

Compiled by Frédéric Goes

Thanks to all contributors. Observers are invited to send records they think may be of interest to fredbaksey@yahoo.com. Species names follow *The Birds of Cambodia, An Annotated Checklist* (Goes 2014).

National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Protected Forest, Bengal Florican Conservation Area and Sarus Crane Conservation Area are abbreviated as NP, WS, PF, BFCA and SCCA respectively. Siem Reap-based *Sam Veasna Center for Wildlife Conservation* and *Angkor Center for Conservation of Biodiversity* are abbreviated SVC and ACCB.

PHNOM PENH

A **Cambodian Tailorbird** was seen at the Killing Fields on 2 February (AJ), a new site for this Near-Threatened and recently described Cambodian endemic.

SOUTH-EAST

At **Boeng Prek Lapouv**, six **Comb Ducks** were observed on 14 January (RvZ), a species only known from that site in the Southeast. During AWC on 26 January, 54 **Oriental Darters** and 395 **Black-winged Stilts** were the highest counts for the site (per HC).

At **Prek Ksach**, a **Eurasian Wryneck** was seen again on 26 January (RvZ), possibly the same bird as the one noted on 15 December, suggesting it is wintering there. Also of interest were some (number unreported) **Chestnut Munias** on 9 February (SSo), 180 **Black-tailed Godwits** on 5 March (CR) and a starting colony of **Asian Golden Weavers** on 28 March (FG).

SOUTH-WEST

At **Anlong Pring** SCCA, nine probable **White-shouldered Starlings** on 11 January (RvZ) are noteworthy, as there are no confirmed records from the Southwest.

In **Kampot**, two **Golden-bellied Geryones** and a single **White-rumped Munia** (first coastal record) were seen along the riverfront on 25 and 26 February respectively; the Munia was found nesting in a mango tree near the riverside on 3 March. Of greater interest were **Little Bronze Cuckoo** seen or heard on several occasions in the mangrove near the river mouth in February (all RO). Nine **Broad-billed Sandpipers** were noted at the saltpans on 7 March (CR). A **Common Barn Owl** was photographed in daylight at Kampot riverfront on 24 March (RO).

In **Bokor NP**, **Long-tailed Broadbill** was found nesting on the plateau and one **Spot-bellied Eagle Owl** was present again this year along the lower part of the access road on 10-11 February (SSo). Three **Slaty-legged Crakes** were heard calling at dusk on 7 March and 50 **Himalayan Swiftlets** were observed on 6-8 March (CR). The crane is a rare or overlooked forest winter visitor, not recorded in Cambodia since 2004.

A kayak-based shorebird survey at **Koh Kapik** Ramsar site undertaken from 24 January to 2 February produced the most significant findings of the review period, including three first records for the country: a single **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** (Critically Endangered) on 24 January, and likely up to five scattered **Chinese Egrets** (Endangered) as well as daily **Lesser Crested Terns** with a day-high of 28 birds, although there were previous but poorly documented records of the latter species from the very same site.



Common Barn Owl roosting in a Kampot garden on 24 March 2014
(Photo Rob Overtoom)



The single Spoon-billed Sandpiper discovered at Koh Kapik on 24 January 2014 (Photo Suy Senglim)

Other species of conservation concern were up to 18 **Nordmann's Greenshanks** seen daily, while nationally notable shorebirds consisted of up to three **Asian Dowitchers** and daily **Terek Sandpipers** (largest flock of 55 birds), an estimated 150 **Bar-tailed Godwits**, ten **Sanderlings** (fourth record), up to five **Great Knots** and small scattered groups of **Broad-billed Sandpipers** on several days, and the second country record of **Red Knot** on 29 January. Also worth reporting are a few **Pacific Reef Egrets**, a single **Grey-headed Fish Eagle** in the mangrove, a species not previously noted along the coast, up to four **Little Terns**, small number of **Brown-headed** and **Black-headed Gulls** (all HN, SSL).

