

**NEW DISTRIBUTION RECORDS OF SUNDA COUCAL *Centropus nigrorufus*
FOR BALI AND MADURA ISLAND, INDONESIA**

**CATATAN PERSEBARAN BARU BURUNG BUBUT JAWA *Centropus nigrorufus*
UNTUK PULAU BALI DAN MADURA, INDONESIA**

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ABSTRAK

Bubut Jawa merupakan burung endemik di Pulau Jawa. Laporan ini mendokumentasikan perjumpaan bubut jawa *Centropus nigrorufus* di Bali dan Madura, Indonesia. Ada 7 perjumpaan di 3 area berbeda di Bali dan 6 area berbeda di Madura. Catatan-catatan ini menjadi catatan baru bubut jawa yang memperluas area persebarannya di luar pulau Jawa. Mengingat burung ini dijumpai diperdagangkan di pasar burung, jarak antara Jawa dan Bali atau Jawa dan Madura sangat dekat, dan tidak ada catatan sebelumnya mengenai jenis ini di Bali dan Madura; maka kehadiran jenis ini di Madura dan Bali sepertinya merupakan burung lepasan dari pada jenis yang secara alami terlewatkan oleh pengamat burung.

ABSTRACT

Sunda Coucal is known to be endemic to Java Island. This report documented the sightings of Sunda Coucal *Centropus nigrorufus* on Bali and Madura, Indonesia. There are 7 sightings within three different areas in Bali and six different areas in Madura. These records are to be new records of Sunda Coucal which widen its distribution outside mainland of Java Island. Based on the presence of this bird in the bird market, the distance of Java and Bali or Java and Madura are very close, and no information from previous records of this species in Madura and Bali. It is presumed that this species could be a feral bird rather than an overlooked species in the past.

INTRODUCTION

Sunda Coucal also known as Javan Coucal has been stated as Java endemic. It was found from Ujung Kulon in the western tip of Java to Surabaya in East Java (Andrew 1990). However, sightings were also recorded in much of the eastern part of Java, specifically in Baluran National Park and near Alas Purwo National Park (Winnasis et.al 2011; Atlas Burung Indonesia 2020). There has never been a Sunda Coucal report on Bali (Mason 2011) or Madura Island (MacKinnon et.al 2010).

The Genus *Centropus* is represented on Bali and Madura by the Lesser Coucal

Centropus bengalensis and Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* (MacKinnon et.al. 2010; Mason 2011; Eaton et.al. 2021). Its major habitats are coastal wetlands, including mangroves, as well as both wet and dry marshlands swamps, estuaries, adjacent nypa palm vegetation, tall grass, thickets and elephant grass. In wet season is also found in grassy fields, flooded forest edges and even sugarcane plantations, while in dry season, it prefers tall-grass meadows and dry marshland, under 900 meter above sea level (Andrew 1990; Payne & Kirwan 2020; Eaton et.al. 2021, Taufiqurrahman et al. 2022).

