

Correspondence

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata* in Little Andaman, Andaman Islands

While on a birding trip with Nature India, led by Adesh Shivkar, Mandar Khadilkar, and Vivek Shill (local guide), a male Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata* was seen and photographed [64] at a pond near Hutbay (10.59°N, 92.53°E) in Little Andaman, Andaman Islands, at 1540 h on 25 December 2018. It was first sighted perched on a wooden fence in the pond. It then flew into the pond, was seen bathing, after which it returned to the fence, where it was seen preening. It was a male, in its ornate, very colourful plumage. We observed, and photographed it for approximately an hour, and subsequently, at 0720 h on 26 December 2018. This bird became popular and many birders saw it in subsequent weeks, at least till 27 January 2019 (eBird 2019).



Manjusha Savant

64. Mandarin Duck.

There are very few reports of the Mandarin Duck from India; mostly from Assam and Manipur (Praveen *et al.* 2014), and only one twenty-first century sighting from Loktak Lake in Manipur, in December 2013 (Kasambe & Singh 2014). Though migratory, origins of the Mandarin Duck in India have always been open to question (Praveen *et al.* 2014; Carboneras & Kirwan 2019); the nearest records are from Manipur (*ibid.*), Bangladesh (Thompson *et al.* 1993), and northern Thailand (Carboneras & Kirwan 2019). We had local people from South- and Little Andaman Islands with us, and they had not seen this bird earlier at Hutbay. We do not know any aviaries in the Andaman Islands that house the Mandarin Duck, but I welcome any thoughts on the same. Another possibility is that it was an escapee from overseas, but there are no known cases of escaped Mandarin Ducks crossing the seas.

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– Manjusha Savant

Software Consultant, Pune 411046, Maharashtra, India
E-mail: manjushasavant@gmail.com

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia* in Andhra Pradesh

On 27 January 2019, I visited a lake near IISER Tirupati temporary campus (13.65°N, 79.47°E) near Mangalam, Tirupati, Chittoor District in southern Andhra Pradesh, along with 10–15 students. The lake is c.7 km away from Tirupati and is one of the many lakes along the foothills of Tirumala. While walking on the path along the borders of the lake, at about 0730 h, we spotted a few birds, including some warblers, in the paddy fields abutting the lake. While photographing and identifying the warblers, I realised that one of the birds in a photograph was difficult to identify [65]. I observed it for some more time and got additional details for its identification, but could not get more photographs since the bird hid inside the grass.



S. G. Sawant

65. Grasshopper Warbler.

The bird had a slim body and was smaller than a sparrow, with a brown and greyish body and a whitish belly. Whitish supercilium, a dark brown tail, and pinkish-orange legs were observed in the field. By looking at the patterns like the streaking on the body, body-shape, and colour, it appeared to be a *Locustella* species. It wasn't a Lanceolated Warbler *L. lanceolata* since the tail was longer and the bird did not have heavily streaked underbelly. Also, less prominent supercilium (observed in person, although