

INTRODUCTION

This guide is a condensed version of *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia* (Robson 2000), tailored specifically for Thailand, and intended to be as portable as possible, for use in the field. Obviously, in order to save space and, therefore, weight, the species accounts are relatively short and are intended to be as concise as possible within the publisher's brief. For more detailed information on a given species, the above-mentioned guide should be consulted.

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia*, with two exceptions; **Slender-billed Vulture** *Gyps tenuirostris* is split from **Long-billed (Indian) Vulture** *G. indicus*, following Rasmussen and Parry (2001), and the very distinctive **Green-backed Flycatcher** *Ficedula elisae* is split from **Narcissus Flycatcher** *F. narcissina*, following Philip Round's *Field Check-list of Thai Birds* (Round 2000).

Unfortunately, however, in order to balance out the plates, and compare some similar species, it has not been possible to follow the exact (correct) species order.

A small number of additional illustrations, depicting recently recorded species in Thailand and certain races found in Thailand, have been executed for this book.

All species recorded in Thailand up to mid-February 2001 are dealt with and illustrated. Two new species for Thailand have been recorded between this date and the book going to press: **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* at Thale Noi, S Thailand, in late February 2001, and **Long-tailed Wren Babbler** *Spelaeornis chocolatinus* on a high mountain near Umphang, W Thailand, in late April 2001.

If readers find any errors or omissions, the author (c/o the publishers, New Holland) would be pleased to receive any information which updates or corrects that presented herein, in the hope that an improved edition may appear in the future.

SPECIES ACCOUNT/PLATE INFORMATION

- ◆ The **total length** of each species appears after the species name.
- ◆ A comparative approach has been adopted with species descriptions, where scarcer species are generally compared to commoner or more widespread species. In general, those species considered to be easily identifiable have been afforded less coverage than the more difficult species.
- ◆ **Comparisons between similar species** are dealt with directly and separately under the various sex/age or other headings.
- ◆ **Males** are described first (except in polyandrous species) and female plumage compared directly to the male plumage.
- ◆ Names of illustrated **subspecies** are given only after the first sex/age class dealt with. It can be assumed that the following illustrations are of the same race, until another one is mentioned. The regions of Thailand (see end paper) where a given subspecies has been recorded (NW, S etc.) appear in brackets after its name, though generally not in the case of the first subspecies dealt with, the range of which can be deduced by consulting the map and then subtracting the ranges of other subspecies. Subspecies given as 'ssp.' are in the process of being described. See for example White Wagtail *Motacilla alba ssp./sp.*, which is likely to be described as a new species shortly.

Details of **non-illustrated** sex/age classes refer to the first subspecies illustrated, unless stated. Apart from a few exceptions, the subspecies listed under '**Other subspecies**' are not considered to differ markedly from the first subspecies mentioned.

- ◆ **Altitude ranges** refer to Thailand only.
- ◆ Species depicted on any one plate have been illustrated to the same **scale** (smaller in the case of flight figures) unless stated otherwise.
- ◆ Readers may notice that the **generic names** of a few species have been abbreviated. This was a necessary space-saving measure.