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**ANNOTATED CHECKLIST OF BIRDS OF KAMPUNG GIAM, PADAWAN****Lim Chan Koon and Isa Sait****ABSTRACT**

This survey was carried out at Gunung Sewa, Kampung Giam, Padawan from 16 to 23 August 2008. Gunung Sewa is covered with undisturbed limestone forests, but the vegetation surrounding its foothill had been cleared for paddy cultivation or turned into orchards; intermixed with old secondary forests and open shrub land. Seventy-five species from 27 families of birds were recorded in this study, of which ten species are protected in Sarawak, while 14 are listed as near threatened in IUCN Red List. The Borneo endemics are the Chestnut-crested Yuhina, Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker and Dusky Munia. Some groups of birds adapted well to the altered and fragmented habitat surrounding Gunung Sewa, while other larger species are distinctively absent.

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by  
Lim Chan Koon and Isa Sait

## Abstract

This survey was carried out at Gunung Sewa, Kampung Giam, Padawan from 16 to 23 August 2008. Gunung Sewa is covered with undisturbed limestone forests, but the vegetation surrounding its foothill had been cleared for paddy cultivation or turned into orchards; intermixed with old secondary forests and open shrub land. Seventy-five species from 27 families of birds were recorded in this study, of which ten species are protected in Sarawak, while 14 are listed as near threatened in IUCN Red List. The Borneo endemics are the Chestnut-crested Yuhina, Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker and Dusky Munia. Some groups of birds adapted well to the altered and fragmented habitat surrounding Gunung Sewa, while other larger species are distinctively absent.

## INTRODUCTION

Padawan limestone areas comprise numerous notable karst outcrops such Gunung Kom, Sebayak, Kayan, Beraang, Sewa, Gayu, Krian, Mas, Chupak, Skandu, Serabu, Kedadom, Nambi and many others. The survey was carried out at *Gunung Sewa*; a limestone outcrop located a short distance away from Kampung Giam, Padawan. The outcrop is approximately 800 metres long by 300 metres wide and about 250 metres in height. The northern flank is more undulating with small rolling hills, which is covered with old secondary stands and cultivated farmland or orchards. The southern flank is steeper with exposed cliff face for one-third of its length in the centre of the outcrop.

Limestone habitat and its associated vegetation is unique in the sense that the soil is poor in nutrients, high humus content and free draining, and hence generally is dryer than other forests. Such is the typical vegetation on G. Sewa, Padawan. Bigger tree can only be found in areas with deep pockets of soil from decomposed leaf litters and firmly secured by their roots



that penetrated into the fissures. Sheer cliffs are generally exposed with few trees, mostly figs, precariously clinging onto the surfaces. Exposed cliff face is generally devoid of any vegetation apart from few draught-resistant herbs (e.g. *Paraboea*), or the single-leaf plant (*Monophyllaea*) in more shaded and humid sections. The base of the limestone outcrop is occasionally dotted with typical scree slope vegetation.

The limestone forests on G. Sewa are relatively intact. Nevertheless, the original vegetation at its foothill had been cleared for agriculture or converted into orchards, cocoa and rubber gardens. Abandoned cultivated land has a mixture of secondary re-growth and shrub land. A narrow strip of old secondary forest can be found on the south-western side, extending towards the confluence of Sungai Sewa and Sungai Sarawak Kiri.

Limestone forest is known to have a less diverse but distinctive bird fauna (MacKinnon & Phillipps, 1995). Apart from the bird inventory conducted during the Bau Limestone Project (Sim & Kong, 2004), there is little baseline information on the bird diversity of other limestone areas in Kuching Division. Sim & Kong (2004) covered seven other habitat types, namely mixed dipterocarp forests, riverine forests, caves, exposed cliff faces, secondary, rice fields and ponds/artificial wetlands. A total of 129 species of birds from 40 families were recorded from the Bau limestone areas in 2004.

The purpose of this study is to carry out a rapid assessment of the bird diversity of Padawan limestone areas in general, and the habitat surrounding G. Sewa at Giam in particular. The study examines the impacts on the composition of birds with the alteration and fragmentation of the lowland forest at G. Sewa.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at Kampung Giam (01° 19.022' N, 110° 16.577' E), Padawan from 16 to 23 August 2008. Field surveys was conducted using a Nikon *Sporter* I (8 x 36) binocular. Songs and vocalisations of the birds were also used for identification, especially skulking species that frequent the dense forest undergrowth. Whenever weather permits, observations were carried out from 0600 – 1130 hours in the morning, and from 1400 – 1730 hours in the afternoon. Observation points included