

Threatened Birds of Asia:

The BirdLife International Red Data Book

Editors

N. J. COLLAR (Editor-in-chief),
A. V. ANDREEV, S. CHAN, M. J. CROSBY, S. SUBRAMANYA and J. A. TOBIAS

Maps by

RUDYANTO and M. J. CROSBY

Principal compilers and data contributors

■ **BANGLADESH** P. Thompson ■ **BHUTAN** R. Pradhan; C. Inskipp, T. Inskipp ■ **CAMBODIA** Sun Huan; C. M. Poole ■ **CHINA** ■ **MAINLAND CHINA** Zheng Guangmei; Ding Changqing, Gao Wei, Gao Yuren, Li Fulai, Liu Naifa, Ma Zhijun, the late Tan Yaokuang, Wang Qishan, Xu Weishu, Yang Lan, Yu Zhiwei, Zhang Zhengwang. ■ **HONG KONG** Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (BirdLife Affiliate); H. F. Cheung; F. N. Y. Lock, C. K. W. Ma, Y. T. Yu. ■ **TAIWAN** Wild Bird Federation of Taiwan (BirdLife Partner); L. Liu Severinghaus; Chang Chin-lung, Chiang Ming-liang, Fang Woei-horng, Ho Yi-hsian, Hwang Kwang-yin, Lin Wei-yuan, Lin Wen-horn, Lo Hung-ren, Sha Chian-chung, Yau Cheng-teh. ■ **INDIA** Bombay Natural History Society (BirdLife Partner Designate) and Sálím Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History; L. Vijayan and V. S. Vijayan; S. Balachandran, R. Bhargava, P. C. Bhattacharjee, S. Bhupathy, A. Chaudhury, P. Gole, S. A. Hussain, R. Kaul, U. Lachungpa, R. Naroji, S. Pandey, A. Pittie, V. Prakash, A. Rahmani, P. Saikia, R. Sankaran, P. Singh, R. Sugathan, Zafar-ul Islam ■ **INDONESIA** BirdLife International Indonesia Country Programme; Ria Saryanthi; D. Agista, S. van Balen, Y. Cahyadin, R. F. A. Grimmett, F. R. Lambert, M. Poulsen, Rudyanto, I. Setiawan, C. Trainor ■ **JAPAN** Wild Bird Society of Japan (BirdLife Partner); Y. Fujimaki; Y. Kanai, H. Morioka, K. Ono, H. Uchida, M. Ueta, N. Yanagisawa ■ **KOREA** ■ **NORTH KOREA** Pak U-il; Chong Jong-ryol, Rim Chuyon. ■ **SOUTH KOREA** Lee Woo-shin; Han Sang-hoon, Kim Jin-han, Lee Ki-sup, Park Jin-young ■ **LAOS** K. Khounbolin; W. J. Duckworth ■ **MALAYSIA** Malaysian Nature Society (BirdLife Partner); K. Kumar; G. Noramly, M. J. Kohler ■ **MONGOLIA** D. Batdelger; A. Bräunlich, N. Tseveenmyadag ■ **MYANMAR** Khin Ma Ma Thwin ■ **NEPAL** Bird Conservation Nepal (BirdLife Affiliate); H. S. Baral; C. Inskipp, T. P. Inskipp ■ **PAKISTAN** Ornithological Society of Pakistan (BirdLife Affiliate) ■ **PHILIPPINES** Haribon Foundation for Conservation of Natural Resources (BirdLife Partner); N. A. D. Mallari, B. R. Tabaranza, Jr. ■ **RUSSIA** Russian Bird Conservation Union (BirdLife Partner Designate); A. V. Andreev; A. G. Degtyarev, V. G. Degtyarev, V. A. Dugintsov, N. N. Gerasimov, Yu. N. Gerasimov, N. I. Germogenov, O. A. Goroshko, A. V. Kondrat'ev, Yu. V. Labutin, N. M. Litvinenko, Yu. N. Nazarov, V. A. Nechaev, V. I. Perfil'ev, R. V. Ryabtsev, Yu. V. Shibaev, S. G. Surmach, E. E. Tkachenko, O. P. Val'chuk, B. A. Voronov. ■ **SINGAPORE** The Nature Society (Singapore) (BirdLife Partner); Lim Kim Seng ■ **SRI LANKA** Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka (BirdLife Affiliate); S. Kotagama; S. Aryaprema, S. Corea, J. P. G. Jones, U. Fernando, R. Perera, M. Siriwardhane, K. Weerakoon ■ **THAILAND** Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BirdLife Partner); U. Treesucon; R. Jugmongkol, V. Kongthong, P. Poonswad, P. D. Round, S. Supparatvirkorn ■ **VIETNAM** BirdLife International Vietnam Country Programme; Nguyen Cu; J. C. Eames, A. W. Tordoff, Le Trong Trai, Nguyen Duc Tu.

