

# Documenting Bird Names in Danaw

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# The Danaw/Thanau'/Kanau' people

- Ethnologue: [dnu] population of 5000, 1000 speakers
- Three villages near Aungban in Shan State: Taungbohla, Thaethit, Chaunggya
- Language status is Threatened-Vigorous (cf. Luce, 1965), main identity marker?

- **Widespread multilingualism: Danaw, Pa O, regional Burmese, ?Shan, ?**

Luce, G. H. (1965) Danaw, a dying Austroasiatic language. *Lingua*

14:98-129







# TEK in Language Documentation

- TEK: Traditional Ecological Knowledge (also IEK, LEK, TBK, *etc.*)
- Useful means of documenting languages
  - Of interest to speakers
  - Plenty of material
  - Simultaneous documentation of cultural content
  - Endangered semantic domain

# Domains of TEK

- Plants – traditional medicine
- Large mammals
- Birds
- Honeybees
- *Etc.*

# Why birds?

- Diverse, highly visible/audible
- Lots of associated folklore
- Birds “tell” people things:
  - warn of danger
  - news of death
  - time of day, weather, season
  - moral lessons



# Challenges

- Scientific ID is very time-consuming but desirable
- Sightings are fleeting and long-distance
- Good field guides may not exist
- An 'expert' may be required

# Methodology

- Stimulus: Smythies (1940) *Birds of Burma*
- Elicitation at two villages: Taungbohla (older men, ages: 50 to ~75),  
Thaethit (younger men, ages: 30 to ~50)
- Group discussion, consensus recorded

# Methodology

- 'Reliable' – name accompanied by accurate information about ecology, behaviour
- 'Consistent' – same name offered by multiple consultants
- **+R+C, +R-C** vs. -R+C, -R-C





# Results

- Over 70 bird names from the two villages
- Very little overlap between the two word lists (only 17 shared items, 24%)
- Referents of remaining bird names highly uncertain

# Shared bird names

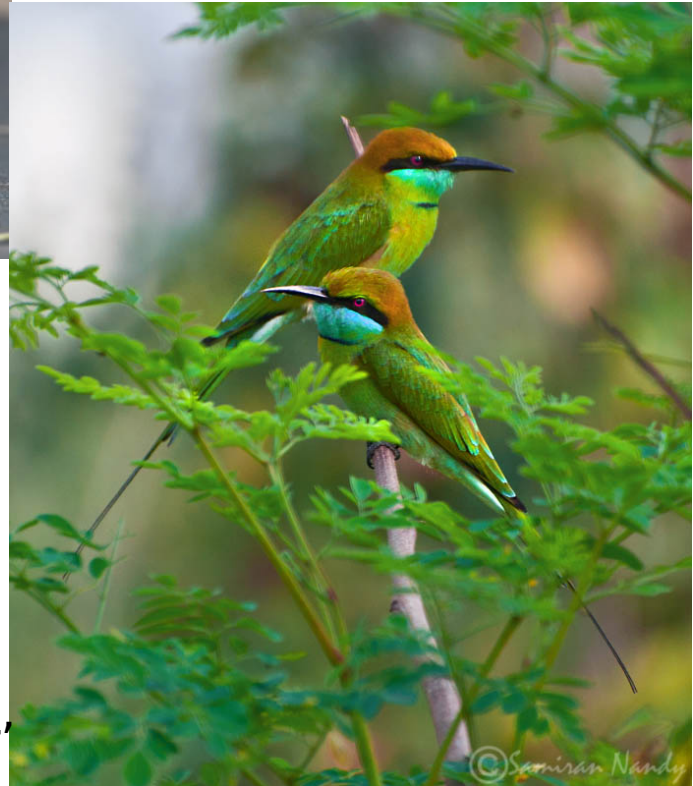
peacock	ū tṣ̃
crane	bjaĩ
crow	ɔ aɛ̃/ nɔŋ aɛ̃
Indian shama, Indian Magpie Robin	san tʃâ
Common Mynah	san tʃĩ lɔn
(Tickell's Goldenback) Woodpecker	san pok t <sup>hē</sup>
owls	maj ū k <sup>hɔ̃</sup>
Burmese Hoopoe	san maj tuŋ rû
raptor 1	nà joũ
raptor 2	lē káŋ pɛ
Wild pigeon (small)	maj tū tu
Junglefowl	jĩn bō
Burmese Francolin	maj kəsā
quail	maj tək wāt
duck	poŋ paj/ maj ŋpāj
vulture	san ladà

