

ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRD

Chloropsis hardwickii

There are 11 bird species in the family Chloropseidae, all of which are distributed in the Southeast Asia and belonged to the genus *Chloropsis*, which means “green appearance” in Latin. Their common name, leafbirds, also suggests the same fact. Some species, such as the orange-bellied leafbird, display sexual dimorphism in their plumage – male being more colourful than female.

EXCELLENT MIMICS

Leafbirds are good at singing and mimicking sounds. They compose songs by learning and imitating the calls of the other birds. An orange-bellied leafbird may make the sounds of any birds in the area, including bulbuls, sunbirds, tits, magpies and even Crested Serpent Eagle, etc. It often displays strong territorial behaviour and is aggressive towards other birds when guarding its foraging sites.

Male Orange-bellied Leafbird

The “orange-bellied” leafbird is named after the adult male, which is brightly coloured with a unique orange belly, making it easily separated from the other leafbirds. It also has a grass-green back, a dark purplish-blue tail and flight feathers, and a black mask over its eyes, throat and chest.

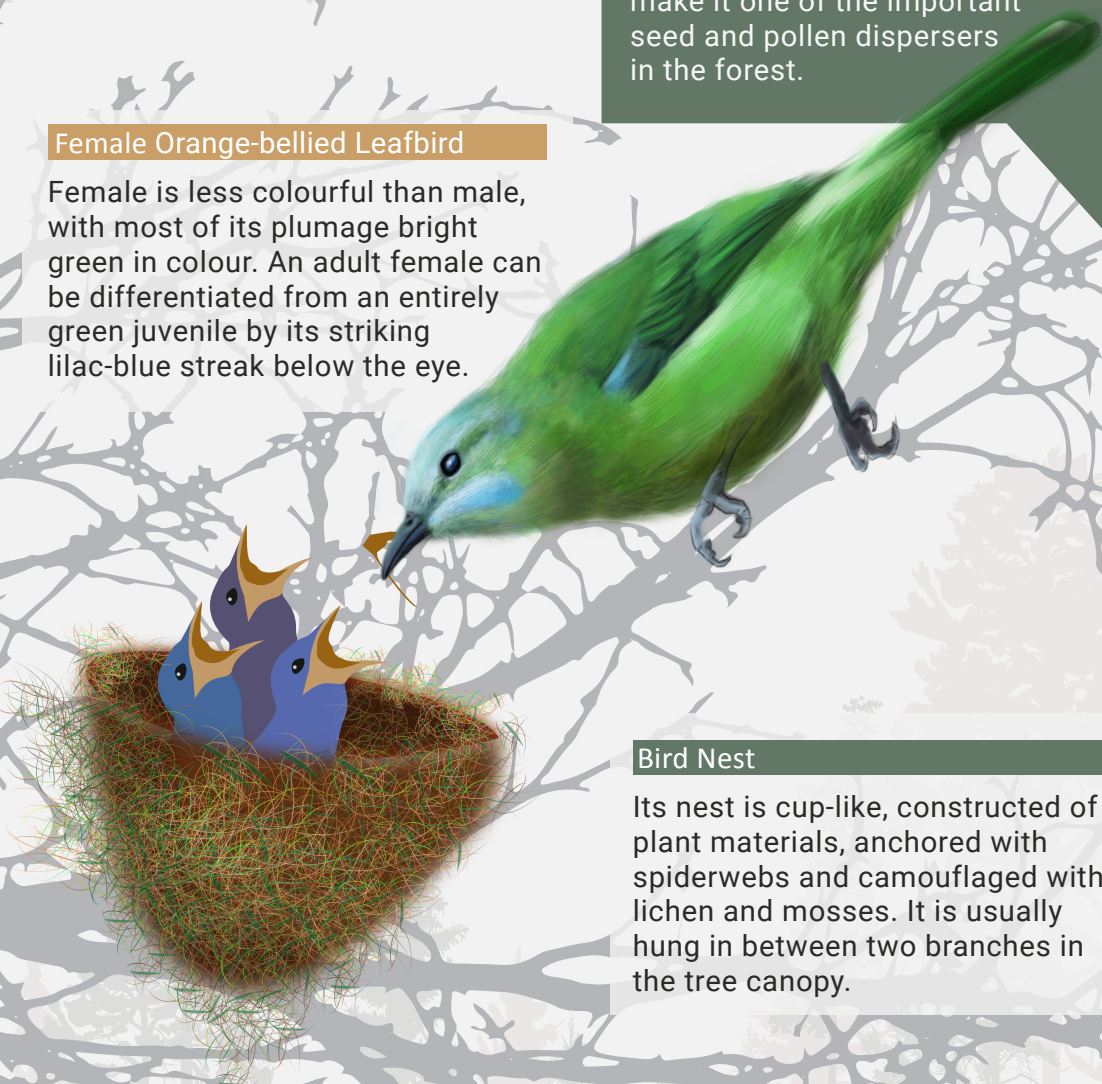


OPPORTUNISTIC FEEDER

The orange-bellied leafbird is a generalist, which means they can eat a wide variety of food whatever the habitat provides – insects, spiders, fruits, seeds, and nectar, with its brush-tipped tongue. These make it one of the important seed and pollen dispersers in the forest.

