

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: a new species for Thailand

PETER CUEREL and SOMSRI THONGSATJA

On 27 December 1991, Peter Cuere1 and Somsri Thongsatja were birdwatching at Chiang Saen Lake (20°15'N 100°03'E), Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, when they found a drake Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*.

The lake is situated about 8 km south-west of the town of Chiang Saen, 4-5 km from the Mekong River and about 25 km due south of the most northerly point in Thailand. On 26 December we had been taken to a secluded bay by local people. This bay contained a large number of ducks and although nothing exceptional was seen, it was noticed that there was a considerable movement of birds in the area, with several large groups of ducks being seen in flight over the surrounding countryside. We therefore returned to the site on the following day.

At about 15h00 on 27 December, PC was searching through a flock of about 600 ducks using a telescope (magnification 30x) at a range of approximately 150 m. The species present were mainly Lesser Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*, with good numbers of Garganey *Anas querquedula* and Northern Pintail *A. acuta*, together with some Common Teal *A. crecca*. It was hoped that the search might produce a Thai rarity such as Gadwall *A. strepera*. Instead, however, a familiar bird was seen and quickly identified as a drake Mallard *A. platyrhynchos* in breeding plumage. The bird remained in view for about 1 3/4 hours, mainly resting. It flew briefly, once, during a disturbance, but travelled only about 20 m. It remained in the same general area in which it was first sighted. The identification was checked by consulting King *et al.* (1975), for the benefit of ST. Notes were taken and used to compile the description given below.

A medium or large-sized duck, appearing about the size of a Northern Pintail, but with a slightly heavier build. The large bill was yellowish, with a touch of green and was darker on the nostrils. The head and neck were entirely dark green, and a narrow white collar at the base of the neck separated these areas from the body. The breast was dark brown, dull with no sheen, but with some lighter speckling. The folded wings and upperparts visible while the bird was at rest appeared pale grey, with some light brown marks. The back was light brownish and the rear end of the body was black with some white visible in the tail. The underparts were whitish and the legs and feet were orange. A very dark bluish speculum, edged with white at the front and rear, was visible in flight. An unexpected feature was that the eye was yellow instead of dark; the latter colour is typical of the Mallard at all stages.

In South-East Asia, the species has previously been recorded in northern, central and eastern Myanmar (King *et al.* 1975) and in Viet Nam (Vo Quy 197?). This appears to be the first record for Thailand, although Boonsong Lekagul and Round (1991) considered that the species was a likely future addition to the list of Thai birds.

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Peter Cuerel, 19 Chalky Copse, Hook, Basingstoke, Hants. RG27 9PX, U.K.

Somsri Thongsatja, 135/2 Mhu 5, Tambon Huaraw, Amphoe Muang, Phitsanuloke, 6500, Thailand.

Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*: a new species for Thailand

JOHN T. KNOWLER

Soon after dawn on the mornings of 18 and 19 February 1986, at the edge of evergreen forest surrounding the small marsh on the summit of Doi Inthanon, Chiang Mai province, northern Thailand, David Clugston, John Mullins and I identified a Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*. Although previously unrecorded in Thailand, it has transpired that we were neither the first, nor the last, observers, to see this individual. The bird was originally found by Brian Field and others who saw it at the same site, again just after dawn, on 2 January. It remained in the area until at least 22 March, when it was seen by Phil Round and Kamol Kamolphalin.

The following description is compiled from my own combined field notes taken on 18 and 19 February. In size and shape the bird was obviously a grosbeak *Mycerobas*, appearing substantially larger than a Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*, with a massive pale horn-colored bill. The head, wings and tail were wholly black except for yellow spots on the inner tertials. The breast, belly, under tail-coverts, rump, mantle and a broad collar around the lower neck were brilliant golden yellow, suffused orange on the collar. When the bird was perched, the collar was conspicuous and the yellow rump



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