

## Status of Sunda Teal *Anas gibberifrons* in South Sumatra

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**Ringkasan:** Pada bulan Juli 2013, Itik benjut *Anas gibberifrons* teramati di sekitar hutan terbakar dan dilaporkan ditangkap oleh masyarakat lokal di Ogan Komering Ilir, Sumatera Selatan. Catatan ini diklaim sebagai catatan pertama di Sumatera Selatan. Akan tetapi sebelum ini, telah terdapat beberapa catatan-catatan dari hasil survei yang belum dipublikasi mengenai Itik benjut di Sumatera Selatan. Disini, catatan-catatan mengenai Itik benjut di Sumatera Selatan dari tahun 1989 sampai 2013 diringkas dan didiskusikan.

### Introduction

The Sunda Teal *Anas gibberifrons* is widespread from the Andaman islands in the Indian Ocean, through Java to Sulawesi and the Lesser Sundas (Madge & Burn 1988; Carboneras 1992; MacKinnon & Phillips 1993). In the Greater Sundas it is reputedly the commonest duck species on Java and Bali (MacKinnon & Phillips 1993) and common in southeast Sumatra (Verheugt *et al.* 1993; Holmes 1996), but scarce in Kalimantan (Mann 2008; Phillipps & Phillipps 2014; Myers 2016). The earliest tentative record from Sumatra was from Lampung province in 1976 (Holmes 1996), and breeding was first recorded in 1989 at Way Kambas National Park in the same province (Parrot & Andrew 1996). In July 2013, Sunda Teal was commonly seen, and photographed, in a burnt area in the Ogan Komering Ilir district of southeast South Sumatra (Kamsi 2014). These observations were reported as constituting the first records of this species from South Sumatra province (Kamsi 2014), but in fact, Verheugt *et al.* (1993) had recorded it as a common visitor to coastal mudflats around the Banyuasin Peninsula, in the northwest of the province, from April to November. In 1989, numbers rose steadily from 44 on 3 May to a maximum of 350 birds on 1 August, but observations ceased on 30 August. Verheugt *et al.* (1993) suggested that local populations congregated in flocks along the coast during the dry season (April to October or November), and Holmes (1996) suspected that they disperse inland to breed during the wet season.

The following unpublished records from Banyuasin Peninsula since 1989 demonstrate that the species arrives as early as February. I also provide details of an earlier observation in the Ogan Komering Ilir district.

### Banyuasin district

Two years after Verheugt *et al.* (1993) reported numbers on Banyuasin Peninsula, Noor (1991) observed one Sunda Teal at Tanjung Balu Gedi (02°08'S, 104°54'E) on 2 February 1991. The species was not reported from the district during the next decade until 3 August 2001, when 143 birds were counted (Goenner & Hasudungan 2001). In the same year, two birds were observed on Bangko River (01°57'S, 104°36'E) on 10 November 2001, and nine birds between Pulau Alang Gantang and Bangko River (01°57'S, 104°36'E) on the following day (Hasudungan & Sutaryo 2002a). In 2002, there were three observations from the Peninsula: 50 birds on 2 March (Hasudungan & Wardoyo 2002a), four birds on 17 June (Hasudungan & Sutaryo 2002b), and 12 birds on 9 October (Hasudungan & Wardoyo 2002b). In the following year, one bird was seen on Simpang Satu River

(02°02'S, 104°41'E), on 18 February 2003 (Wardoyo 2003). Finally, in 2006, I observed 20 birds were sighted on Apung River (02°16'S, 104°47'E) on 25 May (Plate 1). Local people reported seeing ducklings on *tambak* (fish ponds) during April and May.

### Ogan Komerling Ilir district

In 2008 I observed Sunda Teal on Pasir River, Sungai Pasir village, Cengal subdistrict, in the southeast of Ogan Komerling Ilir district. Up to 300 birds were seen upstream (c. 13-15 km inland; 03°38'S, 105°42'E) on 6 July, mixed with 200-300 Lesser Whistling Ducks *Dendrocygna javanica*. Subsequently, I observed ten birds at the river mouth (03°37'S, 105°49'E) on 28 November (Plate 2). As at Apung River, local people here reported ducklings in the fish ponds and adjacent coast during July and August.



**Plate 1.** Sunda Teal on Apung River, Banyuasin Peninsula, in May 2006



**Plate 2.** Pair of Sunda Teal on Pasir River, Ogan Komerling Ilir district, July 2008

### Discussion

Despite a recent claim that the Sunda Teal was first recorded in South Sumatra in 2014 (Kamsi 2014), Verheught *et al.* (1993) reported the species on Banyuasin Peninsula in the province's northwest in 1988-89. They suggested that local populations congregated on the coast during the dry season, increasing in numbers from April to August. Although the highest number reported from the Peninsula since 1989 was 350 birds on 1 August 1989 and 143 on 3 August 2001, the second highest was 50 in March 2002, which represents the late wet season. November and February counts were small (1-9 birds), but the mid-wet season months of December and January were not sampled. The largest number reported inland was 300 birds on the Pasir River, Ogan Komerling Ilir district, on July 2008.

The only confirmed breeding record of Sunda Teal in Sumatra comes from Way Kambas, Lampung province, where a group containing six unfledged ducklings was seen in the shallow water of a channel between the mudflats of Way Wako and Way Seputih on 2 June 1989 (Parrott & Andrew 1996). In June 1993, Holmes (1996) reported seeing

five birds, including three putative juveniles, along the Tulang Bawang near Menggala, central Lampung, probably over 100 km from the coast, but the birds flew off before their age could be confirmed. Parrott & Andrew (1996) assumed that the ducklings at Way Kambas had reached the coast by river from a nesting site inland, yet these ducklings were obviously younger than the putative juveniles seen near Menggala.

The breeding season in Java is from April to August, and November (Hoogerwerf 1950; Hoogerwerf & Hellebrekers 1967). In Lombok, Lesser Sundas, adults have been found in breeding condition in April, and in Sulawesi, downy young in August (White & Bruce 1986). In the closely-related Grey Teal *A. gracilis*, incubation takes c. 28 days, and ducklings are half grown by c.30 days (Marchant & Higgins 1990). Thus the ducklings at Way Kambas, Lampung, presumably hatched from eggs laid in late March. This is slightly earlier than the season in Java. Reports by local people of ducklings in Banyuasin district, South Sumatra, during April–May, suggest egg-laying even earlier, in February–March. Reports of ducklings in July–August in Ogan Komering Ilir district, however, are completely consistent with the Javan breeding season, and support the conclusion that the species breeds in South Sumatra.

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