

The First Record of Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) for Thailand

While birdwatching at Kamphaeng Saen Aviation Training School, Kamphaeng Saen District, Nakhon Pathom Province on 29 November 1986, Mr. Taweesakdi Rohidsuk noticed an unfamiliar dark bird flying overhead in a flock of egrets. The bird landed at the edge of a small marsh though when he approached in order to obtain a better view, the bird flew off and did not return. The fact that the bird had a curved bill and was blackish in colouration led Mr Taweesakdi to suppose that it might be a White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni*, since this species, referred to under the colloquial name Black Ibis, was the only black-coloured ibis depicted in LEKAGUL & CRONIN(1974), the reference then used by many birdwatchers in Thailand.

On returning to the site on 27 and 28 December, he again saw the bird foraging on the marsh together with Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta*, Great Egrets *E. alba* and Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea*. He was able to photograph it using an 800 m telephoto lens together with a 1.5x tele-converter and this established its identification as Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, the first documented occurrence for Thailand (Fig. 1). The bird remained at Kamphaeng Saen until at least 8 March 1987 during which time it was seen by many other birdwatchers. One or two other verbal reports of 'black ibises' received without substantiating data during the 1980s seem likely to have been this species.



Figure 1. Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), Kamphaeng Saen Aviation Training School, Nakhon Pathom Province, 27 December 1986 (Taweesakdi Rohidsuk).

Description: A small to medium-sized ibis with a strongly and evenly curved bill, blackish plumage, dark legs and bill. The head and neck appeared to be entirely feathered. There was no white in the wing.

The Glossy Ibis has an almost cosmopolitan distribution across Eurasia, parts of Africa, India through the islands of Indonesia to Australia as well as along the eastern seaboard of the United States and around the Caribbean (SIBLEY & MUNRO, 1990). It is said to be migratory, dispersive and somewhat nomadic (CRAMP & SIMMONS, 1977). In South-east Asia it is apparently resident in parts of Burma (SMYTHIES, 1986) and is also found in Cambodia and Cochinchina (KING ET AL. 1975).

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