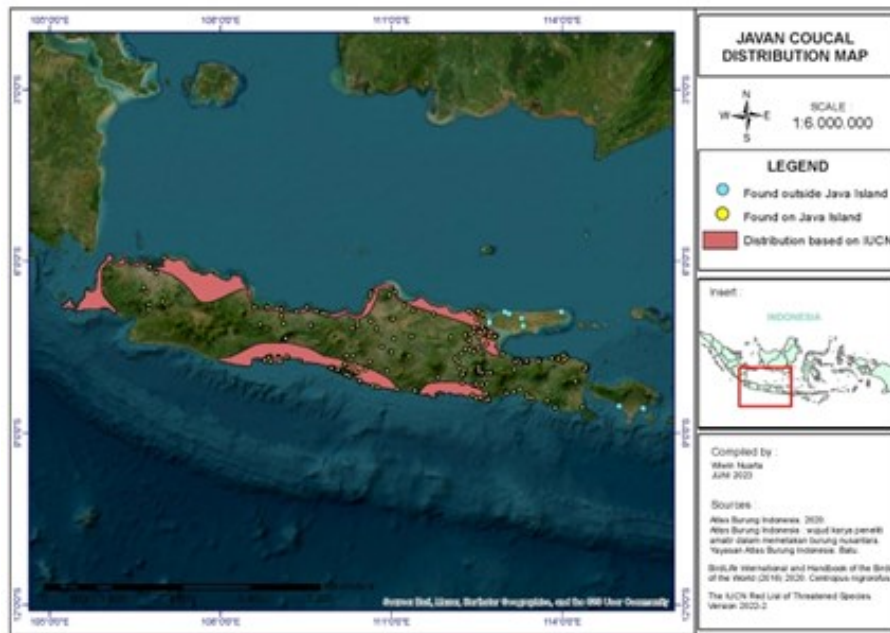


Figure 1. Map of Javan Coucal distribution. Pink color is the distribution based on IUCN. Yellow dot shows where Javan coucal was found in Java Island. Blue dots are the new records places outside Java Island.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Observation was done by exploring the trails within the areas. Every bird was closely observed using binocular 8x42 mm, swarovski ATS-80 monocular, and photographed using Nikon prosumer and DSLR cameras and monocular-mobile phone digiscoping technique. Every sighting was recorded in a notebook and Burungnesia application.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sightings in Bali

On 12th January 2022, HN and PWN visited Antap village, which is about 50 km from Denpasar city (8°32'17"S; 115°00'04"E) for birdwatching. At about 12.10, both HN and PWN saw one individual of coucal flew from a paddy field to a coconut tree. It perched there for a while before rushing to shrubs beside a small river stream. The weather was cloudy with a little bit of rain, which gradually became heavier throughout the afternoon. At 18.42 the Coucal appeared again. It was almost dark, with



Figure 2. Sunda Coucal standing on a paddy field embankment in Antap. Photographed on 12th January 2022 by Husnaeni Nugroho.

rain still drizzling. It perched on a banana leaf for about 30 seconds. HN managed to take a picture of it, although the quality was not very good due to the dark sunset light (Figure 2).

HN then shared the photo to ODP and discussed the species. ODP also checked his own photo of a coucal taken in Antap village on 1st October 2021 when he was birdwatching there in search for Javan Sparrow (Figure 3). The species in ODP's picture happened to show



Figure 3. Sunda Coucal perch on top of a tree taken in Antap coastal area on 1st October 2021, photo by Oka Dwi Prihatmoko

the same pattern on the outer wing and iris color as HN's picture. At that time ODP only took pictures and overlooked them. Both pictures show that the bird has red iris and black bill. Its body is mostly black with rufous color on the wing, but the rufous color does not fully cover them. Only certain parts of the outer wings show the rufous color, while the rest remains black. In HN's photo, the black color covers the entire backside up to the tail of the bird, and no rufous color is seen on its back. These characteristics are consistent with the Sunda Coucal (McKinnon et.al. 2010; Payne & Kirwan 2020; Eaton et.al. 2021).

We observed the bird until 21st January 2022. It was seen perched on banana leaves, walking on paddy fields, rushing into cogon grass, sunbathing, preening, and flying. From other photos taken by HN, the flight style of the bird revealed another characteristic of the Sunda Coucal (Figure 4). Blackish tips were observed in the flight feathers and upper wing coverts (Payne & Kirwan 2020).

On 20th January 2022, another individual of Sunda coucal was also



Figure 4. Blackish tips in flight-feathers and upper wing-coverts which are identical to Sunda Coucal characteristic were clearly seen in Antap bird, photo by Husnaeni Nugroho.

photographed in a coastal wetland area in Jumpai beach, Klungkung district (Andy Walker, pers comm). The distance between Antap village in Tabanan and Klungkung is approximately 62 km. The bird was sighted for the second time in the same location by Mochamad Saifudin on 22nd February 2022. This time the bird was photographed, while perching on the top of the bush within swamp reeds (Figure 5). Therefore, this indicates that all Sunda Coucal found in Bali were different individuals.



