

## Phong Dien

Criteria: A1, A2 &amp; A3

**Province(s):** Thua Thien Hue  
**PA Status:** None

**Latitude:** 16°27'N  
**Longitude:** 107°12'E  
**Area:** 41,548 ha  
**Altitude Range:** 50-1,615 m asl

**EBA / SA:**  
 Annamese Low lands EBA  
**Priority Landscape:**  
 CA 1 - Central Annamites



### General Description

The IBA comprises Phong Dien proposed nature reserve, which is situated in the Annamese lowlands. The topography of the IBA is dominated by a ridge of low mountains, extending south-east from the Annamite mountains. Prior to the Second Indochina War, the vegetation of the IBA was dominated by lowland evergreen forest and lower montane evergreen forest. Now, throughout most of the IBA, the forest has been extensively degraded, fragmented and reduced in extent through a combination of logging, shifting cultivation, wartime spraying of defoliant, napalm and forest fires<sup>1,2,3</sup>. However, the forest within the IBA forms part of one of the largest remaining areas of lowland evergreen forest in the Annamese lowlands. To the west, Phong Dien IBA is contiguous with Dakrong IBA in Quang Tri province.

### Bird Fauna: Key Features

The avifauna of Phong Dien IBA is characteristic of the Annamese Lowlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA), and the IBA supports six of the nine species that define this EBA. The species of greatest conservation importance at Phong Dien is Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*. Until its rediscovery in 1996, this species was believed to be extinct in the wild. Edwards's Pheasant has a very restricted range in central Vietnam but reports from hunters suggest that this species is still relatively common at the IBA. Detailed information is lacking on the status of other restricted-range species found at the IBA, such as Annam Partridge *Arborophila merlini* and Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia danjoui*, although a field survey in 1998 confirmed that Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata* is still common<sup>1,2</sup>.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Edwards's Pheasant <i>Lophura edwardsi</i>	A1, A2	EN	2	One male and one female were trapped in Phong My commune, at 300 to 400 m asl, in August 1996 <sup>2</sup> . In addition, two females, one male and four eggs were taken by rattan collectors within the watershed of the My Chanh river between 100 and 300 m asl in March 2000 <sup>4</sup> .
Crested Argus <i>Rheinardia ocellata</i>	A1, A2	VU	15	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Siamese Fireback <i>Lophura diardi</i>	A1, A3	NT	13	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Red-collared Woodpecker <i>Picus rabieri</i>	A1, A3	NT	11	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
[Great Hornbill <i>Buceros bicornis</i> ]	A1	NT	14	The species was provisionally recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Brown Hornbill <i>Anorrhinus tickelli</i>	A1, A3	NT	16	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Blyth's Kingfisher <i>Alcedo hercules</i>	A1, A3	NT	8	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler <i>Jabouilleia danjoui</i>	A1, A2	NT	17	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Annam Partridge <i>Arborophila merlini</i>	A2		4	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
White-cheeked laughingthrush <i>Garrulax vassali</i>	A2		8	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Grey-faced Tit Babbler <i>Macronous kelleyi</i>	A2		12	The species was recorded between June and July 1998 <sup>2</sup> .

Notes: [ ] = unconfirmed record.

**Biome Restricted Species:** The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 18 species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09). See Appendix 4 for details.

### Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
*Northern Slow Loris <i>Nycticebus bengalensis</i> <sup>2</sup>	DD	[Indochinese Box Turtle <i>Cuora galbinifrons</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	CR
*Northern Pigtail Macaque <i>Macaca leonina</i> <sup>2</sup>	VU	[Chinese Three-striped Box Turtle <i>Cuora trifasciata</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	CR
*Rhesus Macaque <i>Macaca mulatta</i> <sup>2</sup>	NT	[Elongated Tortoise <i>Indotestudo elongata</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	EN
*Stump-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca arctoides</i> <sup>2</sup>	VU	[Wattle-necked Softshell Turtle <i>Palea steindachneri</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	EN
*Red-shanked Douc <i>Pygathrix nemaeus nemaeus</i> <sup>2</sup>	EN	[Chinese Softshell Turtle <i>Pelodiscus sinensis</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	VU
*White-cheeked Gibbon <i>Nomascus leucogenys</i> <sup>2</sup>	DD	<i>Podocarpus neriifolius</i> <sup>2</sup>	DD
[Big-headed Turtle <i>Platysternon megacephalum</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	EN	[Southern Serow <i>Naemorhedus sumatraensis</i> ] <sup>2</sup>	VU

Notes: \* = although recorded during a survey of Phong Dien and Dakrong proposed nature reserves, it is uncertain whether the species occurs within the IBA as locality data is lacking; [ ] = unconfirmed record.