# Differences between the two villages

- Far more bird names from Taungbohla (48), almost double the number from Thaethit (25)
- Far more species recognised by people from Taungbohla
- Some visually striking species not known in Thaethit, *e.g.* *jēt* ‘Silver Pheasant’, *san mī tô* ‘Green Bee-Eater’



*jēt* 'Silver Pheasant'



*san mī tô* 'Green Bee-Eater'

# Differences between the two villages

- Some lexical differences
  - Unreliable ID?
  - Dialectal variation



- *E.g. maj ōt ɲoən/maj lâ*  
'Swifts/Swallows'; *san kətā lĩ/ san tā*  
*khwā* 'Black-backed Forktail'

Nuthatch	san tītī
Chloropsis	san rōi
Burmese Tomchat	san tʃâ bo
Red Vented Bulbul/ Crested Bunting	san kalà əsun
yellow bulbul	san tʃi kloāʔ
Chinese Red-spotted Blue-thr?	san bjεʔ bjεʔ
Sparrow	san ɲā
Chinese Black Drongo	san pənà
Burmese Tailorbird	san bwi
Indian Grackle	san tʃɪ lʊn koũ
Swifts/ Swallows	maj ɔt ɲoən
Parrots	san mī cju rê
Long-tailed Broadbill	san bjεʔ bjεʔ
Indian White-eye	san bidî
Burmese Rufous Piculet	(san) maj kūkūk pēt
Greater Coucal	san un
Malay Koel	san pət <sup>hei</sup>
Indian Kingfisher	san kənwe lĩ
Green Bee-eater	san mī tô
Burmese Ring-dove	maj ɛt tu
Pigeon	maj tū k <sup>ho</sup>
Junglefowl	jĩn bō
Silver Pheasant	jēt
Stone Plover	maj tīvīt
Cormorant	jɪn un

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	san kətā
Indian Spotted Munia	san pedî
green, calls the rain, long 2-note high-low call	san heiʔ kəle
Swifts/Swallows	maj lâ
nightjars	san dajh aõ

**TET**

**TBL**





# Compiling targeted stimulus material

- Bird photos, distribution information: <http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org>
- Bird call recordings: <http://www.xeno-canto.org/>



## Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) (Linnaeus, 1766)

[summary](#) [taxon grid](#) [map](#) [eBird](#) [Wikipedia](#) [NatureServe](#) [ITIS](#) [Birdlife](#) [Flickr](#) [Audio](#) [More links](#)



photo ©Sergey Yeliseev

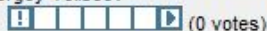


Photo powered by [flickr.com](#).

Listen to recording

Stop recording

**Order:**

Passeriformes

**Family:**

Pycnonotidae

**Scientific:**

*Pycnonotus cafer*

**Geographic range:**

- *Pycnonotus cafer cafer*: Sri Lanka
- *Pycnonotus cafer cafer (pusillus)*: S India (Bombay, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra to Kerala)
- *Pycnonotus cafer intermedius*: Himalayas (w Pakistan to w Uttar Pradesh)
- *Pycnonotus cafer humayuni*: Pakistan (Salt Range) and nw India
- [Show more...](#)

Source: [Clements checklist 2012](#)

**English:**

Red-vented Bulbul

**Czech:**

bulbul šupinkový

**German:**

Rußbülbül

**Danish:**

Rødgumpet Bulbul

**Spanish:**

Bulbul Cafre

**Finnish:**

punaperäbulbuli

**French:**

Bulbul à ventre rouge

**Icelandic:**

Ryðglymur

**Taxonomic status:**

**Species status:** full species

**Your sightings**

You must be [logged in](#) to view your sighting details. To register to [myAvibase](#) [click here](#).

