

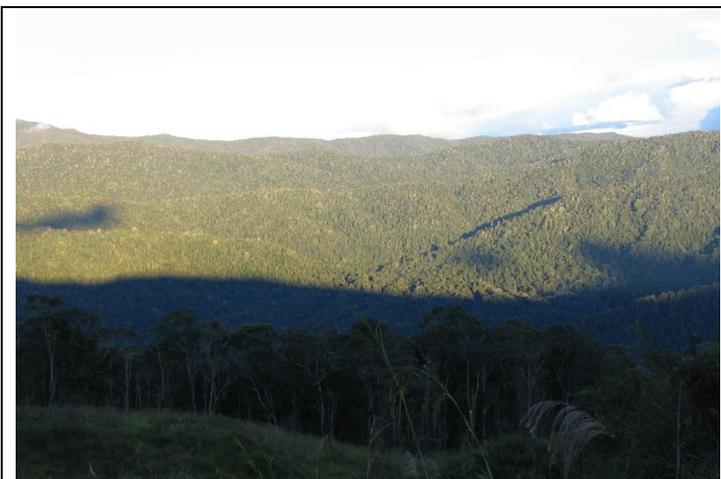
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# Bird species new to science from Southeast Asia (1997 – 2007)

Yong Ding Li

## A Brief Overview

Southeast Asia is one of Earth's least studied, yet among its richest and most diverse region in terms of total biodiversity and species endemism. Virtually all of political Southeast Asia within the Oriental zoogeographic region, excluding Indonesia's West Papua overlaps into four of Earth's 34 known biodiversity hotspot units, namely Sundaland, Wallacea, Philippines and Indo-Burma. Sundaland, of which Singapore forms a part of together with



(Above) Large expanses of montane evergreen forests in central Sulawesi might harbor undescribed bird species. (Yong Ding Li)

Sumatra, Borneo, Java and Peninsular Malaysia, on its own is already incredibly speciose, with an estimated vascular plant diversity of about 25 000 species. The estimated bird diversity of all Southeast Asia runs into over 1500 species, with a large proportion endemic. Indonesia by her own already has over 400 species of endemic birds, approximately a quarter of her known avifauna and the highest absolute bird endemism in the world. Each year, perhaps each month would be more apt, sees the discovery of a few new species of organisms, often an obscure beetle, fly, crab or some arthropod species but also an occasional vertebrate. As far as larger vertebrates are concerned, new species to science are far and few, but are often exciting and captures more media attention than their smaller 'bug' counterparts. Take for example the media hype that was generated by the recent discovery of the Giant Peccary in South America, versus the tens of dozens of new flies species described from Singapore!

In the last ten or so years, 16 bird species new to science in our region have been described, averaging about one to two birds species per year as biologists continue to scour all but the remotest regions in Southeast Asia. Excluded here in this treatment are Cream-bellied Munia *Lonchura pallidiventer* and Pygmy Frogmouth *Batrachostomus pygmaeus*, both invalid due to poorly supported taxonomic evidence. Among the tropics in general, this puts our region way ahead of all Africa south of the Sahara and Australasia (including Pacific Islands), but still far behind South America which undoubtedly boasts Earth's richest avifauna. In comparison early 20 staggering distinct new bird species were described in South America alone from 2002 to 2007, including a

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number of tyrant-flycatchers, antbirds, tapaculos, woodcreepers and parrots. This of course excludes the numerous taxonomic splits of known, pre-existing geographical races that is also taking the region by storm as evidenced by the large number of published journal papers in this area. Classic cases of taxonomic splits in Southeast Asia as a result of elevating status of former races into full species are those of the Leafbird *Chloropsis*, Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo and Brown Hawk-Owl complexes. Within Oriental Asia as a whole, Southeast Asia clearly leads in terms of new birds described, the only exceptions in recent years being the gaudy Bugun Liocichla and Nicobar Scops Owl from India, Serendib Scops Owl from Sri Lanka, the Sichuan Treecreeper of central China and Taiwan Bush-Warbler from its namesake island.



(Above) Calayan Rail (Carmela Española)

Among the Southeast Asian nations, Indonesia at present dominates the list with a total of seven new species discovered, the majority being nocturnal birds like Owls and Nightjars. This should not surprise as the vast and rugged Indonesian archipelago abound with islands, many of which has never been visited or extensively studied at all. In general a disparate proportion of the new discoveries tend towards nocturnal birds, reflecting a clear biasness of scientific work to the more accessible taxa and perhaps the generally diurnal habits of field workers. In a way this is more or less expected since comparatively less research and field

