

## Hin Namno

Criteria: A1, A2 &amp; A3

**Province(s):** Khammouan  
**Protected area:** Hin Namno NPA  
**Area:** 68,125 ha

**Latitude:** 17°25'N  
**Longitude:** 105°56'E

**General description**

The IBA is located within Hin Namno National Protected Area, in central Lao P.D.R. The topography of the IBA is characterised by limestone karst outcrops, interspersed with undulating limestone hills and valleys. The vegetation of the IBA is dominated by sparsely vegetated limestone karst, with semi-evergreen forest and mixed deciduous forest in valley bottoms (Thewlis *et al.* 1998, Walston and Vinton 1999). Forest in the east of the IBA, close to the international border with Vietnam, may be the only example of wet evergreen forest on limestone in Lao P.D.R. (Thewlis *et al.* 1998). Parts of Hin Namno National Protected Area outside of the IBA largely comprise forest on non-calcareous, sedimentary formations. The IBA supports a significant proportion of the global population of Sooty Babbler *Stachyris herberti*, a species endemic to limestone areas in central Lao P.D.R. and central Vietnam. In addition, the IBA supports a distinctive form of leaf warbler *Phylloscopus* sp., which may represent an undescribed taxon with a similar range to Sooty Babbler (P. Alström in litt. to Duckworth *et al.* 1998). Furthermore, the IBA also supports populations of Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata*, Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis*, Brown Hornbill *Anorrhinus tickelli* and, possibly, Rufous-necked Hornbill *Aceros nipalensis*. Despite the fact that none of these species are believed to be common at the IBA, the IBA may be of importance for their conservation, at least at the national level, because of the inaccessibility of much of the area to hunters and loggers (Walston and Vinton 1999). Finally, the IBA is an important site for the conservation of a number of globally threatened primate species, most notably Francois' Langur *Semnopithecus francoisi*, at least one form of which is found at the IBA (Duckworth *et al.* 1999). To the east, the IBA is contiguous with Ke Bang IBA (VN040) in Vietnam, which supports populations of many of the key species found at Hin Namno IBA (Timmins *et al.* 1999).

**Key bird species**

Species	IBA criteria	Global threat status	Lao threat status	Notes
Siamese Fireback <i>Lophura diardi</i>	A1, A3	NT	PARL	In 1996, two males were observed along the Houay Packha and feathers from a female were seen in the same area (Thewlis <i>et al.</i> 1998). During a survey in February and March 1998, a group of at least four birds was seen in semi-evergreen forest at 350 m asl along the Houay Gouan Xiem, and the species was widely reported by local people (Walston and Vinton 1999). The population at the IBA is of moderate to low national significance and low global significance.
Crested Argus <i>Rheinardia ocellata</i>	A1, A2	VU	ARL	Feathers belonging to this species were found in the upper Houay Packha valley in December 1995, and the species was widely reported by local people (Thewlis <i>et al.</i> 1998). During a survey in February and March 1998, two sets of tail feathers were seen in local people's houses, and the species was reported by local people to occur within pockets of evergreen forest within the limestone karst (Walston and Vinton 1999). The significance of the population at the IBA is unclear, as the more inaccessible, wetter forests closer to the international border, which possibly support higher densities, have received little survey effort to date. However, it is probably of moderate to low national significance and low global significance.
Great Hornbill <i>Buceros bicornis</i>	A1	NT	ARL	Two birds, probably the same individuals, were seen on several occasions near the Houay Clocc in December 1995 and January 1996; and a flock of at least four birds was seen near the Houay Talee in January 1996 (Thewlis <i>et al.</i> 1998). A pair was seen in the Houay Gouan Xiem valley in February 1998 (Walston and Vinton 1999). Although the population at the IBA is possibly of moderate national significance, it is probably only of low global significance.

Species	IBA criteria	Global threat status	Lao threat status	Notes
Brown Hornbill <i>Anorrhinus tickelli</i>	A1, A3	NT	PARL	The species was recorded daily near the Houay Clocc in January 1996, with all records probably coming from a single flock of at least 13 birds (Thewlis <i>et al.</i> 1998). A group of at least six birds was seen on two occasions in the upper Nam Ngo valley, and the species was commonly recorded along the Houay Gouan Xiem, with a daily maximum of at least 10 birds in February 1998 (Walston and Vinton 1999). The population at the IBA is of moderate national significance and moderate to low global significance.
[Rufous-necked Hornbill <i>Aceros nipalensis</i> ]	A1, A3	VU	ARL	During a survey in February and March 1998, anecdotal reports were received of the occurrence of the species in forested limestone areas within the IBA, and two unidentified large hornbills, which were either this species or Wreathed Hornbill <i>Aceros undulatus</i> , were seen in flight over the Houay Gouan Xiem (Walston and Vinton 1999). Despite the paucity of records, the IBA may be of moderate significance for the conservation of this species, at least nationally (Walston and Vinton 1999).
†Lesser Fish Eagle <i>Ichthyophaga humilis</i>	A1	NT	ARL	An adult was seen circling and calling over mixed deciduous forest along the Xe Bangfai in February 1998 (Walston and Vinton 1999). Given the limited amount of suitable habitat and paucity of records, it is likely that only a very small population remains within the IBA (Walston and Vinton 1999). The population at the IBA forms part of a larger population, which also includes Upper Xe Banfai IBA (LA017). The combined population of the two IBAs is probably of moderate national significance and moderate to low global significance.
†Spot-billed Pelican <i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>	A1	VU	ARL	Villagers in Ban Dou village, close to the IBA, shot one individual in November 1997 (Duckworth <i>et al.</i> 1999, Walston and Vinton 1999). The species is a vagrant or, at best, a passage migrant, and it is certain that the IBA does not regularly support a significant population of this species.
Sooty Babbler <i>Stachyris herberti</i>	A1, A2	NT		During a survey in January 1996, the species was commonly recorded along the Houay Clocc and Houay Talee, with one to four flocks seen daily; all but one flock were associated with limestone karst (Thewlis <i>et al.</i> 1998). During a survey in February and March 1998, one flock of at least five birds and one of at least two were seen in the upper Nam Ngo valley, and the species was assessed as common in the Houay Gouan Xiem valley and north-west of Ban Phatoung, with flocks of up to 10 seen daily (Walston and Vinton 1999). The population at the IBA is of high national and global significance.

Notes: [ ] = unconfirmed record; † = not confirmed to regularly occur in significant numbers.

**Biome-restricted species:** The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 12 species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09) (Walston and Vinton 1999, Timmins and Khounboline 1996). See Appendix 3 for details.

### Threats to biodiversity

As a result of the inaccessibility of the terrain, threats to biodiversity at the IBA are medium to low compared with other sites in Lao P.D.R. However, threats are expected to increase as a result of human population growth and infrastructure development. Hunting and exploitation of forest products such as rattan remain serious threats to biodiversity. Particularly significant in this context are trans-international border incursions into the IBA (Walston and Vinton 1999). Previously, the IBA was inhabited by members of an ethnic minority, who cultivated non-rice crops in small areas within the limestone. However, these people have now been resettled outside of the IBA, although they continue to maintain some cultivation within the IBA (Thewlis *et al.* 1998). Much of the remainder of the IBA is unsuitable for conversion to agriculture.

**References**

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- Thewlis, R. M., Timmins, R. J., Evans, T. D. and Duckworth, J. W. (1998) The conservation status of birds in Laos: a review of key species. *Bird Conserv. Internat.* 8(suppl.): 1-159.
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