

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* in India: Recent records, including the first confirmed breeding in the Indian Subcontinent

C. Abhinav, Mike Prince, Christopher G. R. Bowden, Devinder Singh Dhadwal, Piyush Dogra & Joydev Pathak

Abhinav, C., Prince, M., Bowden, C. G. R., Dhadwal, D. S., Dogra, P., & Pathak, J., 2020. Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* in India: Recent records, including the first confirmed breeding in the Indian Subcontinent. *Indian BIRDS* 15 (6): 161–167.

C. Abhinav, Village & P.O. Ghurkari, Kangra 176001, Himachal Pradesh, India. E-mail: drabhinav.c@gmail.com [CA] [Corresponding author]

Mike Prince. E-mail: mike@bubo.org [MGP]

Christopher G. R. Bowden. RSPB, The Lodge, Sandip, Beds, UK SG 192 DL. E-mail: chris.bowden@rspb.org.uk [CGRB]

Devinder Singh Dhadwal, DFO (HQ), Wildlife Circle, Dharamsala 176215, Himachal Pradesh, India. E-mail: dd123.singh@gmail.com [DSD]

Piyush Dogra, House No. 338 D, Civil Bazar, Dharamsala, District Kangra 176215, Himachal Pradesh, India. E-mail: piyushdogra83@gmail.com [PD]

Joydev Pathak, 1, N. N. Mukherjee 2nd Lane, Uttarpara, Hooghly 712258, West Bengal, India. E-mail: dr.joydevpathak@gmail.com [JP]

Manuscript received on 16 June 2019.

The Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* is the most widespread member of its genus. In South Asia, it is known to breed in the northern parts of Afghanistan, and is a scarce passage migrant through western and northern Pakistan, in both, spring (April) and autumn (September and October), but is regarded as a vagrant in India (Grimmett et al. 1998; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). Ali & Ripley (1987) describe it as ‘a straggling passage migrant through Pakistan and the north-western Himalayas’. The first confirmed record for Bhutan was in March 2019 (Erterius & Roberson 2019).

This note describes the circumstances of four previously undocumented sightings of this species by the authors; two from Himachal Pradesh, and one each from Uttarakhand and Karnataka. We also compile all known records of the species from India.

Observations

Himachal Pradesh

On 21 July 2015, DSD visited Chandra Taal, Lahaul & Spiti District, Himachal Pradesh. At 1420 h, near the lake (32.48°N, 77.61°E; c.4,300 m asl), he saw a wheatear with greyish upperparts and contrasting black wings [216]. It had a prominent black eye mask bordered above by a white supercilium. The underparts were pale with a buff wash on the throat and upper breast. It flicking its tail frequently. DSD identified it as a male Northern Wheatear in breeding plumage. It was observed for ten minutes.



Devinder Singh Dhadwal

216. Male Northern Wheatear at Chandra Taal, Himachal Pradesh on 21 July 2015.

On the morning of 26 May 2019, JP and Karun Kumar Ghosh were birding around Chicham Village. At 0830 h, they reached a location nearly one kilometre north-westwards of Chicham Bridge, towards Losar (32.34°N, 77.99°E; c.4,500 m asl). They saw an unfamiliar bird [217], c.200 m away from the road, feeding in ploughed fields that were surrounded by stony boundaries. It was moving its tail like a wagtail. There were a good number of Black Redstarts *Phoenicurus ochruros* in the field and one of them chased the wheatear away. It settled at a distance, on a rock, when they could take some photographs. By its jizz, greyish upperparts, and black eye mask, it was identified as a male Northern Wheatear in breeding plumage.



