

Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* and Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*. Other interesting waders include Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*, breeding Greater Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* (SH, SJ pers. obs.) and Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* (van Balen *et al.* 2014). Unfortunately Serangan is not protected and birds are subjected to disturbance by noisy local motorbike riders and fishermen, whilst there is also intensive trapping of birds roosting in trees by hand using sticks and catapults—many of the young live birds ending up in local markets (SJ pers. obs.). However, the major threat to the site is a plan to reclaim about 75% of the Benoa Bay area, creating artificial islands for commercial development.

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The first record of Common Swift *Apus apus* for Thailand and South-East Asia

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The Common Swift *Apus apus* breeds in most of Europe, across the northern Middle East to eastern China and winters in much of southern Africa. Because the species covers such huge distances on migration there is a tendency to vagrancy but birds usually fly fast and high making identification difficult.

On 20 October 2014 a Common Swift was seen and photographed on Khao Dinso (Pencil Hill), Pathiu district, Chumphon province, Thailand (10.633°N 99.283°E). This is the first confirmed record for South-East Asia. At about 15h00 AP briefly saw a 'dark-rumped' swift from a view point on the north side of Khao Dinso; shortly afterwards, it was seen again 100 m further on at the top of the hill. From this point it was watched by all three authors, on and off, for nearly an hour in good light through 8 × 32 binoculars. It often approached within 10 m, sometimes below the skyline against a forested background. Record images were taken (Plate 1). Numerous flocks of Pacific Swifts *A. pacificus pacificus* with extensive white

rumps and a few House Swifts *A. nipalensis* were passing through during these observations, pausing briefly to feed and allowing direct comparisons between the species. Occasionally the Pacific Swifts briefly chased the Common Swift.

Attention was first drawn to this swift by its completely dark rump, a distinct difference from the other large 'white-rumped' swifts in the area. It was also dark brown rather than black above with a slight 'saddle' effect. It appeared shorter than Pacific Swift but with a bulkier body, less tapered and broader-based wings. The dark brown wings had pale-edged primary and greater coverts. There was a small area of white on the throat—a filled-in U-shape—which was only detectable when it approached head-on. The underparts showed no white or barring but appeared uniformly dark brown.

The only large 'dark-rumped' swift recorded in Thailand is the Vulnerable Dark-rumped Swift *A. acuticaudata*. It has



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Plate 1. Common Swift *Apus apus*, Khao Dinso, Chumphon, Thailand, 20 October 2015.

barred underparts and is structurally more similar to the taxon Cook's Swift *A. (pacificus) cooki* from which it can be difficult to separate. *Cooki* has a much narrower, slightly off-white rump compared to Pacific Swift *A. p. pacificus*. Although Dark-rumped Swift is occasionally recorded from northern Thailand the only definite record is of one collected on Doi Pui (King 2007); most subsequent claimed sight records are perhaps more likely to be poorly seen/mis-identified Cook's Swift (P. Round pers. comm.). The latter is a breeding resident, closely associated with limestone areas and caves, its range extending from the extreme north of Thailand south at least to Surat Thani (about 9°N), so its breeding range extends well south of, and broadly encompasses, Khao Dinso—however it is infrequently seen there (P. Round pers. comm.). Pallid Swift *A. pallidus* is the most similar species to Common Swift and can be extremely difficult to distinguish from it. However, it is a paler bird and has a much more restricted range in the south-west Palearctic around the Mediterranean, wintering in the Sahel region of north Africa and is a much shorter distance migrant than Common Swift; it would therefore be extremely unlikely to occur in Thailand.

Three species new to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

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The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, locally known as the Bay Islands, lie in the Bay of Bengal, midway between Peninsular India and Myanmar, spreading from north to south like a broken necklace (6.750°N–13.683°N 92.200°E–93.950°E). Due to their isolation, endemism is very high (Subba Rao *et al.* 1980, Das 1999a,b, Andrew 2001); consequently these islands are a globally important biodiversity hotspot, designated an Endemic Bird Area with 19 Important Bird Areas identified. A total of 284 bird species have been recorded (Sivaperuman *et al.* 2010) and 28 species are considered to be endemic by Stattersfield *et al.* (1998).

As a part of major ecological studies on wetland bird communities in the South Andamans, we have been surveying

In May 2015, researchers in China fitted geolocators to Common Swift *A. a. pекinensis* at the Summer Palace in Beijing (<http://birdingbeijing.com>) and it was expected that they might take a similar path to Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis* which regularly pass through north Thailand. Results so far, however, show they fly west to the Middle East before heading to southern Africa, thus making this record in Thailand even more intriguing.

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the area regularly since 2012. During these surveys, we have recorded three bird species from the tsunami-inundated wetlands of South Andaman which we believe to be new records for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

On 27 November 2013 we recorded three Glossy Ibis, one adult and two subadults in the tsunami-inundated wetlands at Chouldhari, South Andaman (11.617°N 92.667°E), in company with a flock of Great Egrets *Ardea alba* and Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta*. On 10 August 2014 we saw a single bird (Plate 1) at Garacharma, South Andaman (11.617°N 92.700°E). A review of Ali & Ripley