With contributions from: S. H. M. Butchart, D. S. Butler (maps), P. Davidson, J. C. Lowen, G. C. L. Dutson, N. B. Peet, T. Vetta (maps), J. M. Villasper (maps), M. G. Wilson

Recommended citation

BirdLife International (2001) *Threatened birds of Asia: the BirdLife International Red Data Book*. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International.

© 2001 BirdLife International

Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge, CB3 0NA, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1223 277318 Fax: +44 1223 277200 Email: birdlife@birdlife.org.uk

Internet: www.birdlife.net

BirdLife International is a UK-registered charity

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN 0 946888 42 6 (Part A)

ISBN 0 946888 43 4 (Part B)

ISBN 0 946888 44 2 (Set)

British Library-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

First published 2001 by BirdLife International

Designed and produced by the **Nature**Bureau, 36 Kingfisher Court, Hambridge Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5SJ, United Kingdom

Available from the Natural History Book Service Ltd, 2–3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN, UK. Tel: +44 1803 865913 Fax: +44 1803 865280 Email nhbs@nhbs.co.uk
Internet: www.nhbs.com/services/birdlife.html

The presentation of material in this book and the geographical designations employed do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of BirdLife International concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

JAVAN SCOPS-OWL

Otus angelinae

Critical —

Endangered —

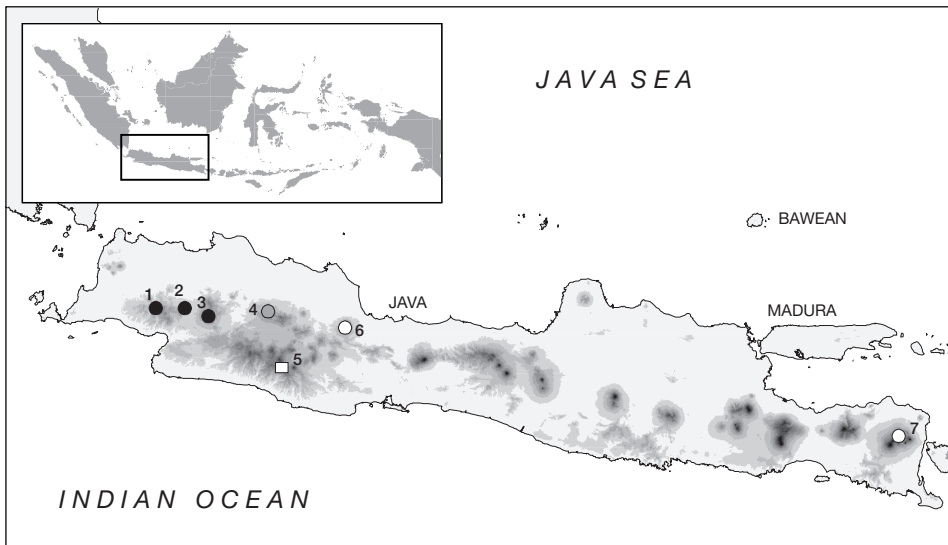
Vulnerable B1+2b,c,e; C2a



This small owl qualifies for Vulnerable because its small range is undergoing contraction and fragmentation through habitat loss, a factor that implies reduction in its small population. However, its silent, nocturnal habits may have resulted in it being under-recorded.