Joydev Pathak

217. Male Northern Wheatear in its habitat, near Chicham, Himachal Pradesh on 26 May 2019.

Uttarakhand

On 15 April 2017, CA and PD went to Tunganath Temple, Rudraprayag District, Uttarakhand. The trek starts from Chopta and a lot of people were trekking to Tunganath Temple and Chandrashila on that day. At 1145 h, they saw a wheatear [218] on the stony slopes near the temple (30.49°N, 79.21°E; c.3,400 m asl), which superficially resembled an Isabelline Wheatear *O. isabellina*. The bird was photographed and was observed for five minutes before it flew off and landed far away. It had brownish-

grey upperparts. Its wing coverts were black with narrow pale fringes, giving an overall blackish appearance to the wings, which contrasted with the mantle. The supercilium was whitish, more prominent above and behind the eye but slightly buffish and less prominent in front. The lores and ear-coverts were darker than the face. The underparts were pale with a buff wash on the throat, upper breast, and flanks. The sides of the tail showed considerable white. When it displayed its tail, the narrow black terminal band and black central tail feathers were clearly seen, forming an inverted 'T' pattern. It was differentiated from an Isabelline Wheatear by a less upright stance, darker contrasting wings, supercilium, and tail pattern.



Piyush Dogra

218. Female Northern Wheatear at Tunganath, Uttarakhand on 15 April 2017.

Karnataka

On 10 March 2019, CGRB and MGP were birding at Jayamangali Blackbuck Reserve) in Tumkur District, Karnataka. At 0900 h they investigated an open area of bare fields with scattered *Acacia* sp., scrub to the east of the reserve (13.74°N, 77.34°E, c.650 m asl.) and almost immediately MGP noticed a wheatear [219] in a bare field just south of the main track. They both had good but distant views through a scope.



Jainy Maria

219. Female Northern Wheatear at Jayamangali Blackbuck Reserve, Karnataka.

At once it was clear that this bird was not the typical sandy coloured, pale-winged Isabelline, but instead was greyish-brown above with blackish wings with narrow brown fringes. The outer tertial on the left wing was freshly moulted and much more

contrasting with a darker centre and paler fringe. The supercilium was very prominent behind the eye, white in colour, but off-white and not so clearly defined in front. The lores were a diffuse dark brown at certain angles. The ear coverts were orange-brown, darker at the rear. There was a hint of a dark eye-stripe behind the eye, and a parallel dark line below this through the centre of the ear coverts. There were indistinct wing-bars formed by pale tips to the greater and median coverts, and the lesser coverts were also white-fringed. The scapulars and back also showed fine white fringes at close range. It wasn't possible to accurately determine any moult contrast with retained juvenile upperwing feathers in the field or from examination of photographs, so the age is indeterminate.

Both observers immediately knew that it was a Northern Wheatear *O. oenanthe*, a bird with which they are very familiar from Britain and elsewhere, and they were aware of the significance of this in India. It was, unusually, not very approachable. In flight though the tail pattern was seen clearly: white with an even width black terminal band on approximately the outer third of the tail, and with fully black central tail feathers, showing as an inverted 'T' pattern. The bird never perched in the very upright position that an Isabelline frequently does, and never gave a long-legged impression. It was watched for about one minute overall, in which time MGP managed to get a couple of record photos, before it flew out of sight and couldn't be re-located.

On returning home, and having written up his field notes, MGP posted the sighting on the eBird website (Prince 2019). The detailed directions given therein enabled many other observers to see the bird over the next two and a half weeks, as it remained faithful to the exact same area, and gave excellent views. The last published report of it was on 27 March 2019 (Abdulpurkar 2019) and it could not be found on 04 April 2019 (Wanvari 2019).

Other records

Damle & Inskipp (2014) assessed records of Northern Wheatear from the Indian Subcontinent, and we update in Table 1, listing all confirmed Indian records, including those that have come to light since publication of that paper. Damle & Inskipp (2014) should be consulted for a more detailed discussion of records documented therein. Note, in particular, that they excluded records from Mhow, Madhya Pradesh (Jerdon 1863), Wardwan Valley, Kashmir (Ward 1908), and Kota, Rajasthan (Vyas 1993): all referenced or mapped by other authors, including Baker (1924), Ali & Ripley (1997), Kazmierczak (2000), Grimmett et al. (2011), and Rasmussen & Anderton (2012). They did, however, accept a record from Udaipur District, Rajasthan, from December 2013 (Shekhawat 2013) that, upon reassessment, we consider to be either a Variable Wheatear *O. picata* or a Finsch's Wheatear *O. finschii* (Oscar Campbell and Nick Moran, *in litt.*, e-mails dated 03 July 2019; Peter Clement *in litt.*, e-mails dated 08 and 09 July 2019) due, in part, to its lack of a supercilium, strong rusty ear coverts, and short primary projection: all features that exclude Northern Wheatear. We therefore exclude this individual from our summary.

