feel that larger scale surveys are needed in Nal Sarovar during the White-tailed Lapwing's breeding season to assess the size of breeding population, document its breeding biology, and identify potential threats.

Acknowledgments

DM would like to especially thank Ramzan Kasam Sama for his help at Nal Sarovar; Shaktisinh Solanki, Surajsinh Parmar, and Kuldipsinh Mori for help in the field work; and Yagnesh Bhatt, Ashok Mashru for helping with this note.

References

BirdLife International. 2016. Species factsheet: *Vanellusleucurus*. Downloaded from http://www.birdlife.org. [Accessed on 05 August 2016].

Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 2011. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent.* 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press & Christopher Helm. Pp. 1–528.

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.

Sama, K., 2002. '*Nal Sarovar ma shwetpunch Titodi* (White-tailed Lapwing) ***no*** *malo'. Vihang* 2002 (Sharad): 13. [In Gujarati.]

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* in Goa: A retrospective record

Mark Newsome

Newsome, M., 2017. Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* in Goa: A retrospective record. *Indian BIRDS* 13 (1): 25–26.
Mark Newsome, 69 Cedar Drive, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, England. E-mail: mvnewsome@hotmail.com.
Manuscript received on 22 February 2017.

The recent publication on the occurrence of a Pied Wheatear in Kerala in 2015 (Reghuvaran 2016) has prompted me to resurrect my notes on a Pied Wheatear seen in Goa in 2001, with the purpose of documenting the sighting as the first for that state.

On the early morning of 28 October 2001, I was birdwatching around the helipad at Fort Aguada, Goa; an area of open flat rocky ground surrounded by short vegetation and trees up to five meters height. When scanning across the area, I noticed a small chat-like bird perched quite upright on the ground. The bird was clearly a wheatear species, and this immediately rang alarm bells, as I knew all wheatears were rare visitors to Goa. Over the course of the next 30 min, I watched the bird from closer range and took field notes (Newsome 2017). I did not carry a camera, so no photographs are available. The details noted, and summarised below, enabled me to reach the conclusion that it was a female Pied Wheatear in first winter plumage.

Size and shape: A small wheatear, similar in size to (or a little smaller than) Northern Wheatear *O. oenanthe*, which I am most familiar with from England. Quite chat-like proportions and remained horizontal when perched. It never gave the impression of a larger upright 'cocky' wheatear such as Isabelline, or Hooded.

Head pattern: Crown, and hind-neck, grey-brown much like the mantle, with an indistinct paler buff supercilium. Ear coverts a little warmer brown than crown. Throat perhaps a little paler but not white. The absence of any dark feathering on the cheeks, or throat, pointed to a female; a male of this (or any other likely confusion species) would show obvious dark feathering coming through, even in first-winter plumage.

Upperparts: Mantle was a quite dull grey-brown. The wings were mid- to dark brown with obvious paler buff edges to the greater coverts forming a slight wing bar and obvious paler edges to the secondaries giving a slight wing panel effect. The clear pale edging to the brown wing feathers also pointed to it being a first-year bird; an adult in autumn would show a much plainer, darker wing with little fringing visible.

Underparts: The throat and upper breast were similar to the head, the remainder of the breast, and belly were pale/dirty white but with a hint of warmer breast sides, and warmer buff at rear of flanks.

Tail pattern: The typical wheatear pattern of an inverted black 'T' on a white tail was seen clearly when it took frequent short flights. The black at the tip was narrower than Northern Wheatear but was still a solid bar, the white of the tail not reaching the tip at any point. Noticeably, however, the black did extend up to the tail edges.

Bare parts: Legs all dark and not particularly long. The bill was quite short, fine, and all dark.

Habits: Although the bird spent a considerable amount of time on the ground, and perched in low vegetation, it also flew to higher elevations in neighbouring low trees (as is regularly done on wintering grounds).

Having birdwatched widely in the Western Palearctic for the last 25 years, I was familiar with the likely confusion species. I have seen Pied Wheatear on breeding grounds in Eastern Europe and Russia and in good numbers on wintering grounds in Kenya. I have also seen Variable Wheatear (form *capistrata* being the most likely confusion species in western India) in Rajasthan. Black-eared Wheatear *O. hispanica* (the most similar species based on plumage) is restricted to the Mediterranean basin and has not been recorded on the Indian Subcontinent. The main features, which ruled out Variable (form *capistrata*), were the obvious buff edges to the wing feathers, the paler supercilium, and the tail pattern. The tail pattern, and general plumage colouration, also

ruled out Desert Wheatear *O. deserti*, the wheatear species most expected in Goa (Lainer 2004).

Although clearly a vagrant to south-western India, the occurrence of Pied Wheatear in Goa is perhaps not unexpected. It has a large breeding range covering south-eastern Europe discontinuously across to western Afghanistan, northern Pakistan, and northern China, with the population moving some distance south-westards to winter in north-eastern Africa, and the south-western Arabian Peninsula (Collar 2017). The species occurs as a rare passage migrant in north-western India (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012), but has also been recorded as a vagrant in Sri Lanka, being first recorded at Colombo on 16 November 1943 (Henry 1971), and more recently in Kerala at Bekal Fort, Kasaragod on 20 December 2015 (Reghuvaran 2016), and at Madayipara, Kannur on 25 September 2016 (Thomas 2016).

References

Collar, N., 2017. Pied Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D. A., & de Juana, E., (eds.). Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from http://www.hbw.com/node/58543). [Accessed on 22 February 2017.]

Henry, G. M., 1971. *A guide to the birds of Ceylon.* 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press. Pp. xl, 457.

Lainer, H., 2004. *Birds of Goa. A reference book.* Mapusa, Goa: The Goa Foundation. Pp. i–ii, 1–244.

Newsome, M., 2017. Website URL: http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34641928. [Accessed on 22 February 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.

Reghuvaran, P., 2016. Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* at Bekal Fort, Kasaragod, Kerala. *Indian BIRDS* 12 (1): 18–19.

Thomas, J., 2016. Website URL: http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S31746431 [Accessed on 22 February 2017.]

First definitive documentation of Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* from Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Delhi NCR

Rohit Arora

Arora, R., 2017. First definitive documentation of Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* from Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Delhi NCR. *Indian BIRDS* 13 (1): 26–27.
Rohit Arora, O-44, Old Double Storey, Lajpat Nagar-4, New Delhi 110024, India. E-mail: winearorarohit@gmail.com.
Manuscript received on 25 October 2016.

The Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* is a long distant migrant that breeds in north-eastern Asia and winters in India, primarily in the Western Ghats, and Sri Lanka. It is a wide-spread passage migrant in the north-eastern parts of the Indian Subcontinent, but straggles elsewhere (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). This note presents a photo documentation of an adult Forest Wagtail at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Delhi NCR.

On the Sunday, 16 October 2016, I was planning to return home after two hours of birding in Okhla Bird Sanctuary (28.56°N, 77.31°E), Noida District, Uttar Pradesh. At 0845 hrs, almost midway on the path between gates 1 and 2, I noticed a wagtail on the bund (on the lake side) almost 30 m ahead of me. The single bird was probably foraging for insects in grass under tree shade. My first reaction was that 'it is a kind of wagtail that I have never seen before', but I was not sure about it's identity then. The bird was moving fast, and I managed to click a few record shots in poor light **[37, 38]**. I carefully planned to move closer to the bird for some close-up shots, but it got distracted by my presence, swiftly moved across the road, and flew away, disappearing into the trees. The total duration of my short encounter with the bird was just about 30 sec.

37

Pics: Rohit Arora

38. Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* in Okhla. .