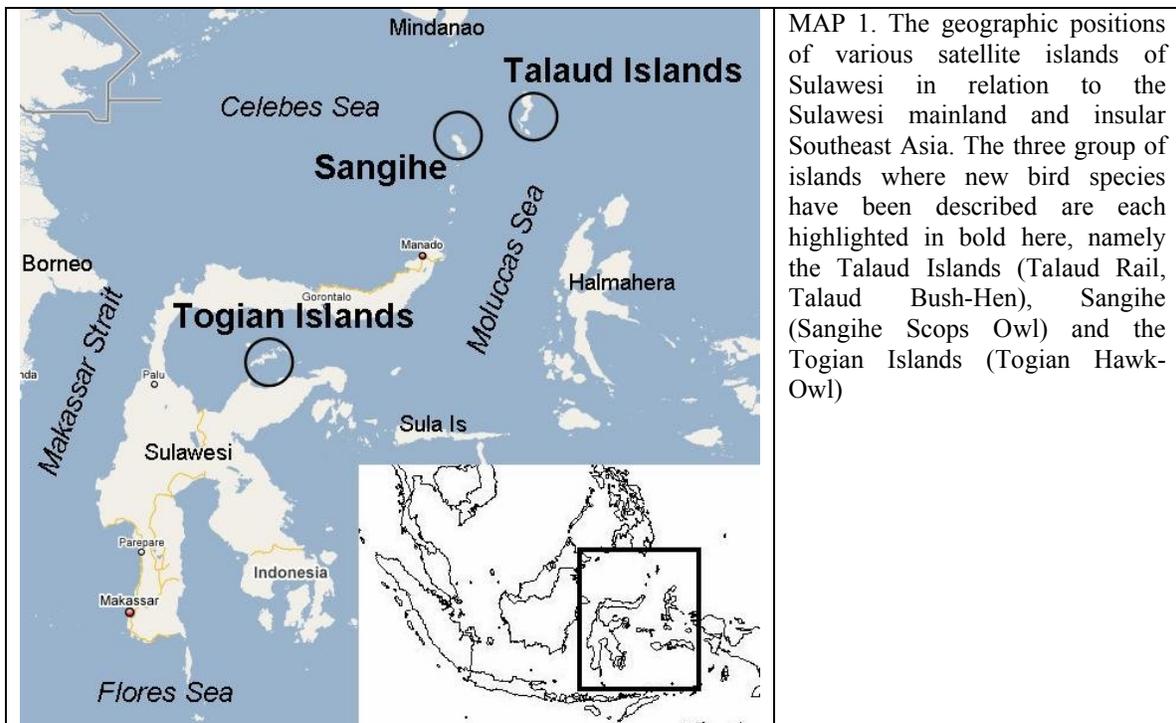
work is conducted after dusk. In comparison, all of the recent, mainland Southeast Asian avian discoveries were of passerines, mostly babblers, as ornithologists penetrate into some of the poorly known mountain regions inland. Vietnam, ironically one of Southeast Asia's most densely populated (253 people/km<sup>2</sup>) and agriculture intensive nations surprised many by its three new distinct species of babblers, namely two laughing-thrushes and a barwing from her central mountainous regions that have formerly seen little or no survey efforts. Sharing the insular geographical characteristics of Indonesia and a massive human population, it was also a pleasant surprise to uncover four new species from the Philippines, a rail, a woodcock, a parrot and a sunbird. Much of what forest that remains in the Philippines, including in national parks are all under pressure from the demands of development, harvesting and a booming population. Couple this with a hitherto sparse scattering of biological fieldwork and one understands why it has one of the most threatened, yet poorly known avifauna.

## **Indonesia – Wallacea**

Before the definitive field guide, Coates and Bishops' Birds of Wallacea was published ten years ago, there was hardly any comprehensive reference work on the birdlife of this vast region except for various annotated checklists and a handful of scattered birdwatcher reports. Indeed, Wallacea, as defined by its thousands of islands including Sulawesi, the lesser Sundas and the Moluccan islands is indeed still among the biologically least known

regions on the planet. Many of the outer, small Wallacean islands like Damar and Tanahjampea were visited only a handful of times, while some not even more than once by ornithologists in recent history, hampered largely by difficulty of access. Levels of research and biological explorations in Wallacea as a whole is pathetically meager when compared to the amount of work that was and still is done in say Java or Malaya. It thus does not come as a surprise that a bird species, shortly after its discovery or description, vanishes into obscurity and ‘extinction’ until another intrepid ornithologists decides to visit.

The biggest landmass in Wallacea, Sulawesi is also perhaps the most biologically interesting, made so by its high species diversity and endemism, as well as its unusual combination of curious taxa like Cuscus, Anoa, Maleo, a testimony to its complex geological past. Much of Sulawesi and its satellite islands, until recently was covered in tall evergreen forest though the advent of commercial and illegal logging has since changed the situation drastically. A number of forested island groups (many now seriously deforested) fan out from each of Sulawesi’s four major peninsulas, including Taliabu, Togian, and Sangihe islands. Some of these remote satellite islands that cluster around Sulawesi’s rugged peninsulas, not more than a decade ago, saw the discovery and description of two owls and two rail species new to science. One of these, the Talaud Islands is a group of islands off Sulawesi’s northern Minahassa peninsula. The Talaud islands were seldom visited due to their isolation from the Sulawesi mainland. Visiting ornithologist Frank Lambert was fortunate to have serendipitously uncovered two species of rails within a period of two years while working on the islands in the late 1990s.



The main island of Karakelong in the Talaud islands group, together with neighbouring Sangihe are small groups of volcanic islands halfway between the Sulawesi and

Mindanao mainland, sitting isolated in the Celebes Sea. During a trip there on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1996, Lambert was to first observe an unfamiliar rail by the roadside from the vehicle he was traveling on. This bird, unfamiliar, yet distinctive was at then observed walking casually across the tarmac road, later moving into damp grasslands in a rural area. Enquiries with local villagers found that the bird, known as the ‘*tu-a*’ was actually not unfamiliar to them. In fact *tu-a* was even occasionally taken for the cooking pot. Sooner or later, the first specimen of the ‘*Tu-a*’ now christened the Talaud Rail *Gymnocrex talaudensis* was procured for western science when a live specimen was purchased from a local bird seller the following month. On the same year, a second unknown rail, this time a forest-dwelling bush-hen of the genus *Amaurornis* (similar to our White-breasted Waterhen) was also initially casually sighted, again by Lambert. Further searches eventually lead to this enigmatic species, the Talaud Bush-Hen *Amaurornis magnirostris* and the other new rail from Talaud to be described for science in late 1998.

