



43. Rose-ringed Parakeets hang roosting on pinnate-leaved palm fronds.

through the months of the south-western monsoon. Despite the presence of several tree species in the area, parakeets roosted only in the pinnate-leaved palms [43] hang-roosting under their leaves at night.

When we posted photographs taken by SPN, on the Facebook Group, 'Birdwatchers of Kerala', (<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1728408393841913&set=gm.1162988080477209&type=3&theater>), Mr. Md. Mothi responded, confirming that he too had noticed parakeets displaying similar behaviour in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (Mothi, *in litt.*, 13 May 2017). At Ramankary, most tree species have an understory, which the roosting-site palms did not. We believe this to be an anti-predatory safety measure adopted by the birds, as mentioned by Collar (1997), which could also help them escape from the strong monsoon winds, and torrential rain.

## References

- Ali, S., 1984. *Birds of Kerala*. Reprint of 2nd ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. Pp. i–xxiii, 1–444.
- Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D., 2001. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Ceylon [sic]*. 2nd ed. Delhi: (Sponsored by Bombay Natural History Society.) Oxford University Press [Oxford India Paperbacks.] Vol. 3 of 10 vols. Pp. 2 pr. II, pp. i–xvii, 1–327, 1 l., 2 ll.
- Collar, N. J., 1997. Family Psittacidae (Parrots). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., & Sargatal, J., (eds.). *Handbook of the birds of the world. sandgrouse to cuckoos*. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions. Vol. 4: Pp. 280–477.
- Forshaw, J. M., 2010. *Parrots of the world*. 1st ed. London: Christopher Helm. Pp. 1–328.
- Gadgil, M., & Ali, S., 1976. Communal roosting habits of Indian birds. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 72 (3): 716–727 (1975).
- Khan, H. A., & Beg, M. A., 1998. Roost and roosting habits of rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) in central Punjab (Pakistan). *Pakistan Journal of Biological Sciences* 1 (1): 37–38.
- Mabb, K. T., 1997. Roosting behavior of naturalized parrots in the San Gabriel Valley, California. *Western Birds* 28: 202–208.
- Neelakantan, K. K., (Induchudan). 2017. *Keralathile Pakshikal*. Trichur: Kerala Sahitya Academy. Pp. i–xiii, 1–638 [5th ed. [In Malayalam.]
- Rasmussen, P. C., & Anderton, J. C., 2012. *Birds of South Asia: the Ripley guide: attributes and status*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C. and Barcelona: Smithsonian Institution and Lynx Edicions. Vol. 2 of 2 vols. Pp. 1–683.
- Zeeshan, A., Khan, H. A., Javed, M., & Farooq, M. J., 2016. Roosting requirements and habits of rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*: Borealis) in a canal-irrigated plantation in central Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Entomology and Zoology Studies* 4 (6): 663–667.

– S. Prasanth Narayanan [SPN], A. P. Thomas & B. Sreekumar

S. Prasanth Narayanan, Advanced Centre of Environmental Studies and Sustainable Studies (ACESSD), School of Environmental Sciences Mahatma Gandhi University, Priyadarsini Hills, Kottayam 686560, Kerala, India  
E-mail: [narayanank@gmail.com](mailto:narayanank@gmail.com)

A. P. Thomas, Advanced Centre of Environmental Studies and Sustainable Studies (ACESSD), School of Environmental Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University, Priyadarsini Hills, Kottayam 686560, Kerala, India

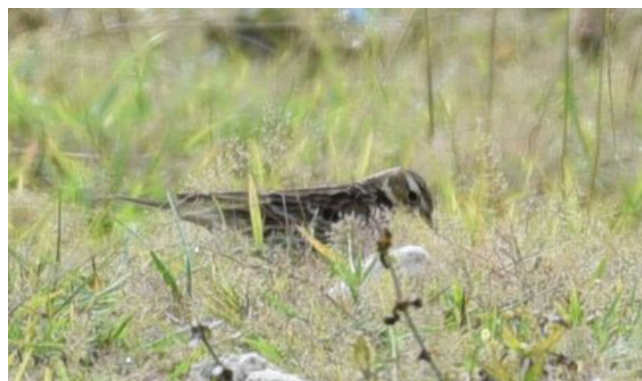
B. Sreekumar, Kottayam Nature Society, Sree Nilayam, Near Union Club, Kottayam, Kerala, India.

