

# MALKOHA



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## Observation **Orange-headed Ground Thrush Seen at Panadura**

On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2005 around 8.00 in the morning, my son Niraj spotted a bird he had never seen before. It had perched on a croton tree about 1 meter from the ground. As he rushed outside to watch it closely, the bird flew away. He said the head and breast was orange in color and the wings were a bluish grey. At first I thought it could be a colorful bird like Indian Pitta, but he insisted the bird was different. He drew a sketch including all the information he observed.

That same day around 4.30 in the afternoon, he saw it again. This time on a *veralu* branch about 2 meters from the ground. The bird was very silent and watchful. Niraj watched it for a few minutes and completed the sketch he drew in the morning. He saw white patches on its feathers and vent. It was smaller than the common Myna. The bird then flew away, to a place full of trees and coffee bushes.

My neighbor too had seen this bird on the ground and on a concrete slab about 1 foot from the ground between 8 and 9 that same morning.

Next morning about 8.30 I also got the chance to see it. The bird swiftly flew from the ground to a *veralu* branch. It was then chased by 2 Magpie Robins, who did not tolerate the intruder. Thrush quickly flew to the same thicket of coffee bushes. As it fly-up its orange color was clearly visible glistened in the morning sun.

We noticed this bird in my garden and in naborhood at Panadura town area. The particular spot where it was found is a dark and shady because of the trees. It is damp from water constantly dripping from an overhead tank. Much of the area is covered by a thick undergrowth of ferns and a large birds-nest plant which gave ideal shade and privacy.

My thank goes to fogsl for assisting in identifying the bird and encouraging us to observe and the birds we sight, gave us the chance to see rare birds and new species easily, even in home garden.

*Chamalee Marasinghe*

## **Another Observation of Orange-headed Ground Thrush at Wilpattu**

Mevan Piyasena reported another Orange-headed Ground Thrush from Wilpattu. This was seen at 18<sup>th</sup> November around 10.45 am. It perched at about 10ft above the ground. It was recorded in a shady dense forest patch between Kokari Willuwa and Kudapathassa. If you visit Wilpattu, inquire about this bird from the wildlife guide Malaka at wilpattu office.



### **The Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka**

Department of Zoology, University of Colombo.

Phone : +94 011 5342609 | Fax : +94 011 5337644

Email : [fogsl@slt.lk](mailto:fogsl@slt.lk)

