

CAMBODIA RECENT BIRD REPORTS, MAY 2010

Compiled by Tom Evans and Frederic Goes

Thanks to all contributors. In the future, please send any records you think may be of interest (for current or earlier months) to both tevens@wcs.org and fredbaksey@yahoo.com. Earlier editions of the digest can be found at www.samveasna.org. Names follow Craig Robson (2008) *A field guide to the birds of Thailand and South-east Asia*.

Next digest will cover June to August 2010.

SOUTH-EAST

At Koki Beach (Kien Svay) there were 80 **Small Pratincoles** and 6 **Black-headed Munias** on 15 May (TDE).

At Boeung Prek Lapeuv, a male **Bengal Florican** on 6 May is pleasing evidence that the species is still hanging on here. There were also 6 **Black-headed Ibises** there on 25 May, plus an impressive retrospective report of 285 in December 2009 (all per SKH). This is the second highest count on record in Cambodia.

On the retrospective theme too, **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Verditer Flycatcher** and **Hainan Blue Flycatcher** found on 7 February in the small forest patch of Kirivong hills (Takeo) were firsts for the southeast (RO).

SOUTH-WEST



One **Grey-tailed Tattler** was photographed on mudflats at the mouth of the Kampot River on 3 May, the latest species in an amazing recent run of firsts for the country from the coastal belt. Around 150 small waders were present nearby on the Kampot salt pans on the same day. They were suspected to be **Sanderlings** on the basis of their prominent wingbars and other features, but unfortunately they were too distant for conclusive photos to be taken. A **Curlew Sandpiper** there on the same day was only the 10th recent record so far traced for Cambodia, and a single **Ruddy Turnstone** was also notable (all RO).

In the Kampot estuary, flocks of 7 and 17 **Terek Sandpipers** on 3 and 17 May respectively were apparently the first records for Cambodia since 1996. On 17 May conclusive pictures were also obtained of at least 9 **Sanderlings** (all RO), the second confirmed record for Cambodia.

Small numbers of **Lesser and Greater Sandpipers**, **Grey Plovers**, **Common Greenshanks**, **Red-necked Stints**, **Whimbrels** and **Eurasian Curlew** in the Kampot estuary and saltpans on 18 May is the latest documented date of spring passage for these species (HN).

A record with a nice photo of a pair of **Wreathed Hornbills** in Bokor National Park was received from 16 April (RO).

A **Coral-billed Ground-cuckoo** was caught on camera trap by an FFI team in Phnom Samkos Wildlife Sanctuary at 1034 m on 6 May (per MM). This species is very seldom recorded in Cambodia, but secretive and probably somewhat overlooked.

At Prey Nup Mangroves, a **Ruddy Kingfisher** was heard and two **Lesser Adjutants** seen on 1 May (RO) with an extraordinary total of nine **Ruddy Kingfishers** there on 17 May, together with a **Little Bronze Cuckoo**, 4 **Painted Storks** and a **Lesser Adjutant** (RO, HN and NB).

Sarus Cranes remained at Kampong Trach throughout May, with a high count of 118 on 3 May (per SKH).



Photo: Rob Overtoom

TONLE SAP

A very large stork nest was found in flooded forest in Baray Bengal Florican Conservation Area in late January, but enquiries since have failed to clinch the identification of the parents. The nest contained two eggs. Unfortunately the nest was predated and egg shell remains were found at the bottom of the nesting tree on 24th January when the conservation team first visited. Local reports strongly indicate that the birds were **Black-necked Storks**, but this cannot be confirmed. The only confirmed breeding records from Cambodia were at Prek Toal in 2004 and 2005). There were suspected to be at least eight of this species in scattered groups of two in the Baray reserve through March 2010, but no other signs of breeding were found (all SeS per RvZ).

NORTHWEST

No significant records received this month.

NORTH

Two **Himalayan Black Bulbuls** (black-headed form) were observed at Trapeang Pring, Preah Vihear Protected Forest in semi-evergreen forest on 28 May and at least two pairs of **Giant Ibis** were seen around Trapeang Pring station from 28-30 May (HR).

NORTH-EAST

Andrea Claassen's first season of studying the breeding ecology of sandbar nesting birds ended on 6 May. Her study area (which covered a subset of the braided-channel section of the Mekong straddling the Kratie-Stung Treng provincial border) supported an estimated population of 28 **River Terns**, 82 **River Lapwings**, 21 **Great Thick-knees**, 125 **Small Pratincoles** and 140 **Little Ringed Plovers**. Of a total of 82 located nests (11, 11, 1, 40, 19 nests of each species respectively), 35 were successful (3, 8, 1, 11, 12 respectively).

A bird tourism reconnaissance survey in Mondulkiri produced several good records, mostly with a blue theme. In Seima Protection Forest during 24-27 May two **Blue-throated Flycatchers** were seen attending a fledgling near O Rang station, and five species of pitta were contacted including **Hooded**

Pitta and the first records for northeast Cambodia of **Blue Pitta**. Three **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** passing over the HQ were a 1st record for the province. On 28 May at Dak Dam, just outside the Seima reserve, **Blue-breasted Quail** and **Oriental Skylark** were the first reported from Mondulkiri. The usual good selection of upland birds was also found there, including the globally threatened **Pale-capped Pigeon**, the rarely recorded **Speckled Piculet** and a suite of restricted-range species with fewer than ten records in Cambodia such as **Grey-crowned Tit**, **Ashy Bulbul**, **Black-chinned Yuhina** (a 2nd record) and **White-cheeked Laughingthrush** (all HN/SVC).

On 3 May three **Sarus Cranes** were again present near Mereuch in Mondulkiri Protected Forest (TNEG).

A drive through Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary produced two **White-shouldered Ibises** on 12 and 17 May in the same abandoned rice field near Sre Choung village, north of Kohnyek (TNEG).

On 13 May a summer-plumaged **White-winged Tern** was seen on Boeung Kansaign, Banlung, a first record for Ratanakiri province (TNEG).

On 14 May a **Giant Ibis** was seen in flight over a grassland in Voensai District (TNEG).

Observers

EP Edward Pollard
HN Howie Nielsen
HR Hugo Rainey
MM Matt Maltby
NB Nick Butler
RO Rob Overtom
RvZ Robert van Zalinge
SeS Sen Sienglai
SKH Seng Kimhout
SVC Sam Veasna Centre staff/tour groups
TDE Tom Evans
TNEG Tom Gray