Two successive SVC expeditions to **Phnom Aural WS** yielded two further – though less

expected – additions to the national ever-growing birdlist: a male **Rusty-naped Pitta** was briefly but well-enough seen at 1,500m on 10 February (OSv) and a single **Himalayan Bluetail** showed well and was digiscoped at the summit on 14 February (TF, SC *et al.*). Other highlights apart from the targeted endemic **Cambodian Laughingthrush** were **Eastern Crowned** and **Sulphur-breasted Warblers**, a male **Little Pied Flycatcher** (sixth national record) and **Black-browed Fulvetta**, four additions for the protected area made on 13-15 February (TF, SC, CK). A third birding trip to Aural Mountain took place during 10-12 March, recording the two high-altitude resident flycatchers: a male **Little Pied Flycatcher** plus a **Snowy-browed Flycatcher**, as well as **Claudia's/Blyth's Leaf Warbler** at the summit, a new species for the sanctuary (HH).

NORTH-WEST

In **Oddar Meanchey** province, an immature **Black Stork** was camera-captured in Sorng Rokavorng CF on 1 March (per PS). This is the first for the northwestern region and only the third country record of this vagrant species.

In **Angkor** World Heritage site, a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** was photographed at Angkor Wat and four grey morph **Black-headed Bulbuls** were noted at Ta Phrom, both on 25 January (SSo, SM). The former is only the sixth national record, the earliest date and an addition on the Angkor birdlist. On 1 March, treats were a single **Orange-breasted Green Pigeon**, **Swinhoe's Minivets** and **Indochinese Cuckoo-shrikes** at Angkor Wat, and two firsts for Angkor: a **Brown Wood Owl** with a prey at dawn near Angkor Wat and a likely **White-throated Needletail** at Phnom Bakeng (HH). The latter is an enigmatic, supposedly largely overlooked passage migrant which has not been recorded in Cambodia in over 10 years.



The immature Black Stork camera-trapped at Sorng Rokavorng CF on 1 March 2014 (Photo ACCB)

At **Beng Mealeas temple**, **Thick-billed**, **Orange-breasted** and **Yellow-footed Green Pigeons** were feasting on a fruiting tree on 6 March (DH).

At **Ang Tropeang Thmor**, the AWC on 26 January recorded 92 **Eurasian Coots** – a new Indochinese peak count, and 13,000 **Garganeys** (per HC). A **Short-toed Snake Eagle** was spotted on 20 February when one **Himalayan Cuckoo** and a nest of **Zebra Dove** with two white eggs were also noted (RvZ). A **Short-toed Snake Eagle** was again seen south of the reserve on 27 February, and two **Milky Storks** at different locations on same date were hybrids (PG). Highlights were two amazing additions to the site.



Two remarkable species found at Ang Tropeang Thmor during the period: Spotted Wood Owl and a visiting Black-faced Spoonbill, on 19 and 14 March 2014 respectively (Photos Sang Mony and Sanh Sophoan)

Firstly, a **Spotted Wood Owl** (first record for the Northwest) was discovered in the open forest north of the reservoir on 27 February (PG), then a roosting pair seen well on 3 March (CR, HH), an adult on its day roost on 4 March (DH), a juvenile and adult on 12 March (SSo), a pair on 17 March (SMo), a juvenile on 18 March (SSo) and two adults with two juveniles on 19 March (SMo). The second find was a single **Black-faced Spoonbill** noted on 11 March and still seen roosting in the vicinity of the large waterbird colony until 17 March (RvZ, OSv). Other goodies on 3 March were a flock of 27 **Oriental Plovers** (HH, CR), four **Common Barn Owls** (HH) and an **Australasian Bushlark** carrying nest material (CR). Two **Oriental Plovers** were also photographed there on 12 March (OSv) and two **Indian Thick-knees** were present on 18 March (SSo).

On 3 March, a surprise find en route from Ang Tropeang Thmor was a vagrant **Long-billed Dowitcher** (CR): a first country record and apparently the first inland record in Southeast Asia.

