

The eggs were white, weighed an average of  $15.5 \pm 0.24$  g, and measured  $34.5 \pm 0.68 \times 29.1 \pm 0.25$  mm ( $n = 6$ ). The female alone incubated the eggs, and hatching occurred after 39 days. During incubation, females rarely left the nest. Hatching success was high with 92.7% of eggs in five clutches hatching, but only 58.3% of juveniles survived to fledge. Both adults defended the nestlings by chasing away potential predators such as Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* and Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*.

At 12 days old, nestlings began to crawl around and feed themselves, and by 32 days the nestlings were able to fly short distances from the nest, but generally stayed at or within 100 m of the nest site until September. Thirty-two pellets collected from near the nest contained 58 food items. Two species of rodent (Greater Long-tailed Hamster *Cricetulus triton* and Reed Vole *Microtus fortis*) accounted for 34% of items, whilst six types of insect (including scarabs, click beetles and wasps) accounted for 60.4%, whilst small birds accounted for only 1.7% of prey identified.

#### REFERENCES

Yin Xiang-chu (1964) [Daytime activity of the Ural Owl *Strix uralensis* and Little Owl *Athene noctua*.] *Chinese J. Zool.* 6(4): 172. (In Chinese.)

Lei Fu-min, Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, PO Box 1000080, Beijing, China.

## Notes on the Slender-billed Scimitar-Babbler *Xiphirhynchus superciliaris* in Yunnan, China

HAN LIANXIAN

The Slender-billed Scimitar-Babbler *Xiphirhynchus superciliaris* is distributed in the eastern Himalayas, southern Assam (India), western and north-eastern Myanmar, northern Vietnam, and Yunnan province in China (Sibley and Monroe 1990). Rothschild (1926) was the first to record the species in Yunnan, but he did not document the exact site, indicating only that his specimen was collected from the divide between the Salween and 'Shweli' (Longchuan Jiang) rivers in western Yunnan. There have been no further reports of the species from Yunnan.

In November 1990, during avian surveys conducted in the Dulong river area (in the western extremity of the Gaoligongshan region) in western

Yunnan, I captured three Slender-billed Scimitar-Babblers (one adult and two young) in a mist net. Subsequently, I made some field observations, and also examined specimens recently collected in Yunnan by Mr Wei Tianhao of the Kunming Institute of Ecology and by Mr Zhou Yunsheng of the Gaoligongshan Nature Reserve management bureau. Some notes on this species in Yunnan are presented below.

#### Habits

The species is found in forest, shrubberies, bamboo and shrubland/grassland dominated slopes near cultivated land, at elevations of 1,800–2,100 m. The specimens I collected were in shrublands at 2,100 m. They are usually found singly or in pairs, although it is also found in larger foraging groups after breeding. The only vocalization noted is a three-syllabled, deep 'do go go, do go go'.

#### Measurements

The subspecies found in Yunnan is *X. s. forresti*.

	Weight (g)	Length (mm)	Wing	Tail	Bill	Tarsus
Adult	25	225	72.0	81.0	46.8	32.0
Young	–	–	53.0	28.0	21.0	24.9
Young	–	–	53.0	28.0	20.3	24.2

#### Distribution within Yunnan

Specimens are known only from three localities: Muliwa in the Dulong Jiang area of Gongshan county in north-western Yunnan; Lengshuihe in Datang township, Tengchong county, western Yunnan; and Shuitang township in Xiping county in central Yunnan. I also saw the species in Heinitang village, Guyong township (Tengchong county). The total number of individuals observed was 11, suggesting that the species is rare in Yunnan.

Thanks to Mr Wei Tianhao and Mr Zhou Yunsheng for providing data, and to Dr R. Harris for help with the English.

#### REFERENCES

Rothschild, Lord (1926) On the avifauna of Yunnan, with critical notes. *Nov. Zool.* 33: 189–343.  
Sibley, C. G. and Monroe, B. L., Jr. (1990) *Distribution and taxonomy of birds of the world*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Han Lianxian, Kunming Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Kunming, Yunnan, P. R. China 650223.