
A southernmost record of chestnut-cheeked starling, *Agropsar phillippensis*, in Bali, Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

Chestnut-cheeked Starling *Agropsar* (*Sturnus*) *phillippensis* is found the south-eastern Siberia to northern Japan, winters in southern Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Borneo, rarely in Sulawesi and the Moluccan islands (Kennedy, 2000; Robson, 2011). In breeding season, the bird occurs in open and mixed deciduous woodland, often in agricultural land, orchards, sometimes in urban parks, around villages, nesting in woodland edge or in clearings; and during non-breeding season habit in open country and cities (Craig and Feare, 2009; Feare and Craig, 1998). In Southeast Asia, the bird vagrant in Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore (Robson, 2011).

In Indonesia, the Chestnut-cheeked starling recorded in Kalimantan, Sulawesi and the Moluccan islands (Sukmantoro et al., 2007). There are several records in East Kalimantan, one record from South Kalimantan and large flocks up to 5000 birds presumed as this species on January-February 1997 in Danau Jempang, East Kalimantan (Mann, 2008). Records from Sulawesi and the Moluccan islands are based from old records (Coates and Bishop, 2000); two old records from North Sulawesi, one from Bacan (Moluccan islands), and a specimen record from Siau (White and Bruce, 1986).

The Bali avian fauna has been updated recently (Mason, 2011), but Chestnut-cheeked starling is absent from the list. In this paper, the occurrence of Chestnut-cheeked starling in Bali is reported and discussed. To our knowledge, this record is not only first record for Bali, but also the southernmost record of this species.

METHODS

The study site is located near Gilimanuk Gas Power Plant (Pembangkit Listrik Tenaga gas or PLTG), Pemaron village, Buleleng sub-district, Buleleng district, Bali province. The area (8°10'32.7036"S, 114°26'34.3680"E) consists of open habitat and parks. A flock of up to 80 grey-whitish starlings was incidentally observed on 14 November 2014. It was not possible to identify all birds at species level with certainty, but they appeared to be a mixed flock of Chestnut-cheeked starling and Daurian starling *Agropsar* (*Sturnus*) *sturninus*. These species are known to flock together. However, among those birds, one bird photographed and identified as Chestnut-cheeked Starling.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On 14 November 2014, a flock of 80 grey-whitish starlings (cf. Chestnut-cheeked Starling and Daurian Starling) was observed near Gilimanuk Gas Power Plant, Bali. All birds are relatively similar, having pale-greyish head and underparts, glossy dark purplish nape-patch and upperparts. Those characters slightly show features of Chestnut-cheeked Starling and Daurian Starling (Craig & Feare, 2009; Feare & Craig, 1998; Robson, 2011). One of them was photographed and identified as Chestnut-cheeked Starling (Figure 1). The presence of chestnut on cheeked and neck-side are important to identify Chestnut-cheeked Starling, compare with Daurian Starling (Craig & Feare, 2009; Feare & Craig, 1998; Kennedy, 2000; Robson, 2011). Since reported in East Kalimantan during 1996-1997, there is no recent records of Chestnut-cheeked

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Figure 1. Chestnut-cheeked starling (below) in Bali on 14 November 2014. Resemble to Daurian starling but differs from showing chestnut in cheek and neck-side (©Hery Kusumanegara).

Starling in Indonesia (Balen et al., 2011; Balen et al., 2013; Balen et al., 2014; Mann, 2008; Pratt & Beehler, 2015). Record of Chestnut-cheeked Starling in Bali is unexpected. Except in Kalimantan, the bird is vagrant in other islands in Indonesia (Coates & Bishop, 2000; White & Bruce, 1986). Vagrants of Chestnut-cheeked Starling have been recorded in eastern Russia, Indian subcontinent, northern Sulawesi, the Moluccas, peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and apparently in the U.S.A. (Feare and Craig, 1998; van der Wielen, 20007). The first birds arrive in southern Japan in late March, moving north until they arrive in the breeding areas in April to early May. In their wintering areas, the last birds are usually seen in late April (Craig & Feare, 2009; Feare and Craig 1998).

Record of Chestnut-cheeked Starling in Bali on On 14 November 2014, it is not only first record of this species in Bali, but also a southernmost record known for this species in its known range area (30S). Previous southernmost record apparently from Binuang area (30S), South Kalimantan, on 14-18 Dec 1974 (Mann, 2008). In Bali and other parts of Indonesia, recent number of local birdwatchers who having good photographic equipments are increased. Certainly, it would have been impact to improve documentations and identifications. Further careful examination in the field between other Starlings and Chestnut-cheeked Starling will possible to add new localities of Chestnut-cheeked Starling in Indonesia. So, It will give better understanding on its migration pattern into southern hemisphere.

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