Figure 5. Sunda Coucal perched on bushes between swamp reeds in the Klungkung coastal area. Photographed on 22nd February 2022 by Mochamad Saifudin.

Two years after those sightings, ODP found another Sunda Coucal pair in Uluwatu region, Badung district. The habitat was a shrub lowland forest which grew on a limestone cliff at the very southwest tip of Bali Island. This area is about 70 km away from Antap village in Tabanan and 60 km from Jumpai beach in Klungkung. The birds were seen on 9th December 2023, and photographed on 2nd January 2024 and 4th February 2024. The birds were seen in the morning from 6.30 AM to 8.00 AM perched at a top of a dead tree branch, sunbathed, vocalizing, and preening its feathers.

Sunda Coucal is similar to Greater Coucal in general shape and proportions, but is slightly smaller. Sunda Coucal measures approximately 48 cm in size, while the Greater Coucal ranges from 47-52 cm. Unlike the Sunda Coucal, the Greater Coucal has a chestnut color on its back, and its wings are fully covered with the same chestnut color (McKinnon et.al. 2010; Payne & Kirwan 2020; Eaton et.al. 2021). Greater Coucal is abundant in Bali, just like the Lesser Coucal (Mason 2011).

Sightings in Madura

The existence of the Sunda Coucal on the island of Madura was first reported in Atlas Burung Indonesia (2020) on 10th October 2016 through an android application called Burungnesia. It was reported one individual in a mangrove area of Labuhan, Bangkalan. Since then, several records of Sunda Coucal in Madura have been uploaded to Burungnesia. On 2nd January 2020 two individuals were recorded in Keleyan village, Bangkalan; 8th January 2020 (1 individual) in Bandang Dajah village, Bangkalan; 20th

January 2020 (1 individual) in Badur batu putih, Sumenep; 24th January 2020 (1 individual) in Robatal, Sampang; and on 24th January 2020 (1 individual) in Sogian Omben, Sampang.

The Sunda Coucal was found in various habitats in Madura, including mangrove forest, corn field, paddy field, mango plantation, garden, and house yard. These areas are similar to the habitats of Sunda Coucal in Bali. The Sunda Coucal habitat in Antap was post-harvest rice fields, where the soil was slightly wet due to rain, and bordered by banana plantation and overgrown cogon grass. It is located approximately 200 meters from the south coast. There is also a small patch of forest to the north, paddy fields with a small stream to the east, and a banana plantation and 15 meter wide river to the west side. The habitat of the Sunda Coucal in Klungkung was a coastal marsh area.

Those areas are perfect for their feeding area since Coucals are known to primarily eat large insects and small vertebrates including snakes, lizards, tree frogs, mice and rats, grasshoppers, carabid beetles, large moths, hairy and smooth caterpillars, large bugs, insect pupae and eggs, snails and slugs, centipedes, crabs, birds' eggs, (Bartels 1915-1930; Sody 1953, 1989; Payne 2005). Budi (2014) reported that Sunda Coucal also feeds on green seeds from young rice plants *Oryza sativa*. They do not eat the spilled ripe rice seeds from the ground. Instead, they prefer to pick unripe seeds directly from plants.

Status

Sunda Coucal was observed to be traded in the Bali bird market in 2017, with five individuals reported and three individuals in

2018 (Chng et.al. 2018). While there is no specific information regarding the origin of these traded birds, it is likely that they were captured within Bali Island. Alternatively, based on the presence of this bird in the bird market, the distance of Java and Bali or Java and Madura are very close, and no information from previous records of this species in Madura and Bali; it is presumed that this species could be a feral bird rather than overlooked species in the past.

Due to trapping for trade and habitat loss the Sunda Coucal has been classified as vulnerable (Birdlife International 2022). Consequently, in 2018, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry included Sunda Coucal as protected animal through regulation number P.106/Menlhk/Setjen/Kum.1/12/2018. Give your recommendation regarding this issue.

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