

## Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris* in the Sikkim Himalayas

The Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris* has a narrow distribution range in India (Grimmett et al. 2011), Nepal (Grimmett et al. 2016), and Bhutan (eBird 2019; Grimmett et al. 2019), whereas it has a wider range in Myanmar, southern China, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia (Walther & Jones 2019). Confirmed breeding records are only from Bhutan, and Nagaland (India). It is a wintering species in other parts of its range in the Indian Subcontinent (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012).

On 11 June 2019, in a temperate forest, Thinlay Namgyal Lepcha saw a Slender-billed Oriole in the adjoining area of the Singhik Reserved Forest, North Sikkim (27.52°N, 88.56°E; 1,550 m asl). The dominant trees in the forest were *Alnus nepalensis*, *Macaranga denticulata*, *Juglans regia*, and *Engelhardia spicata*. The bird was sitting on a branch of bamboo and Lepcha took photographs [211]. The species was identified, on the basis of its long, slender, slightly down-curved bill, and narrower nape band, and differentiated from the Black-naped Oriole (Grimmett et al. 2016). Both the species have a black nape, but the Slender-billed Oriole has a much thinner eye stripe (Mason & Allsop 2009; Grimmett et al. 2019). Lepcha observed the Slender-billed Oriole foraging in the forest for the next five days, up till 16 June 2019.



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Though the Slender-billed Oriole is present in West Bengal, in the Dooars (Sinu 2011), Buxa Tiger Reserve (Allen et al. 1996), and Kolkata (eBird 2019), to name a few—there is a lack of adequate documentation from Sikkim. In Director: Zoological Survey of India's (2006) work, where extensive details of collected specimens have been documented, the Slender-billed Oriole is merely listed without reference to any collections or records. In Grimmett et al. (2019), two patches in Sikkim foothills are mapped as its wintering range—but we could not trace their original source. Barring these references, there are no other records of this species from the Sikkim Himalayas and ours is probably the first definitive documentation. However, this is not unexpected considering its presence in adjacent northern Bengal, and Bhutan (eBird 2019).

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## Addition of Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus* to the avifauna of Peninsular India

On 27 January 2019, my father, Nitin Hardikar, and I visited Nandur Madhmeshwar Bird Sanctuary (20.01°N, 74.10°E), Nashik, following reports of a White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* being present there. Due to the waterbody having dried up, localized patches of small swamps and water-clogged marshes existed on its edges. In the afternoon, while I was awaiting an Indian Jackal *Canis aureus indicus* that disappeared into the reeds to show up, I observed a strange *Anthus* species at the edge of a small pond. It had prominent blackish streaks on the breast, sides, and flanks, which set it apart from the other pipits that inhabit wetlands and marshes. This bird was seen hunting along the water's edge of a small pond and quickly retreat to the safety of the reeds when approached. This pond also had a Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*, two Ruddy-breasted Crakes *Zapornia fusca*, and a White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla maderaspatensis*, apart from the pipit. I took a photo of the bird, to cross check later [212a,b]. After returning home, the bird was identified as a Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus* in non-breeding plumage, based on its prominent buff-coloured supercilium, as opposed to the