DISTRIBUTION The Javan Scops-owl (see Remarks 1) is endemic to Java, Indonesia, where it has been assumed to occur on most of the island's mountains, based on its certain presence on five or six in West Java and one in East Java (König *et al.* 1999; see Remarks 2, 3); however, its reputed silence has obstructed any comprehensive inventory (Andrew and Milton 1988, Becking 1994) and there is also a real problem with identification (see Remarks 4). Records are as follows:

■ **INDONESIA** Java ■ **West Java Gunung Halimun National Park**, 1,000 m above Ciusul, 1994 (D. Liley *in litt.* 1999); **Gunung Salak** in the Ciapus valley at c.1,200 m on the north-north-east slope, July 1977 and October 1987 (Becking 1994), and above Pasir Datar, 1,000–1,500 m on the south-west slope, April 1916, September 1921, July 1922 and September 1926 (Becking 1994); **Gunung Gede-Pangrango National Park**, 1,800 m, August 1911 and September 1920 (Finsch 1912), including above Cibodas, 1,450–1,900 m on the north-north-east slope, November 1969, December 1970 and subsequently, with sight records of young birds in July 1990 and June 1994 (male in MZB; also Andrew 1985, Andrew and Milton 1988, Becking



The distribution of Javan Scops-owl *Otus angelinae*: (1) Gunung Halimun; (2) Gunung Salak; (3) Gunung Gede-Pangrango National Park; (4) Gunung Tangkuban Perahu; (5) Gunung Papandayan; (6) Gunung Ciremay; (7) Gunung Ijen.

○ Historical (pre-1950) ● Fairly recent (1950–1979) ● Recent (1980–present) □ Undated

1994, Tobias and Phelps 1994; see Remarks 4); **Gunung Tangkuban Perahu** at Ciater, 1,800 m on the north-east slope, November 1953 (Becking 1994); **Gunung Papandayan**, undated (König *et al.* 1999); **Gunung Ciremay** (Ceremay) at Apuy, 1,100 m, on the west slope, January 1930 (Becking 1994); ■ **East Java Gunung Ijen** at Sodong Jorok (Godongjeruk), 1,170 m on the west slope above Lijen, March 1916 (Robinson and Kloss 1924b, Becking 1994; see Remarks 3).

POPULATION The species may be more numerous than previously thought, as suggested by Becking's (1994) recent evaluation of records, and by the fact that it is apparently habitually silent (Andrew and Milton 1988) or, perhaps more likely, that the call is simply not recognised (F. R. Lambert *in litt.* 1999). Nevertheless, König *et al.* (1999) remarked that "it doubtless may be considered rare". Its true status cannot be evaluated until a clear understanding of its ecology and elevational limits has been achieved; meanwhile, it is perhaps most appropriate to regard it as it currently appears to be: essentially a very rare bird.

ECOLOGY Habitat The species has been found in tropical upper montane rainforest at 1,400–2,000 m (Becking 1994). Subsequently it has been characterised as having a much broader elevational range, from 900 to 2,500 m (König *et al.* 1999), or, in another assessment, "between 1500 m and 2500 m but recorded as low as 1000 m" (del Hoyo *et al.* 1999), but there must be some doubt about the identity of at least some of the birds recorded at lower levels (see Distribution), and it may yet turn out that the Javan Scops-owl is confined to forest above 1,500 m (F. R. Lambert verbally 1999; but see also Migration). Birds seen at the latter elevation were in the lower and middle storeys of primary forest with a well developed undergrowth beneath 40–55 m tall *Altingia excelsa*, *Quercus*, *Castanopsis* and *Ficus* (del Hoyo *et al.* 1999, König *et al.* 1999). When rearing young, a pair moved with their fledglings within a radius of 100–400 m of where first found (Becking 1994), from which a breeding territory of very roughly 50 ha might plausibly be inferred. By day a bird has been found roosting in a fairly exposed situations on a bare branch c.3–5 m up, occasionally lower (Becking 1994).

Food Food of adults recorded by M. E. G. Bartels included Coleoptera (Cerambycidae), earwigs (Dermaptera), a large grasshopper (Orthoptera) and remains of a small reptile (Becking 1994). Items brought to fledglings (which were also consumed by the adults) included praying mantises (these comprised 38% of 21 food deliveries observed), long-horned grasshoppers, stick insects, crickets/mole crickets and some Coleoptera, probably stag- and scarab-beetles; a young specimen of *O. angelinae* would readily take crickets when these were offered (Becking 1994). An adult has also been observed provisioning its offspring with a large moth (JAT). Insects are seized with the claws from a branch, stem, leaf or ground (Becking 1994).

