

January 1984; two on Band Kushdil Khan lake, Baluchistan on 20 January 1984; one on Kund lake, Hab Chowki, Lasbela in March 1986; and two on Khabbaki lake, Salt Range in January 1987 (Roberts 1991).

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## Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*: a new species for Sri Lanka

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On 5 February 1994 I observed an Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* when visiting Victoria Park in Nuwara Eliya Town (6°58'N 80°55'E), Sri Lanka. The observation was made from 17h00 to 17h30 on the east side of the Park near Park Road at 1900 m. The thrush, observed at a distance of 6-7 m, was first moving around on the ground (10 minutes), and thereafter perching on a branch (5 minutes). The weather was overcast with a soft drizzle of rain. I used Bushnell 9x36 binoculars. Notes were taken and the bird described as follows: size like that of Pied Thrush *Zoothera wardii* (seen 15 minutes earlier in the Park); upperparts uniform pale brown; supercilium, which extended from bill to side of nape, white and very prominent; lores dark with a short white line underneath; malar stripe grey with a white line above; side of head uniform pale grey; chin white and throat uniform pale grey like side of head; upper breast, sides of breast and flanks uniform pale reddish brown; belly white; tarsus yellowish; bill yellowish and iris dark.

I had no doubt that it was a thrush and was right from the beginning aware of the significance of the observation. I am familiar with Eyebrowed Thrush from several observations in Malaysia and the Philippines. However, to rule out any possible confusion with other thrushes, Ali and Ripley (1983) was consulted on the spot and the other references below after having returned home. From the literature it was obvious that no other thrush has the combination of uniform pale grey throat and uniform reddish brown breast together with a prominent white supercilium.

This is the first record of Eyebrowed Thrush for Sri Lanka. The species is a common winter visitor from the breeding-grounds in Siberia (Yenisey east to Sea of Okhotsk, south to Lake Baikal) to southern Japan, southern China, north-east India, the Philippines, South-East Asia and the Greater Sundas. Eyebrowed Thrush has also straggled to Europe, Arabia, Alaska

(Cramp 1988), north-east Sulawesi and Flores (White and Bruce 1986), and elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent: South Andaman Island and north Karnataka (Ali and Ripley 1973), Nepal (Inskipp and Inskipp 1991), Madras, Tamil Nadu (Santharam 1985) and the Maldives (Ash, this issue).

The species was feeding on open ground free of herbs, but with some leaf litter, in the same area as an Indian Pitta *Pitta brachyura* and a Spot-winged Thrush *Zoothera spiloptera* (though not seen together). This habitat was shaded by dense trees and bushes and some parts of it were used as a dump for garden compost. The thrush was turning over dead leaves, probably in search for invertebrates.

The bird was seen later by other observers and remained until at least 28 February (T. Loseby).

I thank S. W. Kotagama and B. O. Poulsen for their comments on the manuscript.

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## Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*: a new species for Thailand

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On 3 August 1990 I was going by motorboat from Laem Phra Nang 8°00'N 98°51'E to Krabi Town, Krabi Province, Thailand, when I observed a Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*.

The observation was made 8 km south-west of Krabi Town at 17h00. Notes were taken and used for the description below. The bird came towards the boat and passed within 12-15 m at a height of 7 m above the sea. It was seen in good light for about 20 seconds, but without binoculars because of the very rough sea and a strong south-west monsoon wind. My attention was attracted by its relatively large size and the big red bill, reminding me of Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*. I quickly realised that it was a tropicbird, having seen them previously in South America and Africa. I immediately realised the significance of this record.

The bird, which was about the size of a Caspian Tern, looked all white except for the rather strong, deep red bill and a distinct black eye-stripe which extended from in front of the eye to the nape. The pointed tail lacked elongated central tail feathers. It flew with active wingbeats and some gliding.

The identification as Red-tailed Tropicbird was checked by consulting King *et al.* (1975) and Harrison (1983) was consulted on my return home. There is no other large, nearly all white species with a deep red bill, black eye-stripe and wedge-shaped tail. The white plumage without black barring on the upperparts and black primaries ruled out all species of gulls, terns and other tropicbirds.

The Red-tailed Tropicbird inhabits the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and is mainly pelagic outside the breeding season. The nearest breeding sites are the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island, and Manuk and Gunung Api in the Banda Sea (MacKinnon and Phillipps 1993). A straggler has previously reached the Bay of Bengal (Harrison 1983).

This is the first record of Red-tailed Tropicbird for Thailand and the Malay Peninsula. The species might have been overlooked due to its pelagic habits; it is probably found near to the coast only after severe storms.

I wish to thank Philip D. Round for his comments.

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## Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis*: a new species for Thailand

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On 3 February 1993, at 07h00, we arrived at the junction of the jeep track at km 37.5 just past the checkpoint on the main road leading to the summit of Doi Inthanon. An obvious feature was a small party of Eyebrowed Thrushes *Turdus obscurus* feeding in fruiting trees. The majority were in a tree on the corner of the road to Mae Chaem. Knowing that several other species of thrush *Turdus* frequently joined the Eyebrowed Thrushes, it seemed pertinent to check through these birds.

Almost immediately M. K. had brief views of a thrush which appeared all dark and showed a grey wash on its flanks. It soon took flight and crossed the road, showing a white belly and a dark breast; it landed in the tall trees around the entrance to the jeep track.

G. F. soon relocated the bird in another fruiting tree, where it became more cooperative, and both of us took down a description. The bird appeared strikingly marked: the upperparts and head were completely black and this colour extended down to the upper breast where it was broken by several pale spots; the belly was unmarked white; the white lower breast and the grey-washed flanks were liberally marked with black spots, which were similar in appearance to those on the underparts of a Song Thrush *T. philomelos*; the eye appeared dark and no orbital ring was noted; the bill was yellow, with a small amount of black on the tip of the culmen; the legs and feet were also yellow, but of a slightly paler colour than the bill. It was similar in size to the accompanying Eyebrowed Thrushes but appeared to have a shorter tail.

Reference to Boonsong and Round (1991) led us to the conclusion that it was a species not described in that book. We then read through the descriptions of thrushes in King *et al.* (1975) and soon established that it was a male Japanese Thrush *T. cardis* and presumably the first record for Thailand.

The bird remained until 11 February and was seen by several other observers, including Mr Daengrassani and Uthai Treesucon (Thailand), Clive Viney (Hong Kong), Jim Chance (U.S.A.), Paul and Mark McManus (U.K.) and Raf Drijvers (Belgium).

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