



## CHAPTER 7

### DESCRIPTION OF FIRST BASIC PLUMAGE OF THREE MUSCICAPID SPECIES FOUND IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SUB-HIMALAYAN FOOTHILLS, WITH NOTES ON THEIR TAXONOMY AND ECOLOGY

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**ABSTRACT.**—Many species in Southeast Asia are hardly known in many aspects (biology, ecology, distribution, plumage characteristics), especially in the southeastern sub-Himalayan Mountains in the border region of Myanmar, China, northeast India, and Tibet. During a September 2005 survey of Naung Mung, Putao District, Kachin State, Northern Myanmar, we obtained specimens of three species evidently in first basic plumage, for which this plumage type was new, hardly known, or significantly different from that seen in specimens in collections or descriptions in the literature. After thorough examination, we identified these specimens as immature members of the following muscicapid species: White-tailed Robin (*Myiomela leucura*), including both a light and darker plumage type; Large Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis magnirostris*); and Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher (*Ficedula strophhiata*). We discuss some taxonomic and biological implications of our findings.

**Key words:** Burma, *Cyornis magnirostris*, *Ficedula strophhiata*, first basic plumage, immature, India, Myanmar, *Myiomela leucura*, Southeast Asia, taxonomy.

#### Descripción del Primer Plumaje Básico de Tres especies de Muscicapidae del Piedemonte Sub-Himalayo del Sudeste, con Notas sobre su Taxonomía y Ecología

**RESUMEN.**—Muchas especies del sudeste de Asia son muy poco conocidas en muchos aspectos (biología, ecología, distribución, características del plumaje), especialmente en la parte sudeste de las montañas sub-Himalayas cerca de las fronteras entre Birmania (Myanmar), China, el noreste de India y el Tibet. Durante un muestreo realizado en septiembre de 2005 en Naung Mung, en el distrito de Putao, estado de Kachin, norte de Birmania, obtuvimos especímenes de tres especies que se encontraban evidentemente en su primer plumaje básico, para las cuales ese tipo de plumaje era nuevo, poco conocido o significativamente diferente del conocido por especímenes de colecciones o por descripciones encontradas en la literatura. Después de un examen exhaustivo, identificamos a estos especímenes como miembro inmaduro de las siguientes especies de Muscicapidae: *Myiomela leucura*, incluyendo tanto un plumaje claro como uno más oscuro, *Cyornis magnirostris* y *Ficedula strophhiata*. Discutimos algunas implicaciones taxonómicas y biológicas de nuestros hallazgos.

THE Hkakabo Razi National Park and its surroundings in northern Kachin State, Myanmar (the former Burma), is one of the most remote and inaccessible regions in the world; few biologists have had the chance to sample there (Rabinowitz

et al. 1999, Rappole et al. 2005, Renner et al. 2007). Among the first and, for a long time, the only ones were Lord Cranbrook, R. Kaulback, F. Kingdon-Ward, B. C. Smythies, and G. Forrest, while they were collecting samples of plants, birds, and

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