Damle & Inskipp (2014) did not list one undated specimen from the 'Valley of Gurias' (presumably Gurez Valley), Jammu & Kashmir, in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History (Vertnet 2019) and, lacking any other details, we treat it as unverifiable and unconfirmed. We list all records we regard as verified in Table 1 and these are also mapped in Fig. 1.

Table 1. Records of Northern Wheatear in India, listed chronologically

S. No.	Locality	State	Date	Comments	Reference
1.	Gilgit, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	March 1878 [or 1879]	'Two specimens were obtained, and about half a dozen others observed, during some heavy weather in March, but never seen at any other time. Both are males...'	Biddulph (1881); Damle & Inskipp (2014)
2.	Gilgit, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	20 March–22 April [1879 and/or 1880]	'This Wheatear passes Gilgit on migration, and is found there in small numbers from the 20th of March to the 22nd April. I did not secure any specimens of this species during the autumn migration.'	Scully (1881); Damle & Inskipp (2014)
3.	Tunganath, Rudraprayag District	Uttarakhand	01 May 2013	Female (incorrectly mentioned as male in Damle & Inskipp 2014), photographed	Mondal & Mondal (2013); Damle & Inskipp (2014); (Mohan & Sondhi 2017)
4.	Nubra Valley, Ladakh	Jammu & Kashmir	14 May 2013	Pair, photographed	Damle & Inskipp (2014)
5.	Madayippara, Kanuur District	Kerala	16–17 October 2013	Female/first-winter, photographed	Chowva (2013); Rajeevan (2013); Damle & Inskipp (2014)
6.	Bompu Camp, Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, West Kameng District	Arunachal Pradesh	14 March 2014	Male, photographed	Islam (2014)
7.	Hundar, Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	04 May 2015	Two individuals, seen at different locations	Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
8.	Chandra Taal, Lahaul and Spiti District	Himachal Pradesh	21 July 2015	Male, photographed	This work
9.	Vellanathuruthu, Kollam District	Kerala	31 October 2015	Male, presumed adult, photographed	Jinesh (2015); Thomas (2015)
10.	Thambi View Point, East Sikkim District	Sikkim	30 April 2016	Female, photographed	Sharma (2016)
11.	Chapursan, Hunza District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	09 May 2016	A pair and another two individuals, seen and photographed at different locations	Shah (2016a); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
12.	Shandur, Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	06, 09 June 2016	20-30 individuals observed on 04 June, 30-40 individuals on 09 June, at two different locations. Nesting activity seen [221], juveniles also observed	Shah (2016b,c); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
13.	Langar, Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	21 June, 14 July 2016	30-40 individuals seen on 21 June, 20-30 on 14 July. Fledglings and juveniles also observed. [222]	Shah (2016d,e); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
14.	Tunganath, Rudraprayag District	Uttarakhand	15 April 2017	Female, photographed	This work
15.	Langar, Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	04 June 2017	40-50 individuals seen, some noted collecting nesting material	Shah (2017); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
16.	Lukung, Ladakh	Jammu and Kashmir	27 May 2018	Male, photographed	Suvarna (2018)
17.	Koksil, Hunza District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	15 June 2018	Single individual seen near a stream	Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
18.	Jayamangali Blackbuck Reserve, Tumkur District	Karnataka	10–27 March 2019	Female, photographed	This work; Prince (2019)
19.	Borit, Hunza District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	10 April 2019	Two individuals seen with numerous Pied Wheatear <i>O. pleschanka</i> and Isabelline Wheatear <i>O. isabellina</i>	Shah (2019a); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
20.	Barsat, Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan	Pakistan-administered Kashmir	25 April 2019	15-20 individuals seen	Shah (2019b); Imran Shah, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 11 October 2019
21.	Near Chicham, Lahaul and Spiti District	Himachal Pradesh	26 May 2019	Male, photographed	This work; Pathak (2019)
22.	Chitkul, Kinnaur District	Himachal Pradesh	06 June 2019	Two males, seen and photographed	Sangwan (2019)
23.	Hanle, Ladakh	Jammu and Kashmir	22, 29 June, 25, 26 July 2019	Two males photographed and one female seen in June, one male photographed in July	Panwar (2019); Rajesh Panwar, <i>in litt.</i> , e-mail dated 12 July 2019

