
First breeding record evidence of Hooded Pitta *Pitta Sordida* in mainland Sumatra, Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

HOODED PITTA, *PITTA SORDIDA*, RANGE FROM THE NORTH INDIAN subcontinent, Nicobar Island, Southwest China, Greater Sundas, Philippines, Sulawesi and New Guinea region (Robson, 2011). It is reported to occupy a wide range of habitat, from all types of forest to overgrown rubber and coffee plantations (Erritzoe, 2003). Therefore, it is listed as “Least Concern” in on the IUCN red-list (IUCN, 2012) despite experiencing population decline in Thai-Malay Peninsula. In Greater Sundas, *P. s. cucullata* overwinters in the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra (including Nias, Islands in Malaca Straits and Bangka) and Java; and *P. s. mulleri* is resident on Borneo and Java (MacKinnon and Phillipps, 1993). The movement pattern of *P. s. mulleri* on Borneo is poorly understood and is further obscured by the possible winter visitor *P. s. cucullata* from northern Southeast Asia (Smythies, 1981; Mann, 2008).

In Sumatra, Hooded Pitta is recorded throughout the mainland, but very little is known about its ecology and phylogenetic history (Marle and Voous, 1988). The intermediate subspecies *P. s. bangkana* is found in Bangka and Belitung Island, southeast of Sumatra (Dickinson and Decker, 2000; Mees, 1986). Hooded Pitta is believed to be resident (*P. s. mulleri* on mainland; *P. s. bangkana* endemic on Bangka and Belitung) and winter visitor (*P. s. cucullata*) from mainland Southeast Asia (Marle and Voous, 1988).

The endemic subspecies (*P. s. bangkana*) was recorded to breed in Belitung island west of Sumatra, because eggs were collected in March, April and May (Chasen, 1937; Marle and Voous, 1988). No breeding evidence was recorded for Hooded Pitta on the Sumatran

mainland (Holmes, 1996; Marle and Voous, 1988; Balen et al., 2011; Balen et al., 2013). “Breeding” is defined as a record of nest-building, nests, eggs, fledging or young being fed (Davison, 1988). To our knowledge, this paper describes the first evidence that Hooded Pitta breed in mainland Sumatra.

METHODS

Study area

The study site is located in Kuro village, Pampangan subdistrict, Ogan Komering Ilir district (3°12'S, 104°59'E), South Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The area consists of secondary forest bordering with rubber plantations from <50 m asl. The individual described in this paper was kept in a cage by local people during a birdwatching event on 10th June, 2004, in Kuro village. The bird was observed and photographed for identification and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During a birdwatching trip on 10th of June, 2004, we encountered some local people with a bird kept in a cage. It turned out that the specimen was not a common cage bird usually kept by local people in the region (e.g. Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* or Bulbuls *Pycnonotus* spp). The specimen was a young fledgling with a yellow base bill. Local people reported that they had collected it two weeks earlier from a nest in Lebak Johor, approximately 5 km from Kuro Village, Ogan Komering Ilir district, South Sumatra Province. The habitat consists of secondary forest bordering with rubber plantation, *Hevea brasiliensis*, near lebak (floodplain).

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The bird was identified as a juvenile Hooded Pitta (*P. s. mulleri*) by its yellow base bill, short-tail, green with black head, upperparts duller, throat mostly white, rest of underparts dull brownish with pinkish-red vent, black bill, and wing coverts green with white wing patches. The specimen differed from a juvenile Mangrove Pitta, *Pitta megarhyncha*, by having a black head without buff, crown-sides and wing coverts with wing patches. These characters fit the descriptions of a juvenile Hooded pitta in various references (Grimmet et al., 2011; MacKinnon and Phillipps, 1993; Robson, 2011; Wells, 2007). Combined with information obtained from local people, this provides evidence that Hooded Pitta breeds in mainland Sumatra. The rapid deforestation, however, may result in declining an already sparse population, even if has already been recorded in degraded forest and secondary woodland, including bamboo jungle and old, over grown tree or rubber plantation (Wells, 2007).

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