Sangihe island, a hundred over kilometers southeast of Karakelong in Talaud, held an unknown scops owl species inhabiting its forested volcanic slopes. In reality, specimens of Sangihe’s unknown scops owl was already long known and procured in Dutch and German collections, though never officially identified and described. Long before its formal discovery, specimens of this little owl had been separately procured by ornithologists A.B. Meyer, C. Platen and C.P Hoedt. Platen himself took the type (A specimen(s) designated for the formal taxonomic description of a species) specimen from Sangihe in 1887, then called Sangir. Unfortunately one of the early specimens was presumably lost during the war, the only clue to its existence being historical records. A ‘modern’ specimen of the owl was finally obtained back in 1985 by F. Rozendaal from coconut plantations and secondary forests on Sangihe. So, while existing specimens of this bird had been sitting idle in museums for over a century, it was only in the last years of the 1990s that with vocalization analysis, combined with a robust study of the existing specimens by Frank Lambert and Pamela Rasmussen, the latter a bird taxonomist, revealed these scops owls to be the hitherto undescribed *Otus collari*. The Cinnabar Hawk Owl *Ninox ios* was also described this way, when a collected specimen of this bird from the Dumoga Bone (now Boga-Nani Wartabone) National Park area was initially confused as rufous morphs of another known sympatric owl, the Ochre-bellied Hawk-Owl *Ninox ochracea* until thorough work, again by Rasmussen proved otherwise.





(Above) Little Sumba Hawk-Owl  
(James Eaton)

Many islands of the vast Malay Archipelago, from the Nicobar islands eastwards are known to be inhabited with resident insular forms of *Otus* and *Ninox* owls. Undoubtedly, until now, taxonomic relationships of these widely distributed owls are poorly clarified, often obscure, sometimes leading to distinct species being merely classified as geographical races of a widespread species and vice versa. Examples of such wide-ranging owls with multiple races in the region are the Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae*, Moluccan Boobook *Otus squamipila*, Moluccan Scops Owl *Otus magicus* and its congener the Sulawesi Scops Owl *Otus manadensis*, the latter inhabiting both the Sulawesi mainland and a number of offshore satellite islands. Further museum work on this complex of poorly known owls could potentially yield unknown forms that were previously mistakenly lumped within a geographically widespread species. Furthermore,

since many islands, especially the larger ones would contain at least one or two resident forms of either a *Ninox* or an *Otus*, unfamiliar owls encountered from some of the less frequented islands could also be potentially species new to science, as exemplified by the recent discovery of the namesake Togian Hawk-Owl *Ninox burhani* and Little Sumba Hawk-Owl *Ninox sumbaensis*. Birdwatchers in a way played a major role in the discovery of the Little Sumba Hawk-Owl, though considerable confusion lingered initially over the unidentified owl on Sumba island in the Lesser Sundas. Partly due to its petite built, many ornithologists including even noted experts were at first quick to jump to conclusion that Sumba's unknown owl was an *Otus*, possibly the poorly known Flores Scops Owl *Otus alfredi*. However as the adage goes one in the hand is better than two in the bush; a captured specimen taken in December 2001 confirmed the identity and provenance of Sumba's second *Ninox*.

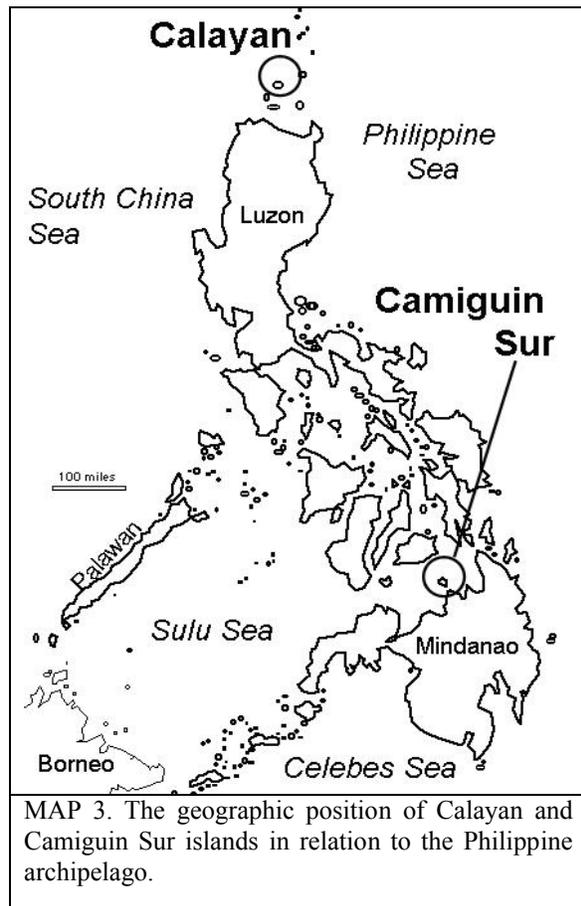
Unlike Indonesia's four newly discovered owl species, the recognition of Mee's Nightjar *Caprimulgus meesi* as a new and distinct species certainly did not receive as much media attention. Documented comprehensively in a taxonomic paper by George Sangster and Rozendaal, Mee's Nightjar from Flores and Sumba in the Lesser Sunda islands (See Map 2) was part of the larger Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* complex. While previously 'lumped' with the Large-tailed Nightjar, a nightjar distributed widely in South and Southeast Asia, interest in the Flores form was first ignited when field observers noted noticeable differences in vocalizations from other races. These initial suspicions were verified by diagnosable sonogram analysis results of Mee's Nightjars taken from both Flores and Sumba. Furthermore, the authors attempted a series of playback experiments whereby songs of Large-tailed Nightjars from elsewhere were played to their counterparts in Flores and Sumba and vice versa (on the Large-tailed Nightjars in Lombok). Amazingly, no response was elicited among the Flores or Sumba birds when

they were exposed to the calls of Large-tailed Nightjar from elsewhere. Meanwhile, whenever these birds were exposed to vocalizations from their congeners, a singing response was almost always expected. While there was inherent similarity between this vocalization and calls of geographic races elsewhere, the fact that birds often responded strongly suggested that in this case, this sound, is actually the territorial song!