## The Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* on Great Nicobar Island, India

On 25 November 2015, while on our way to the southernmost point in Indian territory, Indira Point (6.75°N, 93.82°E), Great Nicobar Island, we stopped briefly at Gandhi Nagar, off Gelathia Road, as the damp open habitat with short grass, along the sea, looked promising for birding. We flushed two birds while walking, which, after a short erratic flight, dropped to the ground and resumed foraging. Loathe to disturbing them again, we watched them from a safe distance and immediately recognised them as pipits *Anthus* sp. The birds were alert and proved very shy whenever we ventured closer, flushing several times, uttering a loud *pssssssii* call—but fortunately they did not leave the area, thus allowing prolonged views. We identified them as Red-throated Pipits *Anthus cervinus*. Though they are on the India Checklist, they are scarce here, and so we decided to photograph them [44, 45].



44. Red-throated Pipit on Great Nicobar Island.



45. Red-throated Pipit on Great Nicobar Island.

This monotypic pipit, with its colour changes, breeds in the Tundra. It enjoys one of the most northerly ranges of all passerine birds and undertakes one of the longest journeys made by an *Anthus* pipit (Simms 1992), wintering predominantly in Africa (south of the Sahara), and South-east Asia (Tyler 2004).

The identification of pipits can be difficult, especially outside their breeding season. The following description is based on brief field notes and photographs:

**Description:** Both birds had rather uniform olive-tinged, grey-brown and white streaked plumage. The distinct black streaks were broad on the back and flanks and narrow on the crown, nape, rump, and upper tail coverts. While the breast was overall white with heavy uniformly dark streaks, the flanks had thick longitudinal stripes. The belly and undertail coverts were unstreaked. Prominent white stripes on mantle were conspicuous. There were two white wing bars, the upper one, on the median wing coverts, being broader and more conspicuous. The legs were the colour of pale flesh.

The crown had fine dark longitudinal streaking extending to the nape and hind neck; short thin bill; a prominent buffish-white supercilium starting at base of bill and reaching far beyond eye towards nape; dark brown ear-coverts; very prominent sub-moustachial stripe, dark malar stripe, and strong black patch (wedge shaped) on lower throat, all created a rather characteristic pattern.

In general, adult Red-throated Pipits show rufous on the supercilium, throat, and breast, although a small number of adult females may lack any trace of rufous and thus appear similar to first-winter birds (Alström & Mild 2003). The fresh plumage, lack of any rufous on the head, the distinct malar stripe, strong wedge shape on lower throat, white stripes along mantle indicate that the Great Nicobar birds were first-winters.

**Behaviour:** The habitat was typical for Red-throated Pipits, which preferentially forage in areas of short turf browsed by ungulates where, as here, they often form mixed assemblages with Yellow Wagtails *M. flava* (Cramp 1988; Alström & Mild 2003; *pers. obs.*). The birds typically foraged singly, presumably to avoid competition with both conspecifics and allospecifics.

The Red-throated Pipit is a scarce passage/winter migrant to the Indian Subcontinent (Ali & Ripley 1998; Kazmierczak 2000). According to Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) it is a passage migrant in north-eastern Afghanistan, the Indus Valley (Pakistan), and occasionally through the Himalayas and North-eastern India; it winters in the Maldives, the Andaman Islands, and possibly the Nicobar Islands (old sight report from Camorta). While Kazmierczak (2000), Grimmett *et al.* (2011), and Ripley (1982) have assumed its presence on the Nicobar group of islands, probably based on Hume (1874), Tikader's (1984) statement that 'in the Bay Islands it is common but restricted to marshy grounds' is of very general nature. We wonder if this statement of Tikader is justified, for Hume (1874) quotes Davison's remarks that it 'occurs both at the Andamans and Nicobars, frequenting similar situations. At the Nicobars I observed it only on Camorta Island.' During his visits to the Nicobar Islands, Abdulali (1965, 1967, 1979) did not report the species although he reiterated that Hume recorded it from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and, 'in the latter it had only been recorded from Camotra.'

