Long-tailed Jaeger. Opinions on the bird from Kochi were divided and hence further detailed opinions are invited from experts.

The effort of getting multiple photographers to scan their archives, coordinating with them to pick the relevant images, processing them, and collating all these images is a herculean task! As indicated above, this whole process of retrospective identification was possible because photographs from multiple photographers (providing multiple angles and resolutions) were available for browsing at a single place.

This discussion highlights the importance of building up an archive of photographs to solve identification challenges for difficult groups like pelagic birds. It is recommended that in future pelagic trips the coordinators should transfer all photographs from participants, then and there, without worrying about content, quality, or size of the transferred images.

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Lesser Noddy *Anous tenuirostris* from Kanyakumari coast, Tamil Nadu

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Pelagic bird watching trips have been conducted regularly since September 2010 off the western coast of India (Karuthedathu *et al.* 2013). However, on the eastern coast, they started only from September 2012. The fourth such trip was organized by the Pearl City Nature Society, on 07 September 2013 from off the Kanyakumari coast (08°05'N, 77°33'E). The Southwest Monsoon was not active over this part of the country at this time and reports from fishermen about bird sightings encouraged us to make this trip. At around 0900 hrs, approximately 5 kms from the harbor, we sighted, close to a catamaran, a Noddy, along with Sooty- *Onychoprion fuscatus* and Common *Sterna hirundo* Terns. At first sight, the Noddy appeared smaller than a Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus*, which we had sighted on previous trips, including one from Tuticorin, *c.* 100 kms from Kanyakumari. Its flight was faster than a Brown Noddy and somewhat fluttery. When we approached closer, it moved

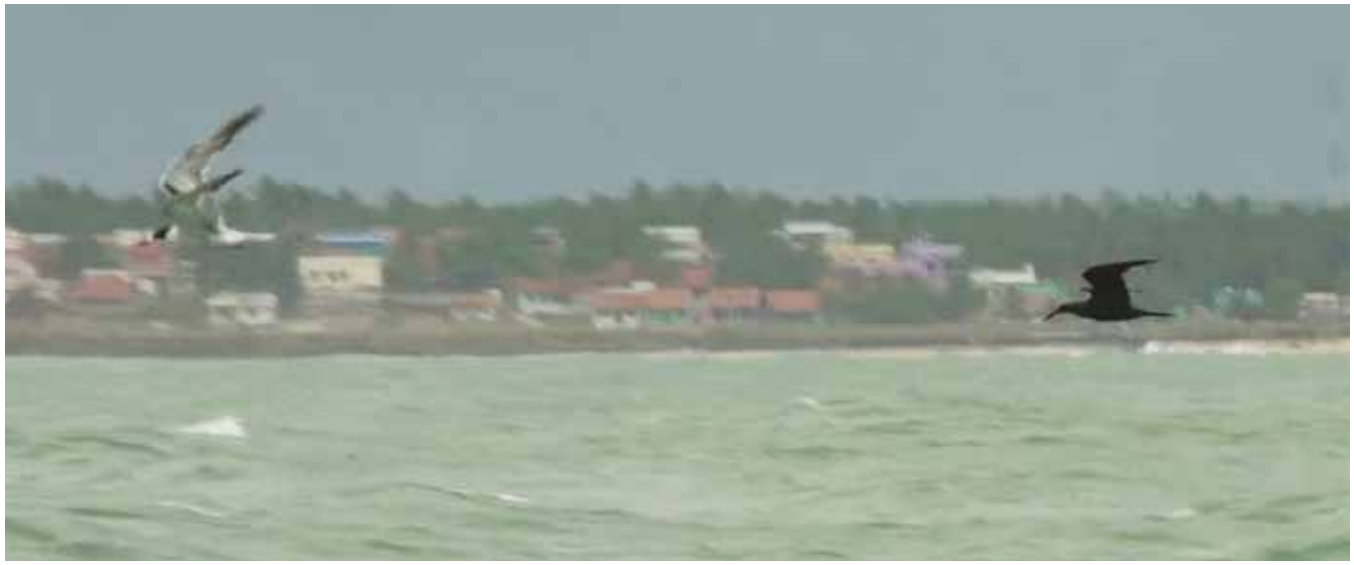

Photo: D. Karuthedathu

84. Lesser Noddy and Common Tern.

Photo: M. Mohan

85. Lesser Noddy.

away from our boat and disappeared from view.

While the bird was flying away from us, MM managed to take few good photographs, and DK managed to grab a short video footage. Analysis of these images indicated that the bird in question had a long thin beak, a relatively delicate build, long narrow wings, and uniform dark upper parts, all of which favored a Lesser- *A. minutus*, or a Black- *A. tenuirostris* Noddy [**84** Karuthedathu 2013). The bird also showed pale lores and a pale cap grading evenly to the grey sides [**85**], and moderately forked tail, indicating a Lesser Noddy, as against a Black Noddy, which should have shown all dark lore, contrasting pale white cap, and deeply forked tail (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012).

These images were also circulated amongst various experts (David Montecelli, and Tony Diamond, *pers. comm.*, emails of 12 September 2013; W. R. P. Bourne, and Teresa Catry, *pers. comm.,* emails of 12 September 2013; Charles Anderson, *pers. comm.,* email of 18 September 2013; Chris Feare, *pers. comm.,* emails of 18 October 2013) who were familiar with both types of birds, for confirmation. All of them agreed that it is one of the smaller noddies, and while commenting on the difficulty in separating Black and Lesser Noddy in field, most of them confirmed the identification mainly based on the pale lore and evenly grading cap. This is the second record of this species from Tamil Nadu, the first being from Point Calimere (Balachandran *et al.* 1986).

Breeding of the Lesser Noddy has been reported from Chagos and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). It is also reported as a non-breeding visitor to Sri Lanka (De Silva 1979; Robson 2011). Further pelagic trips from the southern Indian coast are essential to collect more data on this species and conspecifics.

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