TONLE SAP

A visit to the **grasslands of Pursat** on 14 March succeeded in locating a couple of **Rufous-rumped Grass Babbler**, as well as **Blue-breasted Quail**, **Small Buttonquails**, two **Chestnut Munias** and 20+ **Olive-backed Pipits** (HH), a species not previously known to occur in the Tonle Sap area.

At **Prek Toal**, additions to the site birdlist were three **Garganeys** in the flooded forest, a **Common Kestrel** over the floating village on 22 January (SH, BL *et al.*), and a single **Gull-billed Tern** at the lakeshore on 27 January (HL). Two **Woolly-necked Storks** were counted during the AWC on 26 January (per HC). On the northern tip of the lake, at least one **Grey-throated Sand Martin** was observed on 22 January (SH, BL *et al.*), and unreported number of **White-winged Terns** on 14 February (SMo), then two birds on 22 February (SMY) are the earliest dates for this passage migrant. A **Black-necked Stork** was foraging on the lakeshore on 2 March (HH) and on 9 March a **Chestnut-winged Cuckoo** was encountered in the flooded forest and three **Comb Ducks** on the lakeshore (DH).

At **Phnom Kraom**, a **Spot-breasted Woodpecker** showed up on 16 January (DN), and shorebirds were prominent on 2 March with 400 **Wood Sandpipers**, 100 **Long-toed Stints** (highest national count) and four **Ruffs** (CR).

In **Baray BFC**, the AWC recorded two **White-shouldered Ibis** on 26 January (per HC). In **Chikreng BFC**, **Himalayan Swiftlets** were spotted at Prolay on 1 March (PG).

NORTH

In **Kulen Promtep WS**, one **Grey-backed Shrike**, a species with few confirmed records, was claimed on the way to Thmat Baeuy on 28 January (SMo), although no details were provided to properly assess the record. Interesting reports from **Thmat Baeuy** birding hotspot include two possible **Grey Bushchats** (a species yet to be confirmed



A male Rosy Minivet at Thmat Baeuy on 17 February 2014 (Photos Sang Mony)

for the North), two *stanfordi* **Rosy Minivets** (only one previous northern plains' record) and **Claudia/Blyth's Leaf Warbler** (a first for the northern plains) on 23-25 January (SH, BL *et al.*). A pair of nominate **Rosy Minivets** was seen near the ecolodge on 17 February (SMo). Six **Pale-capped Pigeons** on 18 February and **Brown Fish Owl** at nest with a large chick on same date and 3 March (SMo, PG), and two **Ashy-headed Green Pigeons** on 24 February (SMy) are also noteworthy.

In **Preah Vihear PF**, a pair of **Indian Spotted Eagles** was at Veal Krous vulture restaurant on 2 February (SMo) while a claim of **Eastern Imperial Eagle** there on 4 February (PG, SSi) would require validation by a Record Committee. Three reportedly adult **Himalayan Griffons** were at the restaurant on 17 February (SMa) – possibly the first time non-immature birds are seen in Cambodia. At O'Koki, a **Black-and-buff Woodpecker** on 25-27 January (SH, BL *et al.*) and **Sulphur-breasted Warbler** on 3 February (SSo) were an expected addition and a second record for the northern plains respectively. On 25-27 January, **Claudia's/Blyth's Leaf Warbler** was also reported there (SH, BL *et al.*).

NORTH-EAST

At **Kratie marsh**, ten **Ruffs** on 27-28 January (SH, BL *et al.*) were the first record of this scarce migrant from the Northeast. Sightings of distributional or status interest there included 250 **Yellow-breasted Buntings** going to roost on 11-12 January (TG), **Blue-breasted Quail** and **Small Buttonquail** on 5 February (SSo) and twenty **Red Avadavats** on 4 March (CR). A mixed flock of **Streaked** and **Baya Weavers** at ricefields near Kratie on 1 March held an estimated 1,500-2,000 birds (SMy), the majority being Baya Weavers.

