

A Record of the Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus* in Thailand

On 14 February 1983 I was walking above the Hmong village at km 31 on Doi Inthanon (18°34' N, 98°51' E), Northern Thailand, at an altitude of 1400 m. Around 1700 h I saw a large raptor, which I identified as an adult Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus*. It was soaring together with a Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus* above the open, grassy slopes right above me, and was seen well for about 2 minutes before diving behind the hillside. It was not seen again on the following three days.

Description: Large and broader-winged than the *Butastur*, size and shape more resembling a large *Pernis*. The broad wings were held flat while soaring. Most striking were the all-white body and head, with some darker streaking, contrasting with the broad and dark under-wings. Although some white was present on the front side of the underwing, the underwing-coverts were strikingly blackish, the flight-feathers somewhat paler brown with a darker trailing edge and there was a pale patch at the base of the primaries. The darkish tail had a terminal blackish band, but this feature was not easy to see. The upperparts and therefore also the pale patch on the upper back were not seen. Other features noted were also the long head and tail, and the broad wings somewhat narrowing towards tips with not very well pronounced fingers.

Although listed as a resident in NW Thailand by KING ET AL. (1975) on the strength of a single sight record, its present status in Thailand is unknown (LEKAGUL & ROUND, 1991). As far as I know my observation is only the third for Thailand. This sighting, together with one other record, from Doi Ang Khang, on 25 November 1982 were mentioned by ROUND (1983) but no details were given.

The occurrence of Bonelli's Eagle in Thailand is not unexpected. The species is found from southern Europe and North Africa east to India and South China. A distinct race is found on the Lesser Sunda Islands (CRAMP & SIMMONS, 1980).

It is probably a resident bird in Burma: eggs and nest have been taken in central Burma and the Southern Shan States in the past (SMYTHIES, 1986). It has been recorded from Northern Laos and Vietnam (KING ET AL., 1975) but nothing can be found in the literature about its present status in South-East Asia.

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