**Related taxa**

- ▼ [Pycnonotus cafer](#)
  - ▼ [Pycnonotus cafer cafer](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer cafer \(cafer\)](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer cafer \(pusillus\)](#)
  - [Pycnonotus cafer intermedius](#)
  - [Pycnonotus cafer humayuni](#)
  - ▼ [Pycnonotus cafer bengalensis](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer bengalensis \(bengalensis\)](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer bengalensis \(primerosei\)](#)
  - ▼ [Pycnonotus cafer wetmorei](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer wetmorei \(wetmorei\)](#)
    - [Pycnonotus cafer wetmorei \(saturatus\)](#)
  - [Pycnonotus cafer stanfordi](#)

## 'Maranhao-Piaui' Pygmy Tyrant



XC123471



0:00

2:05



'Maranhao-Piaui' Pygmy Tyrant (*Myiornis*  
*sp.nov.Maranhao\_Piaui*) · call, song

*Jon King*

In June 2012 [Ciro Albano](#) and [Luciano Lima](#) paid a visit to local birders [Firmino Freitas Filho](#) and [Thiago Xavier](#) in Caxias in Maranhao. Firminho and Thiago had encountered many rare birds in their local patch recently and were showing those to the visitors. At one point the men heard a sound that turned out to belong to a *Myiornis* sp. . No *Myiornis* sp. was known from the general area and it seems that this is in fact a new species. [Jon King](#) has uploaded a few recordings of the bird, and [Alex Lees](#) and [Sidnei Dantas](#) found possible recordings in their old mysteries.

'Maranhao-Piaui' Pygmy Tyrant © [Ciro Albano](#)

## Collection Statistics

173017	Recordings
9025	Species
8138	Subspecies
1798	Recordists
2216:40:05	Recording Time

[More...](#)

## Latest New Species

[Saker Falcon](#)

[Orange-throated Sunangel](#)

[Gurney's Sugarbird](#)

[Tessmann's Flycatcher](#)

[Takahe](#)

[More...](#)

## What is xeno-canto?

xeno-canto is a website dedicated to sharing bird sounds from all over the world. Whether you are a research scientist, a birder, or simply curious about a sound that you heard out your kitchen window, we invite you to listen, download, and explore the bird sound recordings in the collection.

But xeno-canto is more than just a collection of recordings. It is also a collaborative project. We invite you to share your own bird recordings, help identify mystery recordings, or share your expertise in the forums. Welcome!

**Try this!**

### Mystery page

XC has a **mystery page**. Recordings that are uploaded as mystery and those that are flagged in the forum when their



English / Scientific	Length	Recordist	Date	Time	Country	Location	Elev. (m)	Type	Remarks	Actions	Cat.nr.
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:13	Conrad Pinto	2012-09-17	17:34	India	Aldona, North Goa, Goa	0	call, song	bird-seen:yes playback-used:no [sono]	 A B C D E	XC162847
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	1:24	Conrad Pinto	2012-09-12	18:33	India	Aldona, North Goa, Goa	0	call, song	bird-seen:yes playback-used:no [sono]	 A B C D E	XC161471
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:43	Conrad Pinto	2012-05-19	16:28	India	Aldona, North Goa, Goa	0	call, song	bird-seen:yes playback-used:no [sono]	 A B C D E	XC161254
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:04	Rajgopal Patil	2010-11-02	08:17	India	Pune, Pune, Maharashtra	550	alarm call	Habitat: suburban woods Alarm call in... <a href="#">more »</a> [also] [sono]	 A B C D E	XC157864
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:52	Frank Lambert	2013-01-27	18:00	India	gir national park gujarat india	160	call, song	bird-seen:yes playback-used:no [also] [sono]	 A B C D E	XC149692
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:21	Marc Anderson	2012-03-30	08:30	Nepal	Chitwan National Park, Narayani, Central Region	190	call, song	bird-seen:no playback-used:no [sono]	 A B C D E	XC146251
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:58	Matthias Feuersenger	2012-07-14	08:47	Western Samoa	Upolu, Apia, Palolo Deep Marine Reserve	1	call	Bird hopping about on some picknick-... <a href="#">more »</a> [sono]	 A B C D E	XC110523
▶ <b>Red-vented Bulbul</b> ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	0:41	Matthias Feuersenger	2012-06-12	15:46	Fiji	Caqalai Island	1	call	Recording equipment: Telinga Pro 7... <a href="#">more »</a> [also] [sono]	 A B C D E	XC108905
▶ <b>Red-vented</b>	0:23	vir joshi	2011-11-08	9:00	India	saldi pond	3	call	[sono]		XC94804



# Conclusions

- Knowledge of bird names inversely proportional to age
- Driven by local extinction of many bird species following habitat loss in recent decades
- Importance of using appropriate stimulus material for elicitation

# Thank you!

- U Wariya (Aung Chan Tha Monastery, Aungban), Ko Win Kyaw Aung (Aungban), the people of Taungbohla and Thaethit villages
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