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– **Manoj Sharma & Sanjay Sondhi**

Manoj Sharma, Village Shankarpur, Ramnagar, District Nainital, Uttarakhand 244715, India
E-mail: treesswift@gmail.com [Corresponding author] [MS]
Sanjay Sondhi, 49, Rajpur Road Enclave, Dhoran Khas, P.O. Gajrada, Dehradun 248001, Uttarakhand, India. Affiliation, Titli Trust (www.titlitrust.org)
E-mail: sanjay.sondhi@gmail.com[SS]

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* from Jammu & Kashmir, India

On 28 April 2019, at 1330 h, two of us (PC and AK) went to Chowki-Choura (32.94°N, 74.60°E), 52 kms north-westwards of Jammu, in Jammu & Kashmir, for bird photography. We were searching for birds along the banks of a small stream. The area had big rocks, dense mixed vegetation with coniferous as well as deciduous trees, some shrubs, and epiphytes. Suddenly two birds flushed from the litter of leaves and one of them provided me an opportunity to click a photograph [175]. Later we identified it as a Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* after finding characters like, long tail, black and gold scapular stripes, white throat patches, barred breast, and pale bars on wing coverts (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; Grimmett et al. 2011). On 30 April 2019 PC and AK, along with Parmil Kumar and Parvez Shagoo, again visited the same spot at 0600 h and once again found a pair of nightjars. This time the birds' vocalizations confirmed their identity.

There is a paucity of information on the status of all nightjar species in Jammu & Kashmir with very few confirmed records within the region. According to Stoliczka (1868), the *Grey Nightjar C. jotaka* was often observed on the road from Simla towards Suket near Kotegurh (the village at the base of Kalkaand, the military posts of Kasauli), in company with the smaller Common Indian Nightjar *C. asiaticus*; whose specimen had been procured from Kishtwar and its extreme boundaries (Ward 1907). As per Ward (1907), Sykes's Nightjar *C. mahattensis* was expected in the plains below the Pir Panjal range, but he provided no evidence. Specimens of the European Nightjar *C. europaeus* from Gilgit had been deposited in the Natural History Museum, London, however, there were no sightings from the Kashmir Valley (Ward 1907). The Jungle Nightjar *C. indicus* was expected to be confined to Poonch, and Jammu, according to Ward (1907), while Grimmett



175. Large-tailed Nightjar.

et al. (2011) map a small, isolated area on the south-eastern border with Pakistan as its summer migration range. The Savanna Nightjar *C. affinis* is a possible species in Jammu & Kashmir with its occurrence close to the borders with Pakistan, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab (Grimmett et al. 2011). The mythical Vaurie's Nightjar *C. centralasicus* was collected just north of Jammu & Kashmir (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012).

As far as the Large-tailed Nightjar is concerned, Bates (1936) mentioned its presence in the Kishenganga Valley. He recorded four individuals at Pateka Forest Reserve in erstwhile, undivided Jammu & Kashmir (presently, Pakistan occupied Kashmir). Hugh Whistler suggested (*in* Bates 1936) that Bates' records were of the Jungle Nightjar; however, Grimmett et al. (2011) seem to accept the Bates record. Our present photographic record establishes its presence within Jammu & Kashmir.

Acknowledgements

We thank Gurpartap Singh, Parmil Kumar, and Parvez Shagoo for their contribution in identification of the species.

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– **Pankaj Chibber & Ajay Kumar (AK)**

Pankaj Chibber, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Canal Road, Jammu 180001, Jammu & Kashmir, India.
E-mail: pankajchibber@live.com [Corresponding author.] [PC]
Ajay Kumar, Department of School Education, Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir 180001, India. [AK]

White-bellied Sholakili *Sholicola albiventris* feeding on a shieldtail snake *Uropeltidae* sp.

On 28 June 2018, at 0711 h, while birding at the IISER Tirupati-Kodaikanal International School field station campus (10.23°N, 77.49°E) near Bombay Shola, Kodaikanal, we made a curious observation. We would usually see a White-bellied Sholakili *Sholicola albiventris* near a thicket. On that day it was perched on a small bush, and all of a sudden it came down onto the ground