

THIRD RECORD OF BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER *Halcyon pileata* FOR MONGOLIA

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хураангуй. Бид Өмнөговь аймгийн Ханбогд сумын нутагт байх Бөөрийн хөхийн задгай байнгын урсгалтай булгийн дэргэдэх хайлаас *Ulmus pumila* -ны төгөлөөс 2015 оны 5-р сарын 30-нд 1 бодгаль хармагнайт халуу *Halcyon pileata* бүртгэж, гэрэл зургаар баримтжуулсан. Хармагнайт халуу Монголд оронд өмнө нь Дундговь аймгийн Дэлгэрцогт сумын нутаг дахь Бага газрын чулуу, мөн тус аймгийн Сайхан Овоо сумын нутаг дахь Онги голын дагуу Онгийн хийдийн орчимд хоёр удаа бүртгэгдэж байжээ. Бидний ажиглалт бүртгэл энэ зүйл шувууны гурав дахь албан ёсны бүртгэл болж байна.

түлхүүр үг: Хан богд, ховор тохиолдол, хайлаас

abstract. On 30 May 2015, the authors visited Bööryn khökhyn zadgai spring which has one of the highest flow rates in the Khanbodg massif and has many Siberian Elm trees. Among a series of passerine migrants, we found a Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*) which perched in the open allowing good observations with binoculars and taking a series of photographs. This species was recorded twice in Dundgobi aimag. Our observation constitutes third record of this species for Mongolia.

key words: Khanbodg mountain, rare records, Siberian elm tree

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Although the ecology of most bird species in Mongolia is poorly-known due to the lack of ornithologists in this large country (Gombobaatar *et al* 2011; Purevsuren *et al* 2013), an increasing amount of bird research, conservation projects and bird watching tourism is resulting in an improved knowledge of bird distribution, notably of rare or vagrant species.

In the last few years, members of the Oyu Tolgoi project studied the birds of Khanbodg soum, Ömnögovı Province, as part of its baseline studies and monitoring of project impacts. The territory of the Khanbodg soum is 15,150 km² and includes most of the Galba Gobi Important Bird Area and the western part of Small Gobi “B” Strictly Protected Area (Purevsuren 2013).

The north-west and south-east of Khanbodg soum are dominated by rocky outcrops and mountain massifs with dry rivers beds. Galba Gobi is a wide valley at 800-1000 m above sea level with large

areas of Saxaul forest (*Haloxylon ammodendron*), dry river beds with scattered Siberian Elm trees (*Ulmus pumila*) and semi-desert. The Khanbodg mountain massif in the centre of the soum encompasses about 1,000 km² of granite outcrops with several permanent springs. These springs provide water for many species and also provide stopover sites for migratory birds in the area. The birds of Khanbodg soum have been documented in a series of internal Oyu Tolgoi reports and summarised by Purevsuren 2013 and Purevsuren *et al* 2013.

On 30 May 2015, the authors visited Bööryn khökhyn zadgai spring which has one of the highest flow rates in the Khanbodg massif (Purevsuren pers.comm.) and has many Siberian Elm trees (Figure 2). Among a series of Siberian passerine migrants, TP found a Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*) which perched in the open allowing good observations with binoculars and taking a series of photographs (Figures 3).



Figure 2. Habitat where Black-capped Kingfisher was recorded in Khanbogd massif. Photo courtesy by Tsolmonjav Purevsuren.

Black-capped Kingfisher is a monotypic species which is resident in south and south-east Asia, but is a summer migrant in eastern China and Korea. It breeds as far north as the far south-east of the Chinese autonomous region of Inner Mongolia, and there have been occasional records in April-June from far eastern Russia and Japan (Brazil 2009). In the north, it inhabits deciduous forest near freshwater between May and October (Woodall and Kirwan, 2013).

According to the Mongolian Red List of Birds, this species has been recorded only once before in Mongolia. S. Gombobaatar and B. Munkhzaya found a dead bird in dry steppe with *Caragana* spp. bushes in rocky hills with cliffs at Baga Gazar Chuluu in Delgertsogt soum of Dundgobi province on 15 June 2002 (Gombobaatar *et al*, 2011). The second (and first live) bird was recorded by the French bird watcher Sébastien Provost by a small river with Siberian Elm trees near the Ongi monastery in Dundgobi province on 30 May 2011 (Gombobaatar *et al*, 2013). Interestingly, the 2011 and 2015 records were both on 30 May.



Figure 3. Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*, South Gobi province, Mongolia, 30 May 2015. Photo courtesy by Tsolmonjav Purevsuren.

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