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Andrew J. Pierce, Kihoko Tokue and Korakoch Pobprasert, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, School of Bioresources and Technology, Bangkhunthien, Bangkok 10150, Thailand. Corresponding author: Andrew Pierce.
Email: andrew@pdti.kmutt.ac.th

Philip D. Round, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Mahidol University, Rama 6 Road, Bangkok 10400, Thailand.

Significant bird records from north-east Cambodia in March–April 1999

J. MLÍKOVSKÝ

During 20 March–23 April 1999, I visited Stung Treng and Rattanakiri provinces in north-east Cambodia. I made a number of significant records, including three species recorded for the first time in Cambodia: White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea*, Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*, and Japanese Paradise-flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*. Details of sites are given in Table 1.

SIGNIFICANT RECORDS

WHITE-BROWED PICULET *Sasia ochracea*

A pair was observed in dry bamboo thickets at Van Lok on 9 April. This is the first record for Cambodia as it pre-dates the record published in Steinheimer *et al.* (2000) and Eames *et al.* (2002). White-browed Piculet is widespread in adjacent southern Laos, close to the Van Lok area (Thewlis *et al.* 1996, Duckworth *et al.* 1998, Evans *et al.* 2000).

RUFIOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*

A female was seen in lowland deciduous dipterocarp forest at Phluk on 20 April. This is the first modern record in Cambodia. The only previous record is from 1875, when an individual was collected in 'Kouys' (= country of the Khoi people) by Harmand (Oustalet 1899; see also Duckworth *et al.* 1999, Thomas and Poole 2003). The presence of Rufous-bellied Woodpecker in deciduous dipterocarp forest in Stung Treng and Mondulakiri provinces was subsequently confirmed by Timmins and Ou Ratanak (2001) and Timmins *et al.* (2003).

LESSER YELLOWNAPE *Picus chlorolophus*

An individual was seen in primary lowland forest at Poi on 30 March. This is the second record for Cambodia. The species had previously been recorded at Lomphat in May–June 1998 by Timmins and Men Soriyun (1998). Lesser Yellownappe is common and widespread in adjacent southern Laos (Thewlis *et al.* 1996, Duckworth *et al.* 1998, Evans *et al.* 2000). Subsequently, the species was found to be rather common in deciduous dipterocarp forest in the Mondulakiri Plateau in May–June 2000 (Timmins and Ou Ratanak 2001).

GREAT EARED NIGHTJAR *Eurostopodus macrotis*

Two birds were observed on each of the evenings of 13 and 14 April 1997 hunting over a large clearing in deciduous dipterocarp forest around the village of Van Lok. Previously this species was recorded in Cambodia only by Engelbach (1948, 1952) and Timmins and Men Soriyun (1998). Subsequent records were made in March 2000 at the foot of Mount Khmaoch in the Cardamom Mountains (Steinheimer *et al.* 2000, Eames *et al.* 2002) and in November 2002 in western Siem Prang (Timmins *et al.* 2003).

EURASIAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

A single individual was flushed in forest in the foothills at the Lalay between Vun Say and Van Lok on 4 April. This is the first record of this species for Cambodia.

RIVER LAPWING *Vanellus duvaucelii*

Overall, 11 individuals were seen on the Tonle San river shores between Taveng and Vun Say on 2 April, including nine singles and two together. Goes (1999) observed 20 scattered individuals on the same river stage in June 1997. The nearby Sesan river supports an important population of this species (Timmins and Men Soriyun 1998).

SMALL PRATINCOLE *Glareola lactea*

A breeding colony of c.20 pairs was found on a flat sand and shingle islet in the Tonle San river in the front of Taveng on 1–2 April. One nest contained two eggs on 2 April (J. Hošek verbally 1999). In the hot weather (36–37°C in shade), adults were observed wetting their breast feathers before going to their nests, apparently in order to cool the eggs. Two other breeding colonies of Small Pratincole, each with less than 10 pairs, were found on the Tonle San river shores on 4 April. A few individuals were seen also on the Srepok river between Stung Treng and Phluk on 20 April, and on the Mekong river north of Stung Treng on 23 April. However, breeding could not be confirmed for the latter two sites. These rivers in north-east Cambodia are now known to be important sites for the species (Timmins and Men Soriyun 1998).

Table 1. Details of sites.

Site	Coordinates	Dates	Notes
Banlung	13°44'N 106°59'E	29–30 March	Dry shrubland near large village
Poi	13°52'N 107°00'E	30 March	Lowland deciduous dipterocarp forest intermixed with plantations near small village on the Banlung–Taveng road
Lalay	14°05'N 106°52'E	3–17 April	Mountain river: the right affluent of the San in Vun Say
Phluk	13°34'N 106°10'E	20 April	Lowland deciduous temporarily flooded dipterocarp forest patches and extensive paddy fields around village on the Srepok River
Stung Treng	13°31'N 105°58'E	19–22 April	City at the confluence of the Mekong and Srepok rivers
Taveng	14°02'N 107°07'E	21 March–2 April	Village on the San River
Van Lok	14°05'N 106°51'E	5–17 April	Primary deciduous dipterocarp forest around the temporary small Kavet village c.20 km north of Vun Say at 1,000 m
Vun Say	14°05'N 106°52'E	3–4 April	Village at the confluence of the San and Lalay rivers

RED-HEADED VULTURE *Sarcogyps calvus*

An individual was seen flying over the Mekong river south of the Cambodia/Laos border on 23 April. Modern records of this species are confined to the northern part of Cambodia (Desai and Lic Vuthy 1996, Goes 1999, Robson 2001, Duckworth *et al.* in press), although previously it was much more widespread (Thomas and Poole 2003).

