

NOTE ON SOME BIRDS APPARENTLY NEW  
TO NORTHERN THAILAND<sup>1</sup>

by

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During a recent bird banding for MAPS (Migratory Animals Pathological Survey) Programme in the northern part of Thailand, a number of birds were collected, among these were two species of birds not previously known in this area. This paper records an additions to the northern Thai avifauna.

All specimens are deposited in the Centre for Thai National Reference Collections (CTNRC), Applied Scientific Research Corporation of Thailand (ASRCT), Bang Khen, Bangkok, Thailand.

1. *Phylloscopus cantator* (Tickell)

1833. *Motacilla cantator* Tickell, J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal 2, 576 (Boradhum and Dholbhum).

One male, skinned number KT 471, ASRCT Cat. No. 53-70, collected in the late evening of 8th October 1967 on Doi Pui (higher peak of the famous Doi Suthep), at about 1300m.

This is the first record for northern Thailand and Chiang Mai Province and is the second record for Thailand. The first record for Thailand is now being reported by Mr. Ben F. KING with forty new records added to Thai avifauna. This first specimen was also collected by the author, at Doi Musoe, about 50 kilometres west of Tak, at about 2500 feet. This location is in the northwestern corner of the central part of Thailand. The specimen is now in the private collection of Dr. Boonsong LEKHAGUL of Bangkok.

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The second specimen, mentioned above, was captured alive by a mist net at about 7 p.m. on October 8, 1968 on a ridge East of Doi Pui. The nets were placed under small oak trees (*Quercus* spp.). The bird is very easily distinguished from the other *Phylloscopii* by having the chin, neck, upper breast and under tail coverts lemon-yellow in contrast with the albescent colour of the lower breast and abdomen. The upper part is bright olive green with well-developed dark coronal band and broad yellow mesial stripe. Wing and tail dark olive, and axillaries and flanks are strongly bright yellow. The wing bars are inconspicuous yellowish green.

The species is very close to *Phylloscopus ricketti* (SLATER) recorded by DEIGNAN as inhabiting the northern and northeastern plateau but may be distinguished by the bright yellow underpart.

## 2. *Erythrura prasina* (Sparrrman)

1788. *Loxia prasina* Sparrrman, Museum Carlsonianum, fasc. 3, 72-73 (Java). Five females skinned:—

KT 438, (ASRCT 53-631), 28th September 1967, Chiang Mai, Chiang Dao, Pang Puai, at 500 metres.

KT 445 (ASRCT 53-632), 1st October 1967, same locality.

KT 452, 453 and 454, (ASRCT 53-633, 53-634 and 53-635), 2nd October 1967, same locality.

One male skinned:—

KT 458 (ASRCT 53-636), 6th October 1967, Chiang Mai, Muang, Doi Pui, at about 1300 metres.

One female banded:—

012-59325, date and locality as KT 458 (ASRCT 53-636).

DEIGNAN (1963, pp. 216-217), gave the following localities as its range : "The northwestern portion of the eastern plateau (Loei) and the peninsular provinces at the Isthmus of Kra (Ranong)."

The birds mentioned by DEIGNAN from Loei may have been received from the collection of Dr. Robert E. ELBEL. Although ELBEL's records, in hand, is not complete, it is known that at least four



specimens collected by ELBEL or his associates were sent to DEIGNAN (original number RE 4277, 4279, 4340 and 4341, sexes unrecorded), and these specimens were collected between 14th-29th November 1954 at Loei; Dan Sai; Na Phung; Ban Nong Wai. As far as I know, these are the only records of the species outside of the Malaysian subregion.

In September 1967, a bird banding for the MAPS Programme was undertaken about one hundred kilometres north of Chiang Mai, at Ban Pang Puai of Amphoe Chiang Dao (Lat. 19°40'N, Long 98°55'E), at an elevation of 500 metres. The area is covered by secondary forest in a rolling, hilly country along the streams some big dipterocarp trees are growing together with teak trees and bamboo thickets. Patches of old clearings made by the nearby villagers for their shifting cultivation are scattered over the area.

About 10 a.m. on 28th September, the first specimen was caught. It was a young female and was taken from a net in the bamboo thickets. That same afternoon, a search was undertaken in the jungle to secure more specimens, but in vain.

Three days later, on 1st October 1967, another bird was captured, also by net, not very far from the first place, at the edge of an old clearing where rice had been cultivated. Many specimens of munia bird had been seen previously, both in flocks and individuals, (in the rice fields), but identification to specific rank was not possible. As the second specimen came in quite late in the evening, there was no chance to look for more.

Next morning, a search was carried out both in the bamboo thickets and the rice fields, but there was no sign of this species. However, before leaving Pang Puai, two more specimens were netted near the first locality. In all, five specimens were collected from Ban Pang Puai, unfortunately, all were young females.

After Pang Puai, the party camped on Doi Pui at about 1300 metres where *Phylloscopus cantator* was collected (see above). The place, as mentioned above, is in an oak forest mixed with scattered

bamboos. In the afternoon of 6th October 1967, a pair (male and female) of *Erythrura prasina* were taken. The male was skinned but the female was released after banding (012-59325) in the hope of recapture so as to study its distribution and habitat. Unfortunately, no further specimens were caught although another week was spent in the area.

The bird is found common in the bamboo forest, as well as in the nearby rice fields, from the Isthmus of Kra down into the Malay Peninsula. Several skins were obtained from Nakhon Si Thammarat. The female from Chiang Mai is brighter in colour but it is not easy to differentiate. The male from Doi Pui is also brighter, having dark green upper parts, with brighter red instead of reddish pink on the lower part of the breast. This may be due to individual variations and the age of the skins. The bird from Doi Pui has enlarged gonads but the central pair of tail feathers is not much elongated.

Dr. H.E. McCLORE, Director of the MAPS Programme, believes that these birds may have escaped from captivity, which is in contrary to the author's opinion. The birds from Doi Pui may possibly have been released from the city of Chiang Mai (only few kilometres away), but this could not apply to the birds collected from Pang Puai, which according to the local information, were, in flocks. Furthermore, Pang Puai is a rolling, hilly area about 100 kilometres north of Chiang Mai and about 30 kilometres from Chiang Dao, it is not likely that the villagers brought and released these birds in the area.

Any way, it seems that the species is now well established, at least in some localities in Thailand, whereas previously it had been known only in the Malaysian subregion. Besides the two records above, the species is also found in the jungle of Saraburi, in the central part of Thailand (Dr. Boonsong LEKHAGUL, private communication).

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