Recognition of Mee's Nightjar *sensu stricto* as a distinct species and initially misclassified, is consistent with trends of vocalization distinctness in nightbird taxonomy, like the other new Indonesian owls and earlier treatments of nightjars and frogmouths. Vocalization differences has been used as a major criterion in delineating species and plays a major role in drawing taxonomic lines within nightbirds at least, as argued by Sangster and Rozendaal. Furthermore, nightbirds in general are often notoriously hard to separate morphologically with their often similar shades of browns and grays. From an evolutionary perspective this is acceptable since under low light conditions birds are disadvantaged from visual perception or recognition and there is thus no added advantage from being particularly bright and colourful. Vocalizations, instead takes an enhanced dimension in intra-species recognition. Mee's Nightjar is one among a few nightbirds recognized this way and I believe future work on vocalizations of owls, nightjars and frogmouths will reveal more taxonomic surprises.

## The Philippine Islands

Calayan island, an island in the Babuyan group no bigger than Singapore and sprinkled like peppercorn off the extreme northernmost tip of Luzon, is somewhat a parallel to Talaud and Sangihe - isolated. It is seldom visited and thus a fairly predictable scene for new discoveries. Field biologist Carmela Española, first came across unfamiliar calls in the forest, eventually tracing them to observe a group of dark-colored, red-billed rails foraging in thick undergrowth on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2004. Barred Rails, *Gallirallus torquatus*, were common on the island and familiar birds, but apparently their calls were totally different from those recorded from the rails seen earlier that day. Eventually, further inquiries with the locals, more observations and sound recordings confirmed their suspicions, that this strange rail was not known to science. The 'accidental' discovery of the large, nearly flightless Calayan Rail *Gallirallus calayanensis*, whose nearest relatives are the Barred Rail and Okinawa Rail *Gallirallus okinawae* of



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Okinawa island in Japan over a thousand of kilometers of ocean northwards was astonishing. At least, it left people wondering how such a large, well-marked species that is conspicuous could have escaped detection for such a long time. It also clearly highlighted the plight of many poorly known bird species in the Southeast Asia, not to mention the countless other obscure mammals, insect and amphibian fauna that has escaped the attention of biologists. Naturally most biologists (whose numbers are already biased towards the western hemisphere) prefer to work mostly on the better known or more accessible species, a tragedy of tropical field biology that creates many forgotten underdogs among species. The challenge for many now is the urgency to describe and catalogue these species before it is too late.

The large mountainous island of Mindanao in the wild southern frontier of the Philippines stands at the limelight of ornithological discoveries, with three out of the four new species discovered from either it or on its satellites. Compared with its larger northern neighbour Luzon which has always received more attention thanks to its concentration of infrastructure and academia, Mindanao is far less studied, especially its many isolated mountain ranges that dot the landscape. Dissident and separatist activity of various groups, coupled with accelerating agriculture-induced forest clearance further complicates field research in Mindanao. Most of Mindanao's endemic montane birds except one species, for example were discovered by ornithological expeditions after 1900, the most recent being the Lina's Sunbird of eastern Mindanao. In 1994, field surveys conducted by Robert Kennedy and the Philippine Biodiversity Inventory located for the first time in the wild an unknown, colourful *Aethopyga* type sunbird from Mount Pasian in mid-elevation mossy forest. Mount Pasian is part of an isolated range of mountains in eastern Mindanao which falls within the vast PICOP (Paper industries) forest concession and 45 km north of Mount Puting Bato, the site of origin of this unknown *Aethopyga* specimens originally identified as the similar Apo Sunbird *Aethopyga boltoni*. Furthermore, 17 misidentified specimens traced to two museums were taken almost thirty years ago by Rabor from the general vicinity of Puting Bato at Mount Mayo. While the two sunbird species appear similar, they exhibit many subtle differences like the metallic colours on the tail, wing coverts and metallic green forehead.

Two other species recently described from the Philippines, the Bukidnon Woodcock *Scolopax bukidnonensis* and the Camiguin Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus camiguinensis* shared similar stories. Both species were known since the 1960s though in the forms of misidentified or unstudied specimens. Bukidnon Woodcocks taken at Dalton Pass, Nueva Vizcaya Province, North Luzon, for one was initially thought to be migratory Eurasian Woodcocks *Scolopax rusticola* and forgotten for the next few decades. Based on these records, subsequent woodcocks recorded from the Philippines were thus presumed to be wintering Eurasian woodcocks



(Above) Bukidnon Woodcock (Arvin Diesmos)

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until sightings of unidentified woodcocks by birdwatchers in Mount Kitanglad, central Mindanao in Bukidnon Province cast suspicion on the real status of woodcocks in the Philippines. What set the observers scratching their heads was woodcocks that were seen in February engaged in roding (courtship) behavior in mossy montane forests, a behavior that unquestionably suggests these birds are resident and potentially breeding. And if these birds are breeding in the Philippines, surely it has either got to be an undiscovered breeding population of the otherwise migratory Eurasian Woodcock or that these birds constitute a totally new taxa. Eventually, the combination of more field observations by various observers, tape recordings of calls and further specimens obtained, together with robust morphological comparisons with older specimens showed that indeed, the woodcocks in the Philippines represented a new undescribed species.

Camiguin Hanging-Parrot is a close relative of the rather similar looking Colasisi or Philippine Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus philippensis*, a widespread species distributed throughout many of the islands of the Philippine Archipelago. Specimens of this species collected in the 1960s from isolated little Camiguin Sur island, off the northern coast of Mindanao by Philippine ornithologist Dioscoro Rabor have been deposited in the drawers of the Field Museum in Chicago and the Delaware Museum of Natural History, only to have been finally critically examined and described recently. All along before this, the birds have apparently been mistakenly assigned as race *apicalis* of the more widespread Philippine Hanging-Parrot. No doubt, while it is very likely that unknown taxa will in the near future be unearthed serendipitously this way, the greatest source of new discoveries would come from field work in the incredibly rich species banks of the Philippine forests. Unfortunately, the megadiverse, endemics-ridden forests of the Philippines continue to fall at the chain saw of illegal logging syndicates, go up in flames at the fire/axe clearance of *Kaingin* and until any drastic action is taken, many of the unknown species, together with the known ones will be lost forever with their habitats.

