

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, a valid species for Sumatra, Indonesia

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Ringkasan: Ibis Rokoroko merupakan jenis Ibis yang tersebar secara luas. Ibis ini pernah dilaporkan di Sumatera, tetapi beberapa ahli meragukannya karena tidak adanya bukti spesimen yang otentik. Pada tanggal 30 September 2010 empat individu Ibis Rokoroko teramati di daerah lahan basah Desa Tanjung Rejo, Kecamatan Pantai Labu, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, Propinsi Sumatera Utara. Empat individu burung ini teramati lagi di lokasi yang sama pada 1 Januari dan 13 Februari 2011, dan kemungkinan merupakan burung yang sama. Catatan ini mengkonfirmasi catatan tentang Ibis Rokoroko di Sumatera sebelumnya.

The Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* is the most widespread species of ibis, occurring in parts of Eurasia, Africa, and Central and South Asia to Australia, as well as being a vagrant to the Atlantic coast of North America (Hancock *et al.* 1992; Matheu & del Hoyo 1992). Within Southeast Asia, the species is a rare to locally common resident in Cambodia, a former resident in Myanmar (Robson 2008), and a vagrant to South Thailand and Singapore (Wells 1999; Seng 2009). It is also considered a vagrant to Borneo, though there have been several recent records in the northwest of the island (Smythies 1999; Mann 2008; Phillipps & Phillipps 2011). In Java it is uncommon and local, the only extant breeding colony being on Pulau Dua, West Java (MacKinnon *et al.* 1998). It has also been reported in Sumatra (Marle & Voous 1988), but this is considered doubtful (MacKinnon *et al.* 1998).

On 30 September 2010, three of us (CA, DH and G) were conducting waterbird surveys in a mixture of fishponds and mangrove forest at Tanjung Rejo village (03°43'N, 09°45'E), Pantai Labu sub-district, Deli Serdang district, Sumatera Utara (North Sumatra) province. At 16:00 hrs we observed four Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* perched in a tree among mangroves, identified by their uniformly dark brown plumage and characteristic slender down-curved bill. The second author (MI) who has had experience with the Black-headed Ibis in Sumatra (see Iqbal & Hasudungan 2012) confirmed the identification from photographs taken by CA (Plates 1, 2). The birds appeared smaller than Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*, and indeed, Matheu & del Hoyo (1992) give measurements of 65-76 cm and 48-66 cm for the Black-headed Ibis and Glossy Ibis, respectively. Instead the birds were similar in size to Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* or Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, both of which were present in the area at the time. Although their facial pattern was not clear, their dark legs show that they were not White-shouldered Ibises *Pseudibis davisoni*, another species found in Indonesia. On 1

January 2011, we observed four birds having similar characteristics with the birds seen three months earlier, and we suspected they were the same individuals.



Plate 1: Four Glossy Ibis perched in mangrove forest at Tanjung Rejo wetlands, northern Sumatra.



Plate 2: A close up of one of the Glossy Ibis at Tanjung Rejo, northern Sumatra

The only previous record of Glossy Ibis from Sumatra is based on a sighting on 22 March 1977 in Tanjung Pura, northern Sumatra (Marle & Voous 1988). Although it has been listed for Sumatra (Andrew 1992; followed by Sukmantoro *et al.* 2007), it was not listed by Holmes (1996) and considered doubtful by MacKinnon *et al.* (1998). Our description and photographs of Glossy Ibis in Tanjung Rejo village, constitute the first confirmed record of this species in Sumatra. Marle & Voous (1988) surmised that the species was a non-breeding visitor to Sumatra, presumably from breeding localities in West Java, such as Pulau Dua and Pulau Rambut. The species has been reported as a vagrant to South Thailand and Singapore (Wells 1999; Seng 2009). Tanjung Rejo is *c.* 500 km from South Thailand, *c.* 750 km from Singapore, and *c.* 3,000 km from West Java. Although these distances show that the site is closer to the Southeast Asian mainland than to Java, the origin of the Sumatran birds cannot be inferred.

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