

The first Record of Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) for Thailand

During the weekend of 22 and 23 April 1989, Nina Higgins, Alan Lewis and I spent several hours counting and watching waders on the coast of the Gulf of Thailand in Samut Sakhon Province, south-west of Bangkok. Wader numbers were high and we found some shallowly-flooded, brackish water ponds or salt pans just east of the village of Ban Chai Thale Rangjan which the birds were using as a high tide roost. While looking through large flocks of waders on the afternoon of 22 April I noticed 2 Pied Avocets (*Recurvirostra avosetta*). The birds were feeding actively in the shallow water. Identification was straight-forward due to their black and white plumage, pale blue legs and diagnostic upturned bills, as well as their distinctive feeding technique with side-to-side sweeps of the bill. The birds were still present the next day, and seemed to prefer to remain on the ponds at low tide when many of the other waders had left to feed on the exposed inter-tidal mudflats.

Wader numbers were exceptionally high and at high tide on the 23rd the following were counted: Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) 50+, Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) 500+, Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) 100+, Asiatic Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*) 600+, Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*) 500+, Nordmann's Greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*) 2, Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*) 180+, Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) 150+, Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) 500+, Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*) 70+. Several other species were present in small numbers.

The Pied Avocet breeds in saline or brackish areas with short vegetation, from western Europe across Eurasia to Transbaikalia and northern China and south through the Middle East to southern Africa. The eastern birds are highly migratory and winter chiefly in coastal south and east China (HAYMAN et al. 1986). This sighting is the first record of Pied Avocet for Thailand.

REFERENCES

HAYMAN, P., J. MARCHANT and A. PRATER. 1986. *Shorebirds*. Croom Helm, London.

P. Morris
134 Station Road
Crayford
Kent DA1 3QQ
United Kingdom