

The Brown-breasted Flycatcher in Assam, with a recent record from Lakhimpur District

The Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* is distributed in northeastern India, central & southern China, northwestern Thailand, northern Vietnam, and probably also in northern & eastern Myanmar; non-breeding in southwestern India (south from Goa), and Sri Lanka (Clement 2020). In the Indian subcontinent, it breeds in northeastern India, winters in southwestern India and Sri Lanka (Grimmett et al. 2016).

The habitat of the Brown-breasted Flycatcher is dense thickets in broadleaf evergreen forest and also along the forest river banks in Sri Lanka. It is found between 1,200 m and 1,645 m, usually below 1,400 m in northwestern Thailand and non-breeding quarters at 150–500 m (Grimmett et al. 2011; Clement 2020).

Kakoi Reserve Forest (27.314–93.985 N & 93.985–94.158 E) is an evergreen forest in the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh occupying an area of 4,415.03 ha (Saikia & Saikia 2020). It is



Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* at Kakoi Reserve Forest.
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located in Lakhimpur District, Assam, and is around 22 km from North Lakhimpur town. The reserve forest hosts a rich biodiversity, but till now no effective study to assess the biodiversity has been done.

On 25 June 2020 at around 0800 h, the authors observed a small flycatcher-like bird perching on a branch of a tree at the height of around 2.5 m near a stream. Though it was a rainy day and the lighting conditions were not suitable

for photography, somehow we managed to get some clicks for further identification.

The bird was about 13–14 cm olive brown with a large head, large eye, and broad eye ring. The colour of the crown and forehead was slightly darker. Broad buffish to whitish eye rings with greyish cheek and distinct whitish sub-moustachial stripe. The chin and throat of the bird were whitish, more pronounced brown or grey-

brown breast band and warmer brownish-buff flanks. The bill was larger than the Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* with an entirely pale lower mandible (Grimmett et al. 2011; Clement 2020). Therefore, we confirmed that the small flycatcher-like bird was a Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui*.

Since this species is a passage migrant to the north-east in summer, the occurrence of the species in the Kakoi Reserved Forest is a sign of healthy habitat. According to the eBird range map, the Brown-breasted Flycatcher has been reported in different parts of India as well as from Assam but there is not any previously published report of the species from the Kakoi Reserve Forest making this the first report for the district.

References

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