### **Indochina – Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar**

Decades of conflicts, insurgency, internal unrest and of course the danger of unexploded landmines had kept many, if not most field biologists from visiting mainland Southeast Asia, reducing all ornithological work to a trickle for a long while. However, the cessation of the Vietnam war and Cambodian civil war once again opened up opportunities for field scientists to work and trough Indochina's poorly explored forests for new species. The period from the late 1980s, moving on into the 1990s was a time of exciting discoveries, particularly from the inland forests of Vietnam and Laos where many new unknown yet distinct large mammals were discovered, like the Saola, Giant Muntjac, Annamite Striped Rabbit and more recently the Laotian Rock Rat. On the avian front, three new species of birds were described from Vietnam's montane forests, namely Golden-winged Laughing-thrush *Garrulax ngoclinensis*. Chestnut-eared Laughing-thrush *Garrulax konkakinensis* and Black-crowned Barwing *Actinodura sodangorum*.



(Above) Black-crowned Barwing (Lim Kim Chuah)

Densely covered with moist evergreen forests in many parts, the Annamite range, a long backbone of mountains, reaching nearly 2600 m at its highest point at Mount Ngoc Linh (Kon Tum Plateau) and stretching throughout most of central Vietnam, Laos and northern Cambodia is a region of exceptional biodiversity. In the late 1990s, ornithological surveys conducted by Birdlife International, Indochina in among the remotest regions of the Annamites yielded two bird species which were later described as new to

science by Jonathan Eames and his colleagues. In 1999, a third species new to science from Vietnam, the montane Chestnut-eared Laughing-thrush, a laughing-thrush most similar to the known Rufous-chinned Laughing-thrush *Garrulax rufogularis* was again found and described by Eames's team. This little known species inhabits thick primary montane evergreen forests on the slopes of its namesake Mount Kon Ka Kinh, at above 1600 m in elevation. Within a short period of less than three years, the discovery of three distinctive bird species from the Annamite mountains is just a modest testimony to the immense biological diversity, aside from birds that the region is home to, and certainly an indication of the amount of work that remains.

While scientific work is steadily streaming into the most remote regions of Vietnam, much of her western neighbor Myanmar, especially the Himalayan foothill regions of the Northern provinces (e.g. Kachin state) are only began to be explored. Difficulty of access, obtaining of permits and other bureaucratic red tape has hidden these biologically-rich regions from the eyes of western scientists until recent years. In 2004, John Rappole, National Zoo Biologist and three fellow colleagues in a joint-expedition were surveying birds based in Naung Mung village, northern Kachin, a province in the northern sub-Himalayan regions of Myanmar. On the faithful 6<sup>th</sup> of February, 2004, Rappole's team picked up two female individuals of an unfamiliar Scimitar-Babbler of the genus *Jabouilleia* from their mist nets. Another female was netted a mile away two days later. As of then, only one species of *Jabouilleia* was formally known, and that was Short-tailed Scimitar-Babbler *Jabouilleia danjoui* from parts of Vietnam and Laos. Clearly, these, bearing in mind the large disparity of range and morphological inconsistencies, birds caught in Myanmar must represent an unknown species. Finally in 2005 it was subsequently described as new to science in the Auk as the Naung Mung Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia naungmungensis*, a skulking understorey foraging bird of submontane broadleaved forests. Since then no one has seen it in the wild.

In a dramatic twist of events, the Mekong Wagtail, a species that was described as new to science in 2001 has been known by specimens from southeastern Thailand since 1972. These specimens, initially identified as the wide-ranging White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*, was even unknowingly illustrated in Boonsong Lekagul and Philip Round's Field Guide to Birds of Thailand. Thereafter, wagtails seen in the region, particularly Laos were

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mistakenly identified to be ‘White Wagtails’ of the supposedly *alboides* race; we now know that this race breeds much further north. Even more recently, bird surveys in Cambodia found these ‘so-called’ *alboides* White Wagtails to be common and breeding along the Mekong river and its tributaries, what would otherwise constitute a startling range extension of the *alboides* White Wagtail. Publication of newer field guides including Richard Grimmett’s landmark Indian field guide showed that the birds in Indochina were very much different from the true *Motacilla alba alboides*! In 2001, follow-up visits to the Cambodian Mekong area took eight specimens, including the holotypes of the new Mekong Wagtail. These coupled with comprehensive analysis of plumage and morphology from specimens and wild individuals confirmed the identity of the new Wagtail, *Motacilla samveasnae*, a bird named in honor of Cambodia’s key conservationist Sam Veasna. At the same time it also showed that its closest relatives are the similar African Pied Wagtail and the White-browed Wagtail of the Indian subcontinent which exhibit major vocal and ecological similarities.



(Above) Mekong Wagtail (James Eaton)

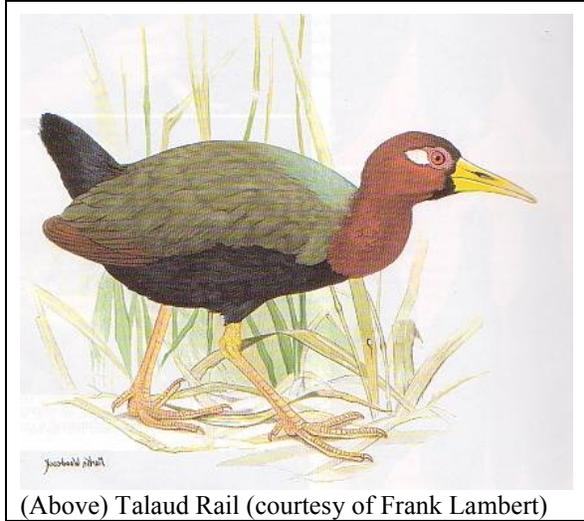
All in all, the exciting discovery and description of five new species from mainland Southeast Asia, with more coming out including a third *Jabouilleia* babbler (work still ongoing) from Tonkin, North Vietnam only goes to show how poorly surveyed much of the region is. This bird rich, yet ornithologist-poor region deserves more study effort, whether in the museum or in the field. The discovery of these new species also gives some hope that other thought to be extinct species might also be awaiting discovery one fine day in the near future, like the Pink-headed Duck for example.