Breeding Fledglings—in all cases two birds of different sizes, attended by their parents—have been found at Cibodas at 1,250–1,600 m in February (Andrew 1985, Andrew and Milton 1988), June (Tobias and Phelps 1994; see Remarks 4) and July (Becking 1994). At Pasir Datar a fledgling was captured alive in July 1921 (Becking 1994). On the basis of this evidence laying dates were calculated as May and December and it was suggested that there may be two peaks or else irregular breeding throughout the year (Becking 1994). The flushing of a female twice from the top of a bird's-nest fern *Asplenium nidus* suggests that such ferns may be used for nesting; otherwise tree holes would be expected, and the clutch-size is probably two (Becking 1994).

Migration The species may be an altitudinal migrant as it was collected at 2,000 m in August (Andrew and Milton 1988), but this elevation more probably represents the upper limit of a year-round band.

THREATS The Javan Scops-owl is one of (now) four threatened members in the suite of 20 bird species that are entirely restricted to the "Java and Bali Forests Endemic Bird Area",

threats and conservation measures in which are profiled by Sujatnika *et al.* (1995) and Stattersfield *et al.* (1998). The lower parts of this bird's habitat (if the broader elevational distribution is to be believed), below 1,000–1,200 m, are very seriously threatened, but the area above this zone is still relatively secure (SvB; see Threats under Javan Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus bartelsi*). The chief concern otherwise is simply the lack of information concerning the species, which makes even a rough assessment of its true status extremely difficult.

MEASURES TAKEN Some localities for the Javan Scops-owl are within protected areas, namely Gunung Halimun National Park, Gunung Gede-Pangrango National Park, Gunung Tangkuban Prahur Nature Reserve (13 km²), Gunung Papandayan Nature Reserve (66 km²) and Kawah Ijen Merapi Ungup-ungup, which has a nature reserve of c.25 km² at 1,500–2,800 m acting as a link between proposed areas in the south-west (Gunung Raung) and north-east (Maelang) (SvB).

MEASURES PROPOSED Fieldwork to attempt to discover how this nocturnal bird advertises its presence (adults have a disyllabic alarm hoot, they infrequently and their fledglings constantly communicate with a loud hissing call, and fledglings beg food with “wailing and screaming” calls: Becking 1995) is essential if a reasonably rapid assessment of both its conservation and taxonomic status is to be made. It seems highly implausible that a forest *Otus* is not territorially vocal, and it may be that some as-yet unsuspected night sound will prove to be its voice (which would, of course, suggest the level of differentiation it enjoys from Rajah Scops-owl *Otus brookii*). If breeding at Cibodas results in young in June–July, then advertisement calling may only occur in or around April, and/or at some post-breeding stage when the young are driven from the territory. Otherwise work on establishing the true range of the species on Java will depend on intensive mist-netting at night on a sample of mountains throughout the island. Proposals for improving protected area cover in montane Java are given in the equivalent section under Javan Hawk-eagle. Pending more results of surveys, a new reserve at Gunung Salak should be considered (no reserves having otherwise been proposed for this protection forest between 1,000 and 2,211 m) (SvB).

REMARKS (1) *Otus angelinae* may either form a superspecies with Rajah Scops-owl *O. brookii* or be a small local race of it (B. F. King *in litt.* 1995 to SvB; also del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). The voice and behaviour of *angelinae* are, however, sufficiently different from *brookii* for the former arrangement to be preferable (König *et al.* 1999). (2) Mystifyingly, the species is said to be known from only two localities (Gede and Tangkuban Perahu) in West Java in del Hoyo *et al.* (1999). (3) The Ijen specimen on which the record from East Java is based had originally been assigned, with some doubt, to Rajah Scops-owl. Its re-identification (as a new subspecies of *angelinae*, yet to be named: König *et al.* 1999) leaves no basis for the occurrence of *brookii* on Java, although a number of birdwatchers' sight records still exist for Cibodas which may be referable to *O. angelinae*. (4) Repeated records of the species from close to the lower edge of forest at Gunung Gede (e.g. Tobias and Phelps 1994) have been questioned, as birds recently scrutinised in this area have all proved to be Sunda Scops-owl *Otus lempiji* (F. R. Lambert verbally 1999). However, the identification of at least one pair of birds near the forest edge as *angelinae* is considered probably correct (JAT); other confirmed records come from the Cibeureum waterfalls, and then mid-way between these falls and the edge of forest (Becking 1994), a distance of only several hundred metres, further suggesting that ranges of the two forms meet or overlap in this area. Clearly, observers should note the apparent presence of both *angelinae* and *lempiji* in forest above Cibodas, and further fieldwork should be targeted at clarifying their relative distribution.