

First photographic record of Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps* from the Indian Subcontinent

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The Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps* is short-tailed, long-legged, chunky warbler that breeds in the warm temporal regions of the eastern Palearctic in north-eastern Asia, Korea, and Japan, and winters mainly in Southeast Asia including Thailand, Myanmar, and Indochina (Kennerley & Pearson 2010; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). The species is considered a winter vagrant to Bangladesh and Nepal (Grimmett *et al.* 1998; Siddiqui *et al.* 2008). Previous sight records from the Indian Subcontinent include one from south-eastern Nepal in 1993 (Lewis 1994), and two from north-eastern Bangladesh in January 1997, and December 1999 (Thompson & Johnson 2003). Rasmussen & Anderton 2012 treated these three records as unconfirmed, and the presence of the Asian Stubtail in the region as hypothetical, considering one record from Nepal as non-definitive and two records (with tape-recording) from Bangladesh as uncorroborated. However, the records from Bangladesh are less likely to have been misidentified given the distinctiveness of the bird, the audio recordings, and the given experience of the observers.

The first photograph of the Asian Stubtail, as evidence of its occurrence in the Indian Subcontinent, was taken in Bangladesh on 2 January 2011. The bird was observed at 1700 hrs for an



34. Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps*.



36. Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps*.



35. Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps*.

hour: feeding, bathing, and preening in a wet area of a moderately dry (c. 12 m wide, c. 30 m from the waterfall) stream, which originated from a c. 50 m high waterfall known as Madhobkunda Waterfall (24°38'N, 92°13'E), Barlekha, Moulvi Bazar, Bangladesh. The bird was identified as an Asian Stubtail based on very short tail, relatively longer bill, indistinctive scales on cheek, long and prominent yellowish supercilium and black eye-stripe, white under parts, and very pale legs and feet [34, 35, 36].

This is possibly the first photographic record and further confirmation of its vagrancy in Bangladesh and in the Indian Subcontinent is likely. Several visits were made to the waterfall during the winters of 2012 and 2013, by the author and others, but no confirmed sighting was recorded since then.

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