## The Future

Judging by the phenomenal rate of habitat destruction seen all over Southeast Asia, the future does not bode well for many of these newly described birds. Many of them occupy highly limited geographical ranges of less than 1000 square kilometres, like the Calayan and Talaud Rail. Extensive loss of natural habitat in their ranges, perhaps augmented by natural events, low breeding success and capture for the pet trade can easily doom a species to extinction. Such is the case of the highly threatened Philippine Cockatoo, which is now nearly exterminated from the wild. Simply the pouring of large amounts of cash and expertise from overseas NGOs may not be a sufficient long-term conservation solution. Only with an integrated approach, through sustainable resource-management strategies involving the native communities will be needed to guarantee long term survival of these species and the forest they live in.

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Many people will ask if more new species would be uncovered for Southeast Asia in the years to come. The answer is a resounding yes, but inevitably there will be less and less 'new' bird and mammal species discovered from little visited, far-flung forests on remote mountains and islands. At least we can be certain that for one, the mysterious undescribed *Muscicapa* flycatcher present in Sulawesi's forests patiently awaits detailed observations and collection by some willing scientist for taxonomic analysis and evaluation. Poorly studied islands in Wallacea, particularly in the Moluccas (e.g. Buru, Obi, and Seram), Lesser Sundas and the mountain forests in northernmost Myanmar are likely settings for future new discoveries. Conversely, many of the future would-be new described species could either come from poorly studied misclassified specimens lying in dusty museum shelves, or more likely, taxonomic splits of pre-existing species when clearer pictures about their phylogenies and evolutionary relationships are built.



(Above) Talaud Rail (courtesy of Frank Lambert)

### **Acknowledgements**

My sincere thanks goes to Arvin Diesmos, Carmela Española, Dr Frank Lambert, James Eaton and Lim Kim Chuah for allowing the use of their photographs.

FIGURE 1. New bird species discovered/described from Southeast Asia between 1997 – 2007. Year given refers to the year of its published description.

S/N	Species	Latin Name	Year	Location	Etymology
<b>Indonesia</b>					
1	Talaud Rail	<i>Gymnocrex talaudensis</i>	1998	Karakelong, Talaud	Talaud Island
2	Talaud Bush-hen	<i>Amauornis magnirostris</i>	1998	Karakelong, Talaud	<i>magni</i> =large, <i>rostrum</i> =beak (Latin)
3	Cinnabar Hawk Owl	<i>Ninox ios</i>	1999	North Sulawesi	<i>ios</i> = rust (Greek)
4	Togian Hawk Owl	<i>Ninox burhani</i>	2004	Togian Islands	Burhan, local bird guide
5	Little Sumba Hawk Owl	<i>Ninox sumbaensis</i>	2002	Sumba Island	Sumba Island
6	Sangihe Scops Owl	<i>Otus collari</i>	1998	Sangihe Island	Nigel Collar, ornithologist
7	Mee's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus meesi</i>	2004	West Flores	Gerlof Mees, ornithologist
<b>Philippines</b>					
1	Calayan Rail	<i>Gallirallus calayanensis</i>	2004	Calayan, Babuyan	Calayan Island
2	Bukidnon Woodcock	<i>Scolopax bukidnonensis</i>	2001	Bukidnon Mindanao	Bukidnon Province
3	Camiguin Hanging-parrot	<i>Loriculus camiguinensis</i>	2006	Camiguin Sur	Camiguin Island
4	Lina's Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga linaraborae</i>	1997	Mt Pasian, Mindanao	Lina Rabor, wife of ornithologist D.S. Rabor
<b>Vietnam</b>					
1	Chestnut-eared Laughing-thrush	<i>Garrulax konkakinhensis</i>	2001	Mt Kon Ka Kinh	Mount Kon Ka Kinh
2	Golden-winged Laughing-thrush	<i>Garrulax ngoclinhensis</i>	1999	Kon Tum Plateau	Mount Ngoc Linh
3	Black-crowned Barwing	<i>Actinodura sodangorum</i>	1999	Kon Tum Plateau	Sodang ethnic group
<b>Cambodia</b>					
1	Mekong Wagtail	<i>Motacilla samveasnae</i>	2001	Lower Mekong	Sam Veasna, local conservationist
<b>Myanmar</b>					
1	Naung Mung Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Jabouilleia naungmungensis</i>	2005	North Kachin	Naung Mung village

Breakdown of new bird species described (by political unit)

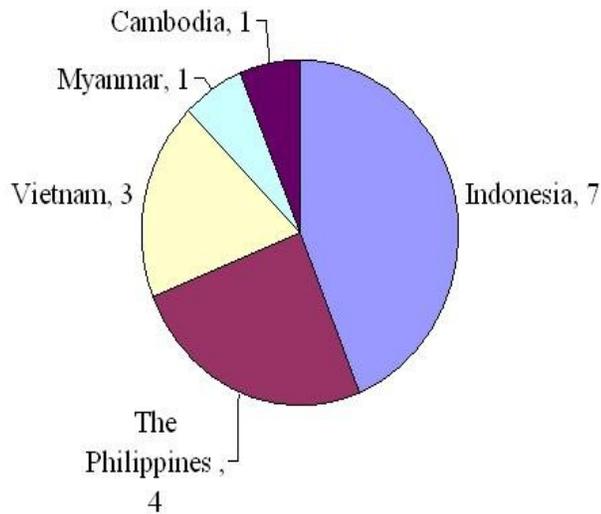


FIGURE 2. A breakdown of bird species described from 1997 – 2007 by political unit.