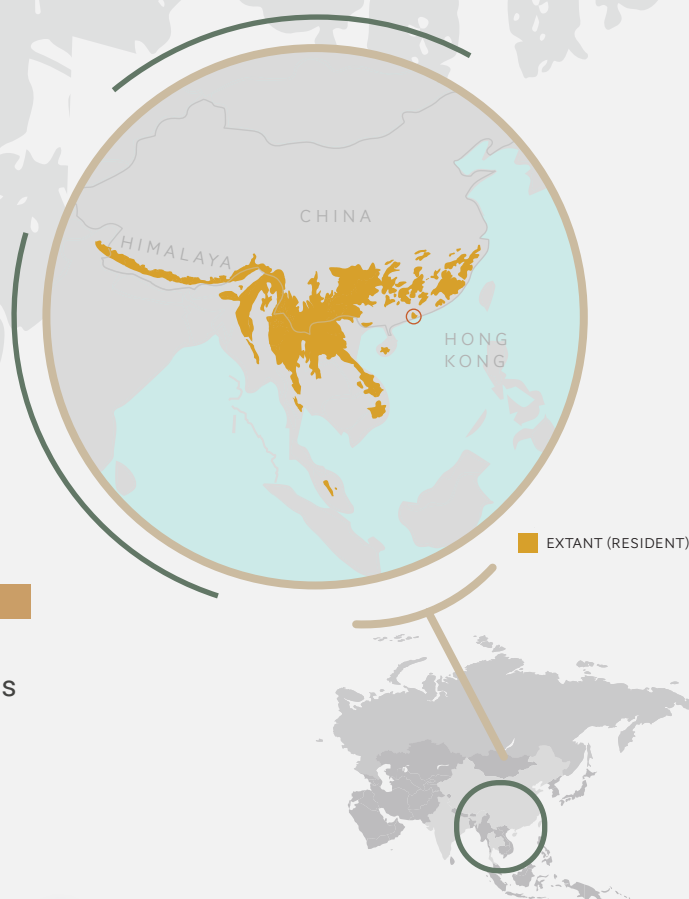
Female Orange-bellied Leafbird

Female is less colourful than male, with most of its plumage bright green in colour. An adult female can be differentiated from an entirely green juvenile by its striking lilac-blue streak below the eye.



Bird Nest

Its nest is cup-like, constructed of plant materials, anchored with spiderwebs and camouflaged with lichen and mosses. It is usually hung in between two branches in the tree canopy.



Distribution and Habitat

Native to the areas around Himalayas, and Southeast Asia with 4 subspecies identified. Orange-bellied leafbirds mostly inhabit the canopy of broadleaf evergreen forests. Resident in Hong Kong.

Conservation Status

The orange-bellied leafbird is listed as “Least Concern” in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, however, three other leafbird species are already listed as “Endangered”. The beautiful appearance and pleasant voice of leafbirds make them famous cage birds, as a result, they are widely trapped in the wild. In addition, owing to the ongoing habitat destruction, the global population of most leafbirds are suspected to be in decline.

WHERE TO SEE

Sightings in KFBG

Commonly recorded

KFBG Distribution

Middle and Upper Areas



Leafbirds are mostly grass-green plumaged, so they blend in well into their tropical habitat. In addition, they usually remain high up in the canopy of trees, making them hard to be discovered. They especially love to forage on trees with mature fruits or flowers.