

passage site for a species that is uncommon to rare anywhere in the west of the Indian Subcontinent (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). Red-throated Pipit is one of many Siberian passerines with a significant migratory divide; despite breeding right across the Palaearctic tundra, there are no regular wintering areas between the Middle East and Myanmar (Alström & Mild 2003, Irwin & Irwin 2005). We encountered large migrant/wintering flocks of *flava* wagtails regularly during March in the Cox's Bazar region at the beginning of the month, and at Nijhum Dweep at the end of the month, but did not encounter any other Red-throated Pipits. It is perhaps significant that the large flock on 18 March were also associating with Short-toed Larks, as this is itself classified as a 'rare winter visitor' to Bangladesh (Siddiqui 2008), suggesting that flocks of both species may be transients rather than winterers. These areas at the western corner of the Meghna River Delta are poorly surveyed at any time of year, and especially so after February, when increasingly inclement weather makes surveying difficult.

Thus it seems most likely that these groups of Red-throated Pipits (and Short-toed Larks) represent transient individuals on a previously unrecognised migration route from their nearest westernmost regular wintering areas in Myanmar, through eastern Bangladesh to breeding grounds at high latitudes. The scant Subcontinent records from northern India, Nepal and Pakistan (Grimmett *et al.* 1998) are suggestive of a return route north-westwards avoiding the hostile topography of the Tibetan Plateau. Further surveys at peak migration periods will be required to understand the status of this species properly both in Bangladesh and further afield.

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## What is *Psittacus borneus*?

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Walters (1998) made the case for replacing *Eos bornea* with *E. rubra* as the scientific name for the Red Lory. *Psittacus borneus* was the name that Linnaeus gave to a parrot depicted in a 1751 plate by George Edwards entitled 'Long-tailed Scarlet Lory' (reproduced on the cover of *Forktail* 13). Walters wrote that 'For many years *Psittacus borneus* puzzled authors', since its plumage coloration did not adhere exactly to that of the Red Lory, then called *Eos rubra*. However, after Count Salvadori suggested it might be a variety of that species, Lord Rothschild seized on the idea favourably and thereafter the accepted name of Red Lory was *Eos bornea*, since Linnaeus's name preceded *rubra* by 30 years.

Walters (1998) consulted me about the Red Lory when he was preparing his paper, but I was unable to give him any information relating to the bird shown in Edwards's plate. However, after recently re-reading his paper I believe that I can now answer the question: what is *Psittacus borneus*? As a lory keeper of nearly 40 years' experience, during the past four years I have acquired four Black-winged Lorries *Eos cyanogenia*, two of which had abnormally coloured plumage which included small areas of green, especially in the wings,

and had a generally dull appearance. In this respect they resembled Edwards's plate of the 'Long-tailed Scarlet Lory'. These two birds were suffering from nutritional deficiencies when I received them, but at the next moult changed into fine specimens with normal, vibrant plumage. I therefore think it highly likely that Salvadori was right and that Edwards's plate depicts a Red Lory, but one which had received a poor diet.

Although I feel confident that this insight solves the question over the identity of Edwards's 'Long-tailed Scarlet Lory', I do not venture to say whether the Red Lory should again revert to the name *Eos bornea*, and leave that for students of nomenclature to consider.

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