

## First Breeding record of White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti* in Sumatra

MUHAMMAD IQBAL

KPB-SOS (Kelompok Pengamat Burung Spirit of South Sumatra), Jalan Tanjung Api-api km 9  
Komplek P & K Blok E 1 Palembang 30152, Indonesia. Email: [kpbsos26@yahoo.com](mailto:kpbsos26@yahoo.com)

**Ringkasan.** Burung Meninting Besar *Enicurus leschenaulti* yang sedang berbiak terobservasi di kawasan kebun karet agroforest di Desa Sangi, Propinsi Jambi pada 30 Januari 2006. Pada sarang tersebut terdapat dua butir telur berwarna putih kemerahmudaan dengan titik-titik hitam. Sarang ini ditemukan di aliran sungai kecil bebatuan yang mengalir tersembunyi di antara pohon hutan dan pohon karet yang tinggi.

The White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti* has a wide geographic distribution from North India, South China, Southeast Asia, Peninsular Malaya and the Greater Sundas (MacKinnon *et al.* 1998). Of the six recognized subspecies, four occur in Indonesia, including *E. l. frontalis* from the Malay Peninsula through Sumatra, Nias island and lowland Borneo, and *E. l. leschenaulti* on Java and Bali (Collar 2005). In Sumatra, it is an uncommon resident, found along streams in dry lowland and lower montane forest up to 1400 m asl, but as yet breeding has not been confirmed (Marle & Voous 1988; Holmes 1996). The following report constitutes the first breeding record for the species on this island.

On 30 January 2006 the author found a nest of the White-crowned Forktail in the rubber agroforest at Sangi Village (01° 35'S, 101° 51'E; 450 m asl), Rantau Pandan Subdistrict, Muara Bungo District, Jambi Province, Sumatra. The agroforest was a traditional rubber plantation, mixed with tall fruit trees (e.g. Durian *Durio zibethinus* and Mango *Mangifera indica*) and rainforest trees with a wide canopy. The area had a hilly topography, which appears to be typical habitat for the species (MacKinnon *et al.* 1998). The nest consisted mostly of lichens or moss and was placed in a deep burrow c. 50 cm underground (Plate 1), c. 30-50 cm from running water in a small stream (c. 1-1.5 m wide). The site had a canopy cover of tall rubber and durian trees, and was well away from the path used by local rubber farmer. The incubating bird was observed on the nest but was flushed when approached closely. The two eggs in the nest were pinkish-white with small dark spots, and surface was slightly lustrous (Plate 2). Lacking any measuring equipment we were unable to take measurements of the nest or eggs.

The nest site seems typical for the species, although the species is also known to build its nest on rock ledges, between boulders, amongst tree roots, or even in a hollow under a bush (Smythies 1960; Hoogerwerf 1969; Collar 2005). On the Thai-Malay Peninsula, nest sites of the subspecies *frontalis* included a

shallow recess in a sparsely-vegetated earth bank 1 m up from the nearly dry bed of a gully leading down to a small river 50 m away; 1.5 m up the vertical face of a boulder in a gully; and low on a limestone face, respectively, all under forest cover (Wells 2007).

No description is available for the eggs of *frontalis* on the Thai-Malay Peninsula (Wells 2007). However the two eggs described above are broadly similar to those of two other regional subspecies (*borneensis* from upland Borneo and *leschenaulti* from Java), which are described as being smooth, dull or faintly glossy surface, grayish-white to creamy-white or pale pink with small reddish-brown and lilac spots (Hoogerwerf 1949; Smythies 1960; Hellebrekers & Hoogerwerf 1967; Hoogerwerf 1969; Mann 2008).



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**Plate 1.** Nest of Sumatran White-crowned Forktail.



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**Plate 2.** The eggs of Sumatran White-crowned Forktail.

In Java, the majority of nests containing eggs have been found from September to June (Hellebrekers & Hoogerwerf 1967). The present record of a clutch in late January in Sumatra fits well within that breeding season, as might be expected given the proximity and similar latitudes of the two islands. The fact that these birds were breeding in secondary vegetation within a plantation matrix indicates some ability of the species to adapt to new or disturbed habitats.

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