

Communication: Inaccurate information in a Biodiversity Record on the identification and movement of a laced woodpecker between Pulau Ubin and Pasir Ris

Elize Y. X. Ng

Email: elize.ng@utas.edu.au

Subject: Laced woodpecker, *Picus vittatus* (Aves: Piciformes: Picidae).

Recommended citation. Ng EYX (2022) Communication: Inaccurate information in Biodiversity Record on the identification and movement of a laced woodpecker between Pulau Ubin and Pasir Ris. Nature in Singapore, 15: e2022096. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2022-0096

In a recent Biodiversity Record, Landy (2021) documents the movement of a female laced woodpecker, *Picus vittatus*, stated to be N1416. It was claimed to be banded on Pulau Ubin on 2 March 2007 at Jalan Mamam, near Beberok Hut. The article details the resighting of the individual on 17 January 2021 and made observations about the movement and the longevity of the species. However, the laced woodpecker observed by Landy (2021) was verified to not be N1416. Furthermore, it is not an individual that was banded in 2007, nor has it moved from Pulau Ubin to Pasir Ris.

Bird banding has been conducted at various sites across Singapore, by the Avian Evolution Lab at the National University of Singapore, from 2013 till the present with relevant permits from the National Parks Board (NParks). Banding was specifically conducted at Pasir Ris Park over several instances in 2017 under permit number NPRP13-019-4c. During a bird banding session conducted at Pasir Ris Park between 1st to 3rd November 2017, a few laced woodpeckers were banded with band numbers starting N141X (Fig. 1 & 2), and none of the banded female laced woodpeckers had the band N1416. The band number N1416 instead belonged to a female common flameback, *Dinopium javanense*.

In addition, consultations were made with NParks staff member, Jacky Soh, to further verify the banding records from Pulau Ubin. JS confirmed that the Pulau Ubin ringing records do not have any individuals banded with band number N1416. In Singapore, all bands used for bird banding are provided centrally by the National Parks Board. One of the main purposes of bird banding is being able to identify recaptured individuals using unique band numbers that do not overlap.

Furthermore, in the picture provided by the author (Fig. 1 in Landy, 2021), it is not possible to confirm the last digit on the band, although it is likely that the individual observed by the author is either N1418 or N1419, as these were the only two female laced woodpeckers that were banded at Pasir Ris Park with a band number starting with N141X. All other band numbers in the series N141X belonged to other species or were male laced woodpeckers. Male laced woodpeckers are easily identified by the red crown, while females have a black crown.

Given the aforementioned verifications, the information presented by Landy (2021) is therefore inaccurate and does not represent the movement of a laced woodpecker between Pulau Ubin and Pasir Ris, nor does it document the longevity of the species. It is, instead, a resighting of an individual that was banded on 3 November 2017 at Pasir Ris Park.

Literature cited:

Landy E (2021) Biodiversity Record: Movement of a laced woodpecker between Pulau Ubin and Pasir Ris. Nature in Singapore, 14: e2021034.

RINGING DATA SHEET – SINGAPORE																			
Place Pasir Ris Park, Camp Park B												Habitat				Weather			
Date 2nd Nov 2017		Ringer Codes																	
Sheet of		Ringer Codes																	
S/N	Species Code	Ring No.	Tarsus (S)	Bill/S	Wing	Tail	BP	PEC	Age	Moult Code	Primary Mode Score	OGC	Wgt	Sex	Time	Net	Ringer	Notes	
1	WT-KING	E1406	17.9	67.5	118	57	0	2	31	M	55555 55551	-	72	-	7:20	14	GCY	92-20	
2	OW-SUL	M2090	19.2	18.7	85	80	0	2	3	0	00000 00000	-	28	-	7:40	9	EN	48-20	
3	FAM	K1143	20.4	15.1	74	81	0	2	3J	M	55555 53300	mm	-	-	8:40	7	NN		
2	R	L-WOOD	N1311	24.0	35.1	129	87	0	3	4	M	55555 44200	-	115	M	8:40	5	DOM	135-20 Recapture
5	GOLD	N1413	24.7	28.9	127	74	5	2	2	M	55555 40000	-	85	M	10:15	12	GL	103-18	
6	GOLD	N1414	27.7	30.6	133	78	5	2	2	M	55530 00000	-	82	M	10:30	12	DOM	50	
7	L-WOOD	N1415	25.7	33.3	129	95	0	3	2	M	00000 00000	-	116	M	10:30	15	EN	136-20 MORTGAGAN	
8	S-DOVE	PO662	23.7	22.6	142	124	0	1	3i	M	44000 20000	-	100	-	10:30	15	GCY		
1	GOLD	N1416	29.2	131	77	0	3	2	M	55555 53000	-	74	F	12:30	15	NN	94-20 Tarsus: 22.8		
10	M-ROB	M2091	24.8	26.3	99	92	0	2	2	M	55555 55442	-	71	M	12:30	12	EN	61-20	
11																			
12																			
13																			
14																			
15																			
16																			
17																			
18																			
19																			
20																			
21																			
22																			
23																			
24																			
25																			

Fig. 1. Ringing datasheet for birds banded on 2 November 2017 at Pasir Ris Park. Box 1 highlights the bird with the band number starting with N1416. Box 2 highlights another bird banded with the band number starting with N141X. L-WOOD refers to the species code used for the laced woodpecker, while GOLD refers to the species code used for the common flameback.

RINGING DATA SHEET – SINGAPORE																			
Place Pasir Ris Park, Camp Park B												Habitat				Weather			
Date 3rd Nov 2017		Ringer Codes																	
Sheet of		Ringer Codes																	
S/N	Species Code	Ring No.	Tarsus (S)	Bill/S	Wing	Tail	BP	PEC	Age	Moult Code	Primary Mode Score	OGC	Wgt	Sex	Time	Net	Ringer	Notes	
3	GOLD	N1417	23.3	31.1	130	85	5	2	2	M	55555 55542	-	78	F	7:30	15	GCY	18-20	
2	AF-FLY	J4140	15.2	21.6	86	85	0	1	2	0	00000 00000	-	13	?	8:30	7	EN	33-20	
R	S-DOVE	PO662																Recaptive	
4	YR-FLY	J4141	16.8	17.0	71	48	0	2	3J	00000 00000	-	13	F	9:30	1	GCY	33-20		
5	RT-SUN	J4142	16.8	21.6	44	44	0	2	2	0	00000 00000	-	12	M	9:50	7	EN	32-20	
4	L-WOOD	N1418	25.1	32.1	126	93	0	2	2	M	55552 10000	-	103	F	10:30	14	EN	127-21	
7	WT-KING	E1407	16.7	54.6	115	73	0	2	4	0	00000 00000	-	77	-	11:00	15	GCY	97-20	
5	L-WOOD	N1419	25.4	32.3	130	98	0	3	3	M	55555 55543	-	100	F	12:30	10	EN	120-20	
8	L-WOOD	N1420	26.5	33.0	126	94	5	3	4	M	55555 55510	-	112	M	12:30	9	GCY	132-20	
10																			
11																			
12																			
13																			
14																			
15																			
16																			
17																			
18																			
19																			
20																			
21																			
22																			
23																			
24																			
25																			

Fig. 2. Ringing datasheet for birds banded on 3 November 2017 at Pasir Ris Park. Box 3 to 5 highlights the bird banded with band numbers starting N141X. L-WOOD refers to the species code used for the laced woodpecker, while GOLD refers to the species code used for the common flameback.