should be established near Ngur, North Diltlang and Artlang. Existing protected areas should be extended at Murlen, Ngengpui, Lengteng and Phawngpui. Within protected areas there needs to be better control of poaching, *jhum* cultivation and human-induced fires. Environmental awareness programmes are needed in villages surrounding protected areas. In view of the high rate of literacy (90%), conservation awareness has better chances of succeeding in Mizoram than in many other parts of India.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank forest officials for their assistance during the study, including N. Pradhan (ACF, HQ), L. Pachuan, P. Lianzuala, Mr and Mrs K. Hramzama, C. Buanga, C. Hranghimea, T. Zakiau, K. Kheilai, Khudu Ray, Lalkung, Zarlansanga, Khaikhu, Lalnunzira, Sonadhar Saikia, Muankima, Rinsanga and Vanlalpeka. I thank Ms Bawitei, P. Rahlo, Mrs Nango, K.Vabeisia, Waukry, M. Goswami, John Paul, Jalal Mazumdar, Amaruddin, Anil Goswami, Hakim, and the late Alauddin Choudhury. I also thank Sirai Laskar, Sirai, Monai, Tomu and Mukut for assistance during surveys along Assam-Mizoram border.

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Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima*: first record for Bangladesh

M. MONIRUL H. KHAN

On 29 January 2006, at 16h00–16h30, Enam Talukder, Zahangir Alom, Samiul Mohsanin and Dilip Das and I observed a Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima* at Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh (23°52.58′N 90°16.19′E, 14 m).

For most of the duration of our observation, the thrush was seen pecking on the ground around a narrow water drain, at a distance of 15 m. We observed it using 10× Nikon binoculars and photographed it. It then flew and perched in a *Ziziphus* tree (6 m high), and then moved to a rain tree *Albizia* sp. (8 m high) before finally flying away. The drain kept this area relatively wet and hence it was covered by herbs (dominated by *Tridax procumbens*) and shrubs. The weather conditions were sunny and calm.

We identified the bird as a Plain-backed Thrush from the following combination of features. It had deep brown upperparts, no wing-bars, white underparts with heavy black scaling on the belly and flanks, a small dark patch behind the eye, an indistinct elongated dark patch on each side of the throat, a very narrow yellowish eye-ring, a dark bill, pinkish legs and a relatively short tail.

There are five possible confusion species among the *Zoothera* thrushes that occur in Bangladesh or in neighbouring eastern India, Nepal and Bhutan: female Siberian Thrush *Z. sibirica*, Long-tailed Thrush *Z. dixoni*, Scaly Thrush *Z. dauma*, Long-billed Thrush *Z. monticola* and Dark-sided Thrush *Z. marginata*. The bird had the diagnostic head pattern of Plain-backed Thrush, and had a plain dark brown back and no wing-bars, eliminating Long-tailed and Scaly Thrushes; prominent scaling on the underparts, eliminating female Siberian and Long-billed Thrushes; and a relatively small bill, eliminating Dark-sided Thrush.

Plain-backed Thrush is mostly resident at 2,100–4,330 m in the Himalayas in India, Nepal and Bhutan, but it visits the foothills at 450–2,700 m in winter (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). The species had not previously been recorded from Bangladesh (Husain 1979, Khan 1982, Harvey 1990, Thompson *et al.* 1993; Thompson and Johnson 1996, 2003; IUCN Bangladesh 2000, Grewal *et al.* 2002). The record is about 240 km south-west from the nearest known records in the Indian state of Meghalaya (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). Minimum altitudes for the species have been noted as 1,500 m (Rasmussen and Anderton 2005), 600 m (Grimmett *et al.* 1998) and 1,300 m (Ali and Ripley 1987). At 14 m, our record is the lowest elevation at which the species has ever been recorded. It is noteworthy that the record was after the only spell of cold weather in the winter of 2005–2006.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank Paul Thompson for comments and for confirming the identification from photographs.

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Spring migration of Oriental Honey-buzzards *Pernis ptilorhyncus* and other raptors at Tanjung Tuan, Malaysia, 2000–2001

ROBERT DECANDIDO, DEBORAH ALLEN and KEITH L. BILDSTEIN

Since the 1950s, it has been known that wintering populations of Oriental Honey-buzzards *Pernis ptilorhyncus* and at least four other raptor species migrate each spring from Sumatra north-east across the Straits of Malacca to the west coast of Malaysia (Oakeley 1955, White 1961, Medway and Nisbet 1964, 1965, Medway and Wells 1976, Wells 1990a, 1990b). This migration is part of the East Asian Flyway, with most birds presumably returning to breed in the region from western China and southern Siberia east to Japan (McClure 1998, Zalles and Bildstein 2000, DeCandido et al. 2004a,b, Higuchi *et al.* 2005). However, the magnitude, timing and duration of the migration of Oriental Honey-buzzard and other species using this route remain unclear (Wells 1999, Zalles and Bildstein 2000). Here we report results from counts made in March 2000 and 2001.

STUDY SITE

Port Dickson (2°24′N 101°51′E, 0 m) is a small town on the west coast of Malaysia on the Straits of Malacca. It is c.94 km south-west of Kuala Lumpur and 90 km north of the city of Melaka (Figs. 1–2). The town is located at the southern end of a range of mountains that runs north-south and presumably funnels many migrants along the western coastal lowlands of the Malay Peninsula (Medway and Nisbet 1965, Wells 1999). The watch site is situated