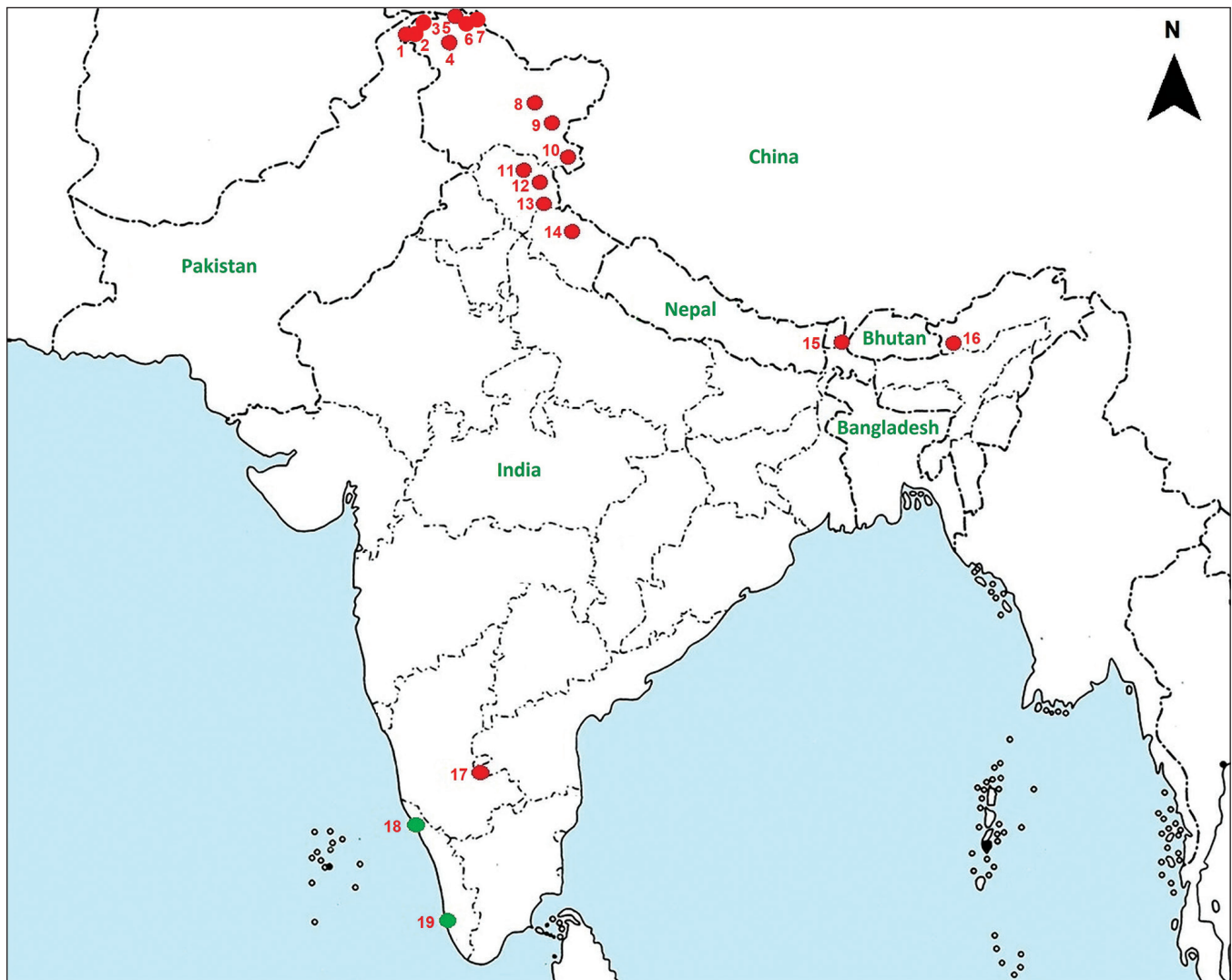


Fig. 1. Map of India showing records of Northern Wheatear. Red dots from March to July, Green dots from October.

