

Photo-Shorts

First Report of a Great Iora Nest

Kah-Wan Tan, Kwang-Ming Teh & Yoke-Mooi Liew

There have been no confirmed nest reports of the Great Iora *Aegithina lafresnayei*. Previous records of nests collected belonged to the Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia* (Wells 2007; Wells 2020). On Great Iora breeding, Wells (2007) states there are two reports from South Thailand, one in April of an incubation and another in July of 'an adult attending one or more fledglings', but details were lacking.

On 07 June 2025 Kah-Wan Tan and Kwang-Ming Teh spotted a Great Iora nest in the Gunung Nuang Recreational Forest, Selangor, Malaysia. The location was a path into the forest reserve with mixed secondary and primary growth, at 280 m ASL. The nest was located in a *Macaranga bancana* (Common Mahang) tree, approximately 6-7 meters above the ground. It was built into the fork of a branch and was sheltered by leaves (Plate1).



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Plate 1: Great Iora nest in a *Macaranga bancana* tree with adult male incubating, Gunung Nuang Recreational Forest, Selangor, Malaysia, 07 June 2025.

The nest was a small cup built with plant material and held together with extensive spider silk, very much like the nest structure of the Common Iora and Green Iora *Aegithina viridissima*.

Both the female (Plate 2) and male were observed incubating.



Plate 2: Female Great Iora incubating, Gunung Nuang Recreational Forest, Selangor, Malaysia, 07 June 2025.

A visit to the nesting site one day later by Yoke-Mooi Liew showed the adult male collecting more material to reinforce the nest (Plate 3). The male was collecting the left-over waxy exudate produced by planthopper nymphs, probably of the *Copsyrna maculata* species. This waxy exudate is hydrophobic. This behaviour of enhancing the integrity of the nest despite incubation in progress is also recognised in the Green Iora (Amar-Singh HSS 2024). Link to a video recording here: <https://youtu.be/LkTHJLSKe48>



Plate 3: Male Great Iora collecting waxy exudate produced by planthopper nymphs for the nest, Gunung Nuang Recreational Forest, Selangor, Malaysia, 08 June 2025.

Sadly, we were not able to follow up on this nest and have no further details of this breeding episode.

An online and literature search did not reveal any other nest reports. A search of the 828 images in the Macaulay Library showed one report by Sam Hambly (Macaulay Library ML570649781) of a Great Iora '*nest building at top*' in May 2023 at Chiang Mai, Thailand; the nest was not shown in the image. Another image by Wich'yanan Limparungpatthanakij (Macaulay Library ML21974870) showed an adult feeding an insect to a juvenile in July 2017 at Songkhla, Thailand. There are also a few other images of an adult with food in its beak suggesting it could be taking prey to feed juveniles.

Our observation and available current data suggests that breeding activities happen in the first half of the year.

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