### Threats to Biodiversity

The major threat to biodiversity at Phong Dien IBA is hunting, particularly the use of snares, which is indiscriminate and threatens ground bird species such as Edwards's Pheasant and Crested Argus. A recent study on hunting at Phong Dien discovered a strong association between hunting and rattan collection because rattan collectors set snares while in the forest<sup>5</sup>. Other threats to biodiversity at the IBA include over-exploitation of firewood and other NTFPs, timber extraction, and forest fires, which result from the use of fire to clear land for agriculture<sup>1</sup>.

Threat	Severity
Fire	• •
Hunting	• •
Selective logging / cutting	•
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	• •

### Conservation Actions

- In 1998, following the rediscovery of Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* at the site, a feasibility study for the establishment of a protected area at Phong Dien was conducted<sup>2</sup>.
- In 2001, an investment plan was prepared for Phong Dien, which proposed the establishment of a 41,548 ha nature reserve<sup>3</sup>. This investment plan has since been approved by Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- Although, to date, a nature reserve management board has not been established<sup>5</sup>, two forest guard stations, in Phong Dien and A Luoi district, have been assigned the responsibility of biodiversity conservation at the site.
- During 2000 and 2001, with the support of the WWF Indochina Programme, Thua Thien Hue Provincial Forest Protection Department implemented several activities aimed at raising environmental awareness and controlling hunting at the site<sup>5</sup>.
- In 2002, a conservation strategy for Edwards's Pheasant at Phong Dien was prepared with the support of the Rufford Small Grants Scheme of the Whitley Awards Foundation<sup>5</sup>.

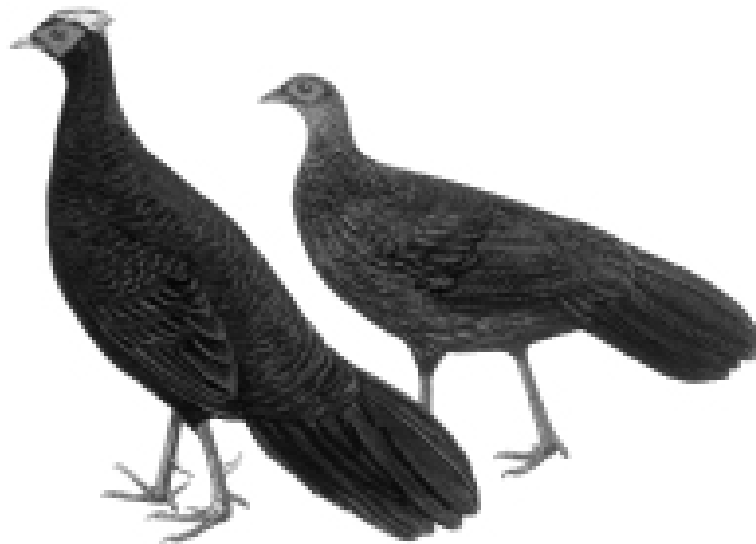
### Recommendations

- Phong Dien should be decreed as a nature reserve, and a management board should be established<sup>3</sup>.
- Local communities should be involved in forest protection and management<sup>5</sup>.
- Environmental awareness activities should be implemented among local communities, particularly focussing on the control of hunting<sup>5</sup>.
- Anti-hunting and logging patrols should focus on the upper watersheds of the My Chanh and O Lau rivers, which are the key areas for Edwards's Pheasant<sup>5</sup>.
- Collection of rattan and other NTFPs within the IBA should be regulated, to ensure that these activities take place at sustainable levels<sup>5</sup>.

- A programme of community-based fire prevention, including awareness raising activities and establishment of village fire-watch groups, should be initiated.
- A monitoring programme should be established to monitor levels of hunting and illegal logging<sup>5</sup>.
- Further studies should be conducted to assess the habitat requirements of Edwards's Pheasant<sup>5</sup>.

### **References**

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Le Trong Trai, Richardson, W. J., Le Van Cham, Tran Hieu Minh, Tran Quang Ngoc, Nguyen Van Sang, Monastyrskii, A. L. and Eames, J. C. (1999) *A feasibility study for the establishment of Phong Dien (Thua Thien Hue province) and Dakrong (Quang Tri province) Nature Reserves, Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
3. Le Trong Trai, Tran Hieu Minh, Tran Quoc Dung and Hughes, R. (2001) *An investment plan for the establishment of Phong Dien Nature Reserve, Thua Thien Hue province, Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
4. Eames, J. C. and Tordoff, A. W. (in prep) Recent records and a conservation status review of some threatened and near-threatened bird species in Vietnam.
5. Tran Quang Ngoc, Nguyen Van Vinh, Le Trong Trai, Phan Thanh Ha, Le Ngoc Tuan and Dang Thang Long (2002) *Understanding the impacts of hunting on Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* at Phong Dien Nature Reserve, Vietnam: towards a strategy for managing hunting activities*. Unpublished report to the Whitley Awards Foundation.



Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*