JAPANESE PARADISE-FLYCATCHER *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*

An adult male was seen in a tall forest at the Tonle San river east of Vun Say on 3 April. This is the first record of the species for Cambodia. The species is known as a rare winter visitor to northern Thailand (Lekagul and Round 1991), Laos and Vietnam (Thewlis *et al.* 1998, Inskipp and Mlíkovský in prep.).

MEKONG WAGTAIL *Motacilla samveasnae*

Two individuals were observed in Taveng on 1 April, several individuals were seen at the Tonle San river between Taveng and Vun Say on 2 April, and several individuals including a singing male were recorded on the lower Srepok river between Stung Treng and Phluk on 20 April. At the time (before this species had been formally recognised) they were identified as White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* but it was noted that they differed in plumage and could be taxonomically distinct. The species was described subsequently by Duckworth *et al.* (2001). Its known occurrence is limited to north-east Cambodia, southern Laos and north-east Thailand (Duckworth *et al.* 2001, Davidson *et al.* 2001, Thomas and Poole 2003, Timmins *et al.* 2003).

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Jiri Mlíkovský, Department of Zoology, National Museum, CZ-115 79 Praha 1, Czech Republic.
Email: jiri.mlikovsky@nm.cz

Ranging behaviour in the Malayan Peacock Pheasant *Polyplectron malacense* in Peninsular Malaysia

P. J. K. MCGOWAN

The Malayan Peacock Pheasant *Polyplectron malacense* is an inhabitant of lowland dipterocarp rainforest in Peninsular Malaysia and it possibly also still survives in southern Thailand (Fuller and Garson 2000). It is classified as Vulnerable owing to rapid population declines (BirdLife International 2004). Little is known of its behaviour and ecology in the wild. Davison (1983) recorded striking differences in the level of calling by males from year to year and suggested that calling activity was related to food availability. The highest level of calling occurred in a year when trees of many families flowered and fruited synchronously, resulting in an abundance of fruit and insects. McGowan (1994) reported high levels of calling in only four months out of 24 in the field over four years, although occasional calls were heard in most months (McGowan 1992). Display scrapes were only maintained during such calling periods. It is believed that only the males call, although females do produce clucks that are audible from a few metres away (personal observation). Males often respond to calls given by another male (Davison 1983), and playback of recorded calls elicited replies from nearby males (McGowan 1992). This suggests that males call to defend territories, presumably when breeding. When not calling, Malayan Peacock Pheasants are very difficult to detect, and it is not known if they remain resident in their territories.

The movement patterns of few Malaysian rainforest vertebrates are known in any detail, owing to the difficulty of collecting appropriate data. Dense vegetation makes visual tracking impossible, leaving radio-tracking as the only way of locating marked animals, e.g. rats *Rattus mulleri*, *R. tiomanicus* and *Leopoldamys tiomanicus* (Sanderson and Sanderson 1964), Asian elephants *Elephas maximus* (Olivier 1978), Malayan tapir *Tapirus indicus* (Williams 1979) and seladang *Bos gaurus hubbachi* (Conry 1980). There are only two radio-tracking studies of forest birds in Malaysia. Davison (1981) radio-tagged two male Great Argus *Argusianus argus* for five months, and Lambert (1989)

tracked six fruit-eating birds of the three canopy-dwelling species for up to seven days each to determine daily ranges and roost locations. Here I describe the ranging behaviour of the Malayan Peacock Pheasant using radio-tracking in tropical rainforest in Peninsular Malaysia.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

The study was carried out in 2 km² of forest adjacent to the Kuala Lompat Ranger Post on the eastern edge of the Krau Wildlife Reserve, Pahang State, Peninsular Malaysia (3°43'N 102°17'E), where up to 11 Malayan Peacock Pheasants had been heard calling in 1980 (Davison 1983). Detailed descriptions of the lowland evergreen dipterocarp forest found at this site are given by Chivers (1980), Bennett (1983) and Lambert (1987). The site is dissected by north–south trails at 150 m intervals, linked by many cross-trails. Fieldwork was conducted during January–August 1988, January–April 1989, November–July 1990 and January–June 1991.

Five Malayan Peacock Pheasants were radio-tracked from May 1988 to February 1989 (juvenile male 1), late February and March 1989 (adult female 1 and adult male 1), December 1989 to July 1990 (adult female 2), and January to July 1990 (adult male 2). Juvenile male 1 was nearly fully grown, although the fully adult plumage had not yet developed. Birds were trapped with leg snares and equipped with single stage transmitters manufactured by Biotrack, Wareham, U.K. The transmitters were attached to the birds with cord necklaces (Kenward 1987, Marcstrom *et. al* 1989), and weighed 10 g, which is less than 3% of the estimated minimum body weight (the maximum proportional weight recommended by Kenward 1987). Signals were detected using a Mariner 57 portable receiver and a 3-element Yagi antenna. Field-testing showed the range of the transmitters to be up to 230 m, with a life span of up to 10 months.