New bird species described from Southeast Asia (1997 - 2007)

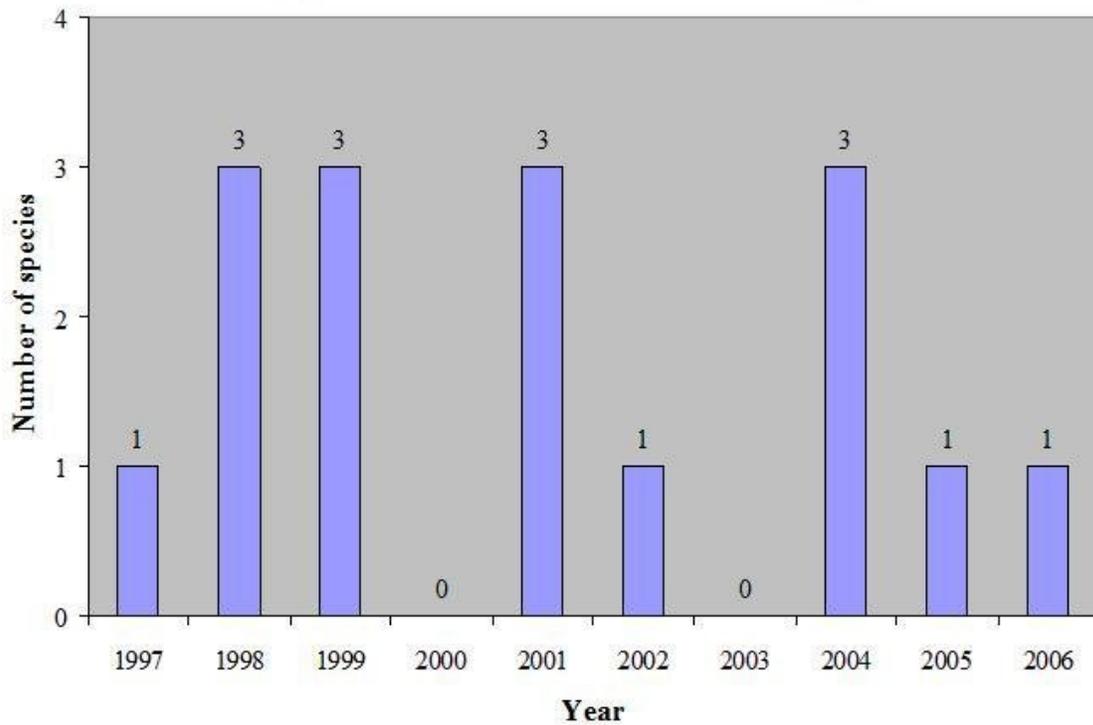
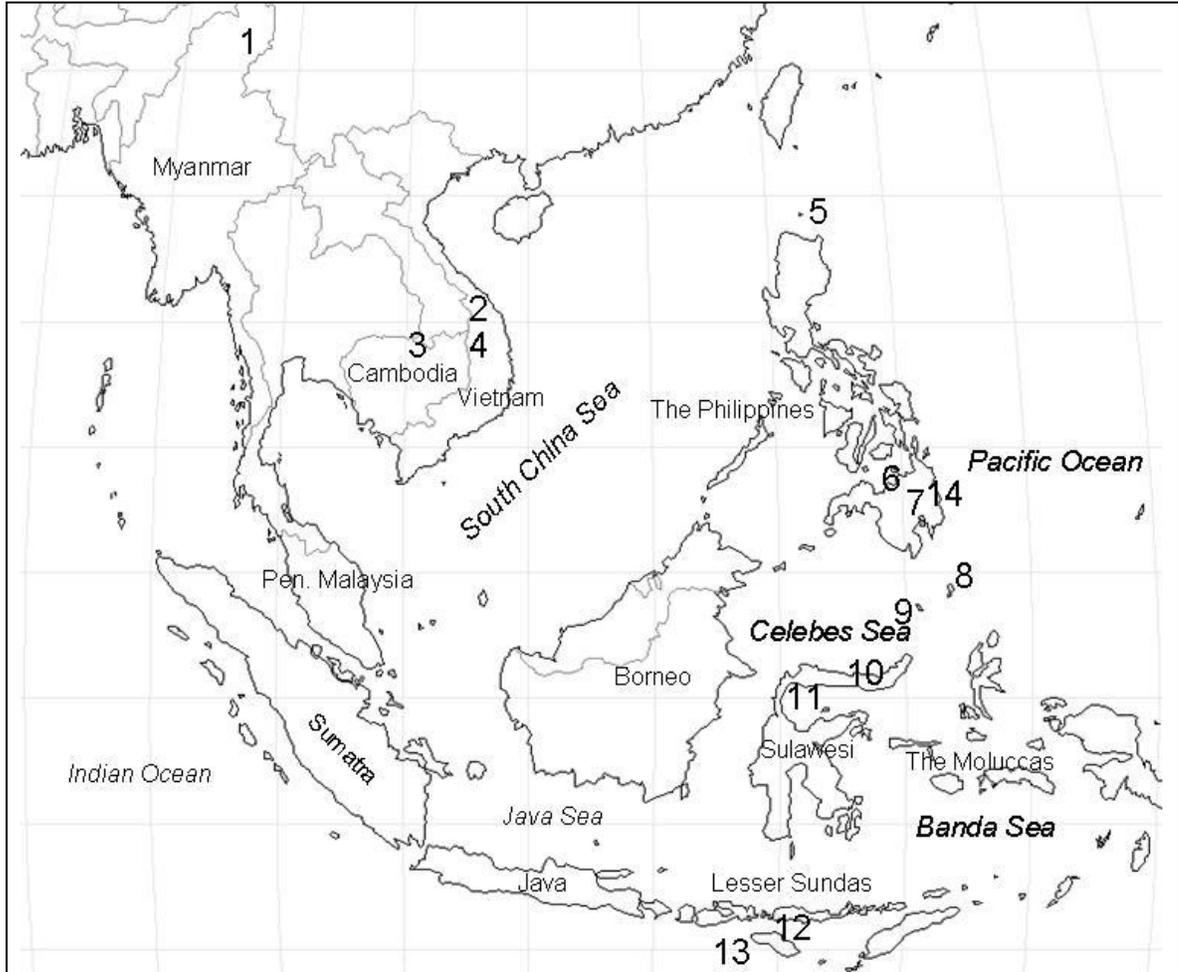


FIGURE 3. A breakdown of new bird species described from Southeast Asia by year (1997 – 2007).

