

an uncommon but regular winter visitor to Kinmen. Rarely, but in increasing numbers, this species has been recorded on Kinmen during the breeding season (Wild Bird Society of I-Lan 2007). Our record is, however, the first report of what appears to be successful breeding of Yellow-billed Grosbeaks on Kinmen. This record also represents the southernmost breeding record for this species barring observations in Hong Kong, where breeding was first proven in 2003 and has been confirmed or suspected in every year since then (J. Allcock *in litt.* 2007). Summering birds have also been noted at Nan'ao near Shantou in eastern Guangdong Province approximately 160 km south-west of Kinmen (Sun *et al.* 2007)

Increased reports of this species south of its normal breeding range in a time of global climate change suggests that this species may be in the early stages of a range expansion. The Yellow-billed Grosbeak's preference for human disturbance may facilitate this expansion. It should be noted that Yellow-billed Grosbeaks are regularly kept as cage birds in China, so the possibility exists that the birds we observed were escapees. In this case, this report would represent a new introduction event and possibly the early stages of the naturalisation of this species on Kinmen Island. The only other explanation of the presence of this family group on Kinmen Island is that the family group flew or was blown to Kinmen from its breeding grounds on mainland China. Because Yellow-billed Grosbeaks do not breed in mainland China adjacent to Kinmen, they would have to have travelled as a group at least 160 km from their nearest possible breeding grounds. We suggest that this is extremely unlikely and think that these were probably wild birds or possibly escapees. Whether the Yellow-billed Grosbeak on Kinmen represents an isolated occurrence, a

range expansion, or the introduction and naturalisation of an exotic species is unclear. Future breeding activity of Yellow-billed Grosbeaks on Kinmen and elsewhere should be closely monitored as this species is likely to have a dynamic distribution.

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Breeding records and observations of the Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* in peninsular Malaysia

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Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* is a bird of paddyfields, riverbanks, sand- and mud-bars, and small coastal streams, and is also found in ponds and flooded fields (Strange and Jeyarajasingam 1993, MacKinnon and Phillipps 1993). Its breeding range spans the warm-to-temperate parts of Eurasia from the Atlantic to Korea and Japan, South Asia, southern China, South-East Asia and north and east Australia (Hancock and Kushlan 1984, Galdikas *et al.* 1985, Wells 1999).

The Little Egret was earlier not known to breed in the Thai-Malay Peninsula (Wells 1999); however, recent records indicate that the breeding range is expanding. In peninsular Malaysia, a breeding colony was found in 2002 in Malim Nawar (Yeap 2002) and another in 2004 in Kinta Nature Park (Lim 2004a,b), both in Perak State,

Malaysia. Here I report on the occurrence of Little Egret in two further breeding colonies in peninsular Malaysia.

Two heronries were visited at Rawang (3°18'39"N 101°34'46"E), in the state of Selangor, during October 2005–March 2006. Observations at Rawang I were made from an observation tower near the side of the road, whereas the heronry in Rawang II was clearly observed also from the road at the edge of the wetland where it was located.

OBSERVATIONS

Rawang I

On 9 October 2005 (05h00–18h30) the majority of the birds in the heronry were Little Egrets. A single Little

Egret chick was observed on a nest. Another nest had a brooding adult, but the nest contents could not be seen. Black-crowned Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax* were also nesting all around. On 22 October 2005 (08h30–11h00), c.50–60 Little Egrets were observed, of which 19 were sitting on nests and 5 were seen building nests. One Little Egret was observed adding materials to a nest that had only recently been vacated by Black-crowned Night Herons (fledgling night herons were observed in the same nest on the previous visit), and two pairs were observed mating on their nests. Three nests were examined, two of which contained two eggs each, and one contained three eggs. According to Hancock and Kushlan (1984), three eggs is typical in tropical areas (five is the usual number in temperate zones and sometimes as many as eight are found). No chicks were observed. All Little Egrets were in breeding plumage, having plumes on their heads, backs and neck and with the characteristic yellow feet of the subspecies *E. g. garzetta*. On 26 March 2006 c.40 Little Egrets were observed, including c.10 juveniles. Sixteen active nests at various stages were observed, some with eggs, some with juveniles. One adult was observed feeding three juveniles.

Rawang II

On 26 March 2006, another heronry was found c.2 km from the Rawang I heronry. This second location had been visited in October 2005 when no Little Egrets or Black-crowned Night Herons were seen. On the second visit c.100 Little Egrets and 37 nests at various stages were counted, including nests containing eggs, young chicks and juveniles. Three pairs of adults were observed mating.

DISCUSSION

Wells (1999) reviewed the status of Little Egrets in the Thai-Malay Peninsula, and concluded that there was no breeding population in peninsular Malaysia. Since 2002, four heronries have been discovered in peninsular Malaysia, which together support a total of c.60 active

nests. Three of these four heronries are well known and had been surveyed prior to 2002; hence, the Little Egret can be considered a 'new' breeding resident (rather than having been overlooked as a breeder in the past). All of the Little Egrets observed breeding in peninsular Malaysia are of the subspecies *E. g. garzetta*. The nearest breeding colonies in the north appear to be those in West Thailand (800 km to Perak), and those further south in Pulau Dua, West Java (1,100 km to Selangor). To monitor the expansion of the Little Egret into peninsular Malaysia, the four known nesting sites must be regularly monitored, and other potential sites surveyed for the presence and nesting of this species.

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New and significant records of birds in Arunachal Pradesh, north-east India

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The state of Arunachal Pradesh, in north-east India, is a biodiversity hotspot and supports a rich and diverse birdlife. Several accounts of the avifauna of Arunachal Pradesh have been published during the last decade, including Athreya *et al.* (1997), Birand and Pawar (2004),

Choudhury (1998, 2003), Datta (2001), Datta *et al.* (1998), King and Donahue (2006), Kumar and Singh (2000), Newton (2002), Sangha and Naoroji (2005), Sangha *et al.* (2007) and Singh (1994, 1999, 2003). Despite this, the avifauna of Arunachal Pradesh is poorly