Thus, the Great Nicobar Island birds probably constitute the first confirmed photographic record from the Nicobar Islands.

## References

- Abdulali, H., 1965. The birds of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 61 (3): 483–571 (1964).
- Abdulali, H., 1967. The birds of the Nicobar Islands, with notes on some Andaman birds. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 64 (2): 139–190.
- Abdulali, H., 1979. The birds of Great and Car Nicobars with some notes on wildlife conservation in the Islands. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 75 (3): 744–772 (1978).
- Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D., 1998. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Robins to wagtails*. 2nd (Hardback) ed. Delhi: (Sponsored by Bombay Natural History Society.) Oxford University Press. Vol. 9 of 10 vols. Pp. i–xviii, 1–310, 10 II.
- Alström, P., & Mild, K., 2003. *Pipits & Wagtails of Europe, Asia and North America. Identification and systematics*. 1st ed. London: Christopher Helm (Publishers) Ltd. Pp. 1–496.
- Cramp, S., (ed.), 1988. *The birds of the Western Palearctic*, 5. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 1998. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 1st ed. London: Christopher Helm, A & C Black. Pp. 1–888.
- Hume, A. O., 1874. Contributions to the ornithology of India. The Islands of the Bay of Bengal. *Stray Feathers* 2 (1,2&3): 29–324.
- Kazmierczak, K., 2000. *A field guide to the birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives*. 1st ed. New Delhi: Om Book Service. Pp. 1–352.
- Pittie, A., 2017. Bibliography of South Asian Ornithology. URL: <http://www.southasiaornith.in>. [Accessed on 15/10/2017]
- Rasmussen, P. C., & Anderton, J. C., 2012. *Birds of South Asia: the Ripley guide*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C. and Barcelona: Smithsonian Institution and Lynx Edicions. 2 vols. Pp. 1–378; 1–683.
- Ripley, S. D., 1982. *A synopsis of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka*. 2nd ed. Bombay; Oxford: Bombay Natural History Society; Oxford University Press. Pp. i–xxvi, 1–653.
- Simms, E., 1992. *British Larks, Pipits and Wagtails*. Harper Collins, London.
- Tikader, B. K., 1984. *Birds of Andaman & Nicobar Islands*. Calcutta: Zoological Survey of India. Pp. i–xxiii, 1–167.
- Tyler, S. J., 2004. Family Motacillidae (Pipits and wagtails). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., & Christie, D., (eds.). *Handbook of the birds of the world. Cotingas to pipits and wagtails*. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions. Vol. 9: Pp. 686–786.

– Harkirat Singh Sangha & Sudhir Garg

Harkirat Singh Sangha, B-27, Gautam Marg, Hanuman Nagar  
Jaipur 302021, Rajasthan, India

E-mail: [harkirat.sangha@gmail.com](mailto:harkirat.sangha@gmail.com)

Sudhir Garg, Vidhyadhar Nagar, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

E-mail: [sudhirgarg@gmail.com](mailto:sudhirgarg@gmail.com)

Received on 17 November 2017.

## Red-naped Shaheen *Falco peregrinus babylonicus* from Belgaum, Karnataka

While birding in the morning of 06 December 2017, at Belgaum (15.81°N, 74.53°E; 662 m asl), we noticed a falcon perched on the branch of a tree and feeding on some prey it held in its talons. When we got a better view, we were surprised to see that it was a Red-naped Shaheen *Falco peregrinus babylonicus* feeding on a Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* [46]. A few crows were harassing the bird, and ultimately, it flew away with its prey. While flying off it uttered a *kee-kee-kee* call.

We compared the images of the falcon to the illustrations in Rasmussen & Anderton (2012), and in Bhatt & Ganpule (2017), confirming our identification. The photos clearly show the rufous nape, and the rufous wash on cheeks and underparts—diagnostic of this race. We also discussed the identification with Nirav Bhatt, Prasad Ganpule, and J. Pranay Rao; all concurred with our identification.