

FIRST SIGHTING OF PIED BUSH-CHAT IN SUMATRA

by

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On 1 April 1991 at approximately 16.00, a single adult male Pied Bush-chat *Saxicola caprata* was observed near the PHPA guard post at Simpang Malaka, Berbak Game Reserve, Jambi Province, Sumatra (104°00'E, 1°24'N). The bird was seen well, perching on the top of a bush and moving around locally in open vegetation dominated by *Gleichenia* sp and *Pandanus helicopus*, about 25 m from the Simpang Malaka river. It was studied in bright sunlight at a range of 10 m for about 30 minutes, using 8 x 30 binoculars. The species is well known to the author from Java (Rusila 1990) and Sumba (Zieren *et al.* 1990), and was readily identified by its black plumage (upperparts, underparts, head, tail, bill and legs) with a white patch on the wings and tail coverts.

The range of the Pied Bush-chat extends from the Middle East to S.W. China, south through the Philippines and Sulawesi to Java, and east to New Guinea, inhabiting open country. There is no previous record from Sumatra, nor is it recorded from the Malay Peninsula and Borneo, except for a single record in Brunei in December (Vowles 1985); [two specimens, a male and female, are labelled "Borneo" without details (Smythies 1957)]. Most populations are resident, although those in the north of the Indian sub-continent are described as partial migrants or subject to local movement (Ali & Ripley 1973). It is suspected that the present record represents a vagrant from Java; further records should be sought from Sumatra. A colleague has reported a single male Pied Bush-chat at the same site on 3 February 1992, presumably the same bird.

References

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