

## Breeding of Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius* at Lake Toba, Sumatra

PETER R. HIPKIN

Peter R. Hipkin, British Council, 48 Av Habib Bourguiba, Tunis 1001 Tunisia.

Email: peter.hipkin@eudoramail.com

### **Perkembangbiakan Murai-batu tarung *Monticola solitarius* di Danau Toba, Sumatra**

**Ringkasan** Disajikan bukti pertama yang menunjukkan bahwa Murai-batu tarung *Monticola solitarius* berkembang-biak di Pulau Sumatera.

The Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius* is considered to be an uncommon 'winter' visitor to North Sumatra and North Borneo, though there are many records from June to August during the boreal summer (van Marle & Voous 1988; MacKinnon & Phillipps 1993). In South-east Asia the species is said to breed from January to June (Robson 2000). During early July 1996 I visited the Lake Toba district in North Sumatra, and found evidence that the species is a locally common breeding resident.

After spending a few days in Berastagi I travelled to a village called Baranggaol on the north-west shore of the lake on 3 July 1996. On the cultivated hill slopes behind the village I was quite surprised to find a male Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius*.

On the following morning I visited the Sipisopiso waterfall by bus, then walked down the road to Tongging on the shores of the lake. Passing through one particular cutting with high rocky banks I found a pair of Blue Rock-thrushes feeding four recently fledged and noisy young, and was able to watch them for some time at close quarters. About an hour later, just above the town, I passed close by another male, this time perched on a small roofed shrine in a cemetery. This bird, incidentally, had only one leg, the other being just a stump.

From these observations over such a short time and space I concluded that the Blue Rock-thrush is a common breeding species at this locality. It may be relevant to add that during the previous summer (1995) the observer found approximately 10 pairs of this species breeding in Terengganu State, Malaysia on the artificial rock face of a very large dam. With the building of so many dams in the region it would not be fanciful to predict an increase in records of this species.

The author knows this species very well from Spain and Tunisia. All birds referred to are of the uniform blue-grey form.

### **References**

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