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## Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: the first record for Bangladesh

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On 21 December 2003 at 07h00, I observed a male Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* at Alengthong (c.21°58'N 92°35'E), Bandarban, south-east Bangladesh. The species has not been previously listed for the country and is therefore believed to be the first record (Husain 1979, Khan 1982, Thompson *et al.* 1993, Thompson and Johnson 1996, 2003, IUCN Bangladesh 2000, Cheke and Mann 2001).

The bird was seen on a medium-sized leguminous tree on a scrubby hill slope, close to a small patch of mixed-evergreen forest at c.900 m. It was observed using 7–21x40 Tasco binoculars for about one minute, until it flew away. It had the shape of a typical flowerpecker, with a short bill and tail. The upperparts looked dark, probably because of the poor light. It had a pale throat, a crescent-shaped scarlet breast patch of about 2 cm<sup>2</sup>, and a buff-coloured lower breast and belly; the bill and legs were blackish. Based on these characters, the bird was identified as a male Fire-breasted Flowerpecker using Grimmett *et al.* (1998). There are six other flowerpecker species found in the region: Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile*, Yellow-vented Flowerpecker *D. chrysorrheum*, Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker *D. melanoxanthum*, Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *D. trigonostigma*, Pale-billed Flowerpecker *D. erythrorhynchus*, Plain Flowerpecker *D. concolor* and Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *D. cruentatum* (Thompson and Johnson 1996). The presence of a crescent-shaped breast-patch distinguishes the Fire-breasted Flowerpecker from all these. A black belly-patch (a diagnostic feature of the male) was not noticed, and this may indicate that the bird had not acquired full adult plumage.

In the Indian subcontinent the Fire-breasted Flowerpecker occurs in the Himalayas through north-west India, Nepal, Bhutan and the north-east Indian hills where it is a resident, but subject to altitudinal movements (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). The species is commonly found at high altitudes, breeding mainly at

1,400–2,700 m and wintering from foothills up to 2,500 m (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). The hills of south-eastern Bangladesh are located less than 100 km from the known distribution of this species in Mizoram, and the bird was probably an altitudinal migrant.

Alengthong is situated close to Myanmar and the Indian state of Mizoram. This is one of the most remote, and hence least explored, areas of Bangladesh. Political disturbance and the presence of armed terrorist groups make any survey work difficult, hence there has been no long-term survey or research on the birds of this area. Only some brief explorations have been carried out, and these recorded a number of new species for Bangladesh (see Thompson and Johnson 2003). Further new records might be expected.

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