1=Shandur and Barsat, Gilgit-Baltistan; 2=Langar, Gilgit-Baltistan; 3=Hunder, Gilgit-Baltistan; 4=Gilgit, Gilgit-Baltistan; 5=Chapursan, Gilgit-Baltistan; 6=Borit, Gilgit-Baltistan; 7=Koksil, Gilgit-Baltistan; 8=Nubra Valley, Ladakh, J. & K.; 9=Lukung, Ladakh, J. & K.; 10=Hanle, Ladakh, J. & K.; 11=Chandra Taal, H.P.; 12=Near Chicham, H.P.; 13=Chitkul, H.P.; 14=Tunganath, U.K.; 15=Thambi View Point, Sikkim; 16=Bompu Camp, Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, A.P.; 17=Jayamangali Blackbuck Reserve, Karnataka; 18=Madayippara, Kerala; 19=Vellanathuruthu, Kerala.



Rajesh Panwar

220. Male Northern Wheatear at Hanle, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir on 29 June 2019.

Records of the Northern Wheatear from Hanle, in 2019, are interesting as there are multiple sightings in late June and late July. On 22 June, Rajesh Panwar saw one male Northern Wheatear in a marshy area, alongside a road, near Hanle (32.79°N, 78.95°E; c.4,300 m asl). A second sighting was on 29 June when one female and two males [220] were seen. The female visited the place with one of the males but it was shy and didn't allow Panwar to take photographs. These individuals were feeding on insects in the grass and dung of domestic animals and kiang *Equus kiang*. They were frequently resting on boulders on the other side of the road. During his return visit, he saw one male on the afternoon of 25 July and morning of 26 July (Rajesh Panwar, *in litt.*, e-mail dated 12 July 2019; *pers. comm.* dated 30 July 2019).

Discussion

The Northern Wheatear has one of the largest breeding ranges of any songbird, extending across Europe and Asia, with a few extending (of the 'Greenland' subspecies *O. o. leucora*) as far

westwards as Greenland and north-eastern Canada, whilst some of the nominate subspecies range as far eastwards as Alaska and extreme north-western Canada (Collar & Christie 2019) (Fig 2). They are extreme long-distance migrants, with, remarkably, the entire population wintering in Africa, in a broad band south of the Sahara. Birds breeding in the eastern Canadian Arctic eastwards are known to migrate mainly to western Africa, crossing a wide (c.3,500 km) stretch of the North Atlantic Ocean. Birds from Alaska take a route westward across Asia to winter mainly in eastern Africa; three Alaskan birds fitted with geolocators were tracked through northern Russia and Kazakhstan, and across the Arabian Desert to wintering areas in Sudan and Uganda or Kenya (Bairlein et al. 2012). This means that both populations are record-breakers: the Alaskan breeders' round-trip of c.30,000 km is the longest known migration of any songbird, whereas the east Arctic breeders undertake the longest trans-oceanic crossing and longest non-stop flight (Hussell 2012). It is believed that the fact that birds from the western and eastern extremes of the breeding range do not winter in the Americas or in South Asia respectively, but instead make these extremely long-distance migrations, and can best be explained by this being a relatively recent range expansion from historically more restricted southern European breeding areas (Couzens 2005).



Fig. 2. Map of the world showing breeding (Yellow) and wintering (Blue) range of Northern Wheatear. ©BirdLife International.

