

The Cinereous Vulture has been reported 16 times post 1986, thrice in each decade till 2010, from all southern Indian states, except Goa. All past records are from winter, between December and February (earliest sighting 01 December, last, 17 February), except ours, which is in March–April. Four birds, out of the 17, were cases of exhausted birds. There are reports of the Cinereous Vulture from northern Maharashtra, without explicit sighting details: Vyawahare (1992) reported it was occasionally observed in flight at Dhule and Sakri, and Ali & Ripley (1987), southwards to about the latitude of Dhulia in Khandesh. A record of the Cinereous Vulture from Pondichery mentioned in Naoroji (2006), and Rahmani (2012), citing Perennou (1988), appears to be an error, as the latter does not list the bird! We admit that we may have missed some records from northern Maharashtra, which was considered within the wintering range of this species, as observers may not have put their records in public circulation.

The Cinereous Vulture appears to be an erratic straggler in southern India. An increase in the number of birders might be the only reason that it has been increasingly reported in this decade.

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White-tailed Flycatcher *Cyornis concretus* from Dzuleke, Nagaland

On the 21 February 2019, I visited a forest tract in Dzuleke village (25.62°N, 93.94°E), between Khonoma and Poilwa, in Kohima District, Nagaland. Adjacent to the ground that is Dzuleke's picnic-spot I observed a White-tailed Flycatcher *Cyornis concretus* on a bush beside a stream, at an altitude 1,760 m.

Kazmierczak (2000), and Grimmett *et al.* (2011) state that this flycatcher can be distinguished from others by its white belly, white spots on tail feathers when the tail is spread, and pale colouration of legs. It could be misidentified as a White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura*, however, the latter male has an entirely dark blue body. I photographed the bird [115, 116], and later identified it as a White-tailed Flycatcher.



115. The White-tailed Flycatcher clearly showing white belly, flank, pale legs, and white splash on spread tail.



116. Another view of the spread tail showing white patches from behind.

The White-tailed Flycatcher is not a widespread species in the Eastern Himalayas; possibly breeding in south-eastern Arunachal and wintering in adjacent Upper Assam and the Patkai Hills. It has been reported from Meghalaya, Manipur, and Mizoram (Ali & Ripley 1987; Grimmett *et al.* 2011; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; Clement 2019; eBird 2019). It is listed for Nagaland in Choudhury (2001) without any details of status and abundance, as well as Choudhury (2003) with status given as 'unknown'. Its presence in the Patkai Hills and further southwards, in the Mizo Hills might have led to the speculation that it would occur in the Naga Hills as well. Choudhury (2003, 2005) must have been the source of this being listed in several online checklists for Nagaland (Grewal 2010; Lepage 2019).

Hence, this appears to be the first definitive evidence of it occurring in the Naga Hills.

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'East Siberian Wagtail' (White Wagtail) *Motacilla alba ocularis* in Rajasthan

In the afternoon of 29 January 2019, Frank Dorel, Henk Hendriks, Peter de Rouw, Mahendra Singh, and Roland van der Vliet were enjoying the spectacle of the Demoiselle Cranes *Grus virgo* at Kheechan, Rajasthan, India. Several other species frequented the lake's edge including several White Wagtails *Motacilla alba*. Most of them were Masked Wagtails *M. a. personata* and Siberian White Wagtails *M. a. alba* ('*dukhunensis*'), but one was clearly different. We identified it as an East Siberian Wagtail *M. a. ocularis*

(de Rouw 2019). It was not shy, enabling PdR to digiscope it [117]. We did not realize the importance of the sighting until later in the evening, when, while reviewing our daily sightings against Grimmett *et al.* (1998) and Rasmussen & Anderton (2012), we realized that *ocularis* is only supposed to winter in Northeast-India. From the only digiscoped image available, our bird can be seen to be grey-backed and to have a distinct eye-stripe, amongst other features. The bird is a male but its age cannot be determined with certainty.



Peter W. de Rouw

117. East Siberian Wagtail.

The subspecies *ocularis* breeds in Siberia eastwards into Alaska. It winters from north-eastern India, eastwards to the Philippines (Tyler 2019). However, knowledge of the occurrence, and present distribution, of *ocularis* in India is not well known, probably because many observers do not distinguish between subspecies of White Wagtail. In general, the main field guides to the birds of the Indian Subcontinent generally state its wintering distribution as 'North' and/or 'Northeast-India' (Grimmett *et al.* 1998; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; Arlott 2015). Ali & Ripley (1998) are more specific, mentioning Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Bangladesh as its wintering grounds, as well as a rare occurrence westwards, to Harike Lake, Punjab, based on a bird trapped on 31 March 1985 (Akhtar & Prakash 1989). Vyas (2019) does not mention it for the well-watched Delhi area. Outside its regular wintering areas in north- and north-eastern India, we found only one other Indian record supported by photographs: on 15 October 2018, a bird was present at Mattu, Udipi County, Karnataka (Manimoole & Lakshmiis 2019). Therefore, our bird would be the first documented record of this subspecies in Rajasthan. We should note though that Alström & Mild (2003) mention *ocularis* to rarely winter west to Rajasthan, based on their own observations although not corroborated by any documentation.

Outside the Indian Subcontinent, *ocularis* is predominantly a spring migrant northwards of India, in both the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal (Proud 1955; Inskipp & Inskipp 1991), and eastern Kazakhstan (Wassink 2010). It has, furthermore, been recorded as a rare winter visitor to Seistan, Iran (Sarudny 1911). Vagrants are increasingly being reported, not only in Japan, Australia, and North America (Alström & Mild 2003; Dunn & Alderfer 2006), but also in the Western Palearctic. After the first Western Palearctic record in the United Arab Emirates on 07 November 2017 (Partridge 2018), others were reported in Cyprus (28 March–14 April 2018), Oman (18 November 2018), Sweden (25 November 2018), and again Cyprus (30 March–11 April 2019), probably due to a greater interest in the identification of White Wagtail subspecies. We hope that this note will result in a higher awareness of this subspecies in the Indian Subcontinent, leading to a better understanding of its occurrence there.