

# A sight record of White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* in Pokunutenna, Sri Lanka

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## Observation

While bird watching in Pokunutenna (located in the northeastern boundary of the Udawalawe National Park) on 22 February 2007, I observed a flock of Swifts containing several species.

The observation was done using my Leica Trinovid 10 x 42 binoculars over a period of one hour. I observed several distinctly larger Swifts that were smaller than Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* and it at once recalled a Needletail *Hirundapus* sp from the profile. Basically, it was different from the related local resident; Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus*, which I have seen in the general area of the observation by having a white throat and a horse-shoe shaped white mark in the ventral area (of the two features *H. giganteus* does not show a white throat). I could further observe that the white colour of the throat area and the ventral area was similar in intensity. The Swifts in question also showed a whitish mantle area clearly. Based on these facts, I was able to confidently exclude the two species; *T. melba* and *H. giganteus* and narrow down the identification to White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*, a species if this submission is accepted by the 'authorities' would be an addition to the Sri Lankan bird list.

White-throated Needletail was reported by a visiting bird watcher in 2003 at Sinharaja but was not reported formerly.

The other species recorded in this flock of swifts included Little Swift *Apus affinis*, Indian Swiftlet *Collocalia unicolor* and Asian Palm-swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mr. Chandeepp Corea, Operations Director of SLWCS for this trip and Mr. Lalith Seneviratne for his hospitality during the brief stay at his facility.

## References

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