Elsewhere in **Kratie province**, a new site for **Asian Golden Weaver** held a remarkable 100+ roosting birds on 11 January (SMo), and eight nesting pairs on 2-6 March (SSo, PG). Some **Collared Kingfishers** were at the Mekong Kampi pool on 28 January (SH, BL *et al.*), and a **White-rumped Pygmy Falcon** was encountered in degraded dry deciduous forest en route to Seima on 6 February (SSo). On the Mekong River shore, a **Peregrine Falcon** was savouring a Little Cormorant, and a nearby wet field had two pairs of nesting **Asian Golden Weavers** on 12 March (DH).

At **Seima PF**, one out of a party of three **Orange-necked Partridges** gave great views, a female **Red Junglefowl** was found on her nest and a male **Japanese Paradise-flycatcher** (a first for Mondolkiri) showed up along the ONP trail on 7-8 March; a **Blue-winged Pitta** heard on 9 March was early (all HH). A single **Eastern Crowned Warbler** was seen and a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** was calling on 12 March (DH).

On the **Sen Monorom plateau**, birding at O'Ramis on 29-30 January yielded **Blue-throated Flycatcher**, and **Dark-sided Flycatchers** (earliest date), **Ashy Bulbul**, as well as probable **Rufous-capped Babblers** although a single **Chestnut-crowned Warbler** was most unexpected, not being known outside the Southwest (SH, BL *et al.*).

In the highlands of **Dak Dam**, a male **Chestnut Bunting** (second country record), a single **Short-toed Snake Eagle** right at the Vietnamese border (highest altitude and an addition for Mondolkiri), two **Mountain Bulbuls**, a few **Black-throated Laughingthrushes** and a **White-tailed Leaf Warbler** (first confirmed from the Northeast) were great finds on 29-30 January (SH, BL *et al.*). The latter species was also sighted on 13-14 March as well as a **Lesser Shortwing** (DH), another first confirmed for the Northeast. On 14 March, birders witnessed a female **Crested Goshawk** snatching a White-cheeked Laughingthrush (DH). Dak Dam's specialities include the increasingly regular **Maroon Oriole** and **Silver-eared Mesia** on several dates, as well as **Spot-throated Babbler** on 29 January (SH *et al.*) and heard on 8 February (SSo), **Black-crowned Parrotbill** on 5 February (SMo) and 14 March (DH), and **Chestnut-fronted Shrike-Babbler** on 5 February (SMo), all species with only a handful of records. **Rufous-fronted Babbler** was also reported a couple of times (BL, DH) although it still awaits a valid sight record, as it is vocally indiscernible from Rufous-capped Babbler.

OBSERVERS

(* = SVC guides)

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| AJ | Ashish Joh | RvZ | Robert van Zalinge |
| BL | Bengt Legnell | SC * | Seab Chea |
| CK * | Chhun Kunthea | SH | Stig Holmstedt |
| CR | Craig Robson (<i>Birdquest</i>) | SM | Simon Mahood |
| CSo * | Chen Sophal (Naran) | SMa * | Sean Mardy |
| DH | Dion Hobcroft (<i>VENT</i>) | SMo * | Sang Mony |
| DN * | Duong Nara | SMy | Susan Myers (<i>Wings</i>) |
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| HC | Hong Chamnan | SSi * | San Sikol (Srun) |
| HH | Henk Hendriks | SSl | Suy Senglim |
| HL | Henning Lege | SSo * | Sanh Sophoan |
| HN | Howie Nielsen | TF | Thomas Fiore |
| OSv * | Orn Sambovanak (Johnny) | TG | Tom Gray |
| PG | Phil Gregory (<i>Field Guides</i>) | VT * | Vanh Tharath |
| PS | Phok Samphos | | |



The dapper Black-crowned Parrotbill, a rarely recorded Dak Dam speciality, showed well on 14 March 2014

(Photo Dion Hobcroft)