

Short Communication

New sighting record of white-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus* in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh, India

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The white-tailed Lapwing, *Vanellus leucurus*, is a species of bird which is listed by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Least Concern, winter visitor to India and breed in Central Asia and Southern Russia. It is occasionally sighted in the western region of Maharashtra State, Gujarat, Rajasthan, India, but hardly ever documented. There is no record of its presence in the study area. In this note, the first sighting record of the white-tailed Lapwing at Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh was reported.

Key words: Winter visitor, Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh, *Vanellus leucurus*.

INTRODUCTION

The white-tailed Lapwing, *Vanellus leucurus*, is a species of bird which is listed by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Least Concern (ver 3.1). It is a medium-sized wader belonging to the family, Charadriidae, occurring singly, in pairs or in small groups (Urban et al., 1986; Grimmet et al., 2011; Message and Taylor, 2013). The species prefer to forage in short grassland within or near dry part of wetlands. It breeds in Baluchistan, winters in North-West subcontinent. More or less migratory populations breed in Russia and migrate in winter to northeast Africa, the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent, and reappear in their breeding lands in

March and April (del Hoyo et al., 1996; Hayman et al., 1986; Rasmussen and Anderton, 2012; Bird Life International, 2016; Sama, 2002). White-tailed Lapwing has large dark eyes, blackish bill, very long yellow legs and white tail lacking black band. Juvenile has dark sub terminal marks and pale fringes to feathers of the upperpart. Crown is mottled with dark brown (Grimmett et al., 2011). The habitat consists of freshwater marshes and marshy wetlands edges. They usually feed in shallow water by pecking at the surface and by foot dabbling.

In this note, the first sighting record of the white-tailed Lapwing at Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh

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Figure 1. A white-tailed Lapwing.



Figure 2. White-tailed Lapwing in pair.

was reported. Line Transect method was used for the observation and monitoring.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was performed in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary (NBS) from December 2017 to January 2018. Survey work was carried out during suitable time in winter morning (7:00 to 11:00 am, evening: 3:00 to 5:30 pm). Observations were made along line transects with the aid of 10 x 50 binoculars and Canon EOS 70D SLR camera. A line transect of 1 to 100 m was prepared and the birds were monitored on both sides of the transect by close end transect up to 2 km without stopping. The birds were identified using standard field guide books of Ali and Ripley (1995) and Grimmett et al. (2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On 23rd December 2017 at 9:00 h, a white-tailed Lapwing was observed in the open short grasses foraging with Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) and Indian Pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*) during bird monitoring near the Watch Tower in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Unnao District in Uttar Pradesh, India. It was photographed for authorization of the identification (Figure 1). The habitat of the sanctuary consisted of short grasses and marshy areas. This species was previously not recorded in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Unnao. Again, on 30th December 2017, two pairs of white-tailed Lapwing were sighted by the bird monitoring group (Figure 2).

It has been reported from various places in India, like Delhi (Urfi, 2003), Maharashtra Bhayandar and Naigaon (Lad and Patil, 2015), the Bharat Petroleum Corporation mangroves (Verma et al., 2004), Manor (Monga, 2001), Gondur Tank, Dhule District (Vyawahare, 1992), Nandurbar (Davidson, 1882) and a tank near Kalyan, Thane district (Abdulali, 1952). The white-tailed Lapwing is a winter visitor to India (Grimmett et al., 2011). It is a regularly observed bird in northern and central regions, but a rare species for western Maharashtra (Anand, 2003).

Conclusion

During the study, this species was seen with Red-wattled Lapwings (*V. indicus*) and other waders like Indian pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*) and Grey headed Lapwing (*Vanellus cinereous*). There is no previous record of sighting of this species from the Nawabganj Bird

Sanctuary. There could be various reasons why this species was scarcely reported in North India as single birds or in groups of two or four while this is gregarious in nature. This must be further studied. The sighting in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary seems to be a domestic extension of range for the white-tailed Lapwing.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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