## A Gazetteer of Localities



Species	Locality(s)
Camiguin Hanging-Parrot	6. Camiguin Island (off north Mindanao)
Sangihe Scops Owl	9. Sangihe Island (off Sulawesi)
Cinnabar Hawk-Owl	10. North Sulawesi (Mount Ambang, Dumoga Bone), also recorded from Lore Lindu
Togian Hawk-Owl	11. Togian Island, Togian Group (off Sulawesi)
Little Sumba Hawk-Owl	13. Sumba Island
Mee's Nightjar	12. West Flores, also present on Sumba
Talaud Rail	8. Karakelong Island, Talaud Group
Talaud Bush-Hen	8. Karakelong Island, Talaud Group
Calayan Rail	5. Calayan Island, Babuyan Group (off north Luzon)
Bukidnon Woodcock	7. Mount Kitanglad, Bukidnon (Mindanao), also recorded from north and central Luzon and Calayan Island
Chestnut-eared Laughing-thrush	4. Mount Kon Ka Kinh (Central highlands)
Golden-winged Laughing-thrush	2. Mount Ngoc Linh (Kon Tum Plateau)
Black-crowned Barwing	2. Mount Ngoc Linh (Kon Tum Plateau), also recorded from Dakchung Plateau (Laos)
Naung Mung Scimitar-Babbler	1. Naung Mung, north Kachin Province
Lina's Sunbird	14. Mount Mayo, Buting Bato and Pasian (Mindanao)
Mekong Wagtail	3. Lower Mekong River (including tributaries)

FIGURE 4. ‘Missing’ bird species from Southeast Asia (by political unit) that might either be extinct or still extant but potentially awaiting rediscovery. Most are poorly known from a few specimens or historical sightings. Sumatran Ground Cuckoo, Cerulean Paradise Flycatcher and Sangihe Shrike-thrush were missing for decades until their recent rediscovery as evidenced from photographs and live capture and is thus not included in this list.

Species	Latin Name	Location(s) for Rediscovery – Based on historical geographical data	General Notes
<b>Brunei</b>			
Blue-wattled Bulbul	<i>Pycononotus nieuwenhuisii</i>	Ulu Temburong (Borneo)	Might be taxonomically invalid, as suggested to be a bulbul hybrid. Recently sighted
<b>Malaysia</b>			
Dulit Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus harterti</i>	Mount Dulit, Sarawak (Borneo)	Recently provisionally sighted in 2004 at Mount Dulit
<b>Myanmar</b>			
Pink-headed Duck	<i>Rhodonessa caryophyllacea</i>	Hukaung Valley, Kachin, north Myanmar	Recent unconfirmed records from Kachin.
<b>Philippines</b>			
Brown-banded Rail	<i>Rallus mirificus</i>	North Luzon (Also in Samar)	Many specimens taken on migration but wild populations unknown
Sulu Bleeding-heart	<i>Gallicolumba menagei</i>	Tawi-tawi Island, Sulu	-
Negros Fruit-dove	<i>Ptilinopus arcanus</i>	Mount Kanlaon, (Negros)	-
Worcester’s Buttonquail	<i>Turnix worcesteri</i>	North Luzon	Many specimens on migration bought from bird catchers but wild populations unknown. Type bought from a market.
Whitehead’s Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia whiteheadi</i>	Mount Data, (Luzon), Mounts Kitanglad, Apo, Matutum (Mindanao)	Many unconfirmed sight records. Difficult to identify.
<b>Indonesia</b>			
Sharpe’s Rail	<i>Gallirallus sharpei</i>	Unknown	Known from one specimen described in 1893. Presumed to originate from the Greater Sundas
Javan Lapwing	<i>Vanellus macropterus</i>	Tanjong Air (Java)	Unconfirmed sight records
Silvery Pigeon	<i>Columba argentina</i>	Mentawai, Simeulue, Riau-Lingga Islands. Also North and East coast of Borneo (Malaysia)	Unconfirmed sight records from Sumatra east coast. Recent records in North Borneo
Lesser Masked Owl	<i>Tyto sororcula</i>	Buru, Tanimbar Islands	Recently photographed and documented in the Tanimbars.
Siau Scops Owl	<i>Otus siaoensis</i>	Siau Island, off North Sulawesi	-
Black-browed Babbler	<i>Malacocincla perspicillata</i>	South Kalimantan (Borneo)	Known from a single specimen labeled ‘Java’, but taken presumably from South Borneo
Rueck’s Blue-flycatcher	<i>Cyornis ruckii</i>	Gunung Leuser, Aceh (Sumatra)	Known from four specimens. Similarity to Hainan Blue-Flycatcher prompted suggestion of a possibly Chinese/Indochinese origin.
Banggai Crow	<i>Corvus unicolor</i>	Banggai Islands	Known from two specimens from the Banggai group. Recent searches futile.
<b>Thailand</b>			
White-eyed River-Martin	<i>Pseudochelidon sirintarae</i>	Bung Borapet, (Possible in Mekong and Tonle Sap)	Unconfirmed sight records from Tonle Sap. Suggested to migrate from China.

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