As well as these two subspecies, there are two others typically recognised. 'Seebohm's' Wheatear *Oenanthe [o.] seebohmi* is a short-distance migrant restricted to north-western Africa, sometimes considered a separate species (Clement & Rose 2015; Clements et al. 2018; Collar & Christie 2019), and 'Mediterranean' Northern Wheatear, *O. o. libanotica*, which is distributed from southern Europe, Asia Minor, the Levant, Transcaucasia, northern and central Iran, Turkmenistan, northern Afghanistan, Tien Shan, Mongolia, southern Transbaikalia to northern China (Xinjiang east to Shanxi), overlaps with *oenanthe* in most of its range (Collar & Christie 2019).

The Northern Wheatear is traditionally considered a vagrant to India. Historically there were no confirmed breeding records for the Indian Subcontinent, but one was suspected at c. 1,280 m asl from Chitral in Pakistan (Perreau 1910; Grimmett et al. 1998). The nesting activity and recently fledged juveniles observed at Shandur (36.08°N, 72.52°E; c.3,700 m asl) and Langar (36.09°N, 72.63°E; c.3,350 m asl, and 36.11°N, 72.65°E; c.3,310 m asl) in Gilgit-Baltistan by Imran Shah [221, 222], therefore represent the first confirmed breeding records from the Indian Subcontinent.

The species is, however, known to breed in north-central (Herath to Upper Bamian Valley) and north-eastern Afghanistan and Tajikistan (Clement & Rose 2015), which are not far from these locations in Gilgit-Baltistan. The *libanotica* subspecies is thought to breed in these areas, and thus it is suspected that the birds breeding in Gilgit-Baltistan are probably also *libanotica*. Note, however, that differences between *libanotica* and the nominate subspecies are slight and clinal, so field assignment of individuals to subspecies level is typically not safe. Apart from these June and July records of breeding birds from Shandur and Langar, records from other locations in Gilgit-Baltistan are from April and May: Hundar (36.51°N, 73.41°E; c.2,480 m asl) on 04 May; Chapursan (36.82°N, 74.38°E; c.3,360 m asl) on 09 May; Borit (36.44°N, 74.86°E; c.2,720 m asl) on 10 April; and Barsat (36.16°N, 72.71°E; c.3,340 m asl) on 25 April, except for the record from Koksil (36.82°N, 75.34°E; c.4,260 m asl), which was on 15 June. Only few individuals (one to four) were seen at these locations, apart from Barsat, where 15–20 individuals were seen. Shah (2020) has plotted the distribution map of the Northern Wheatear in Gilgit-Baltistan Fig. 2.



221. Female Northern Wheatear with feed for chicks at Shandur, Gilgit-Baltistan on 09 June 2016.



222. Fledgling of Northern Wheatear at Langar, Gilgit-Baltistan on 21 June 2016.

The large numbers of individuals seen in Shandur and Langar, Gilgit-Baltistan, mainly during June and July (Imran Shah, *in litt.*, e-mail dated 11 October 2019), indicate that the species is common at these locations during these months. Biddulph (1881) and Scully (1881), however, only saw a few individuals on migration during March and April in Gilgit, with none during May to July, and recorded no breeding birds. This may be due to the fact that they didn't cover high altitude areas in the region where the bird breeds (Biddulph 1881). Note though, that during July and August 1880, Biddulph (1882) arranged the collection of birds from Shandur over about a two-week period, but this species was missing from his list. Hence it could also be a case of range extension by the species.

The other records from northern India span the period from mid-March to early June, thus fitting in with spring migration timings of the species, except for the intriguing late June and July records from Hanle and Chandra Taal. These records fall well out of the expected range for routine spring or autumn passage migration but are in line with the recent Gilgit-Baltistan breeding records. The Northern Wheatear was seen at the same place in Hanle on four different dates within a period of 35 days in June and July. Although it was not seen carrying food or nesting material, and no nest or fledglings were seen, the presence of a pair in a suitable breeding area suggests that it was probably breeding there (as per criteria given by Feijen & Feijen 2008). Note that Pfister (2004) did not report the Northern Wheatear from Ladakh. All records from Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are from high altitude areas, ranging from Chitkul and Tunganath at c.3,400 m asl to Chicham at c.4,500 m asl; similarly, the Ladakh records were as high as 4,500 m asl, and in the north-east the Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh records are from c.3,400 m asl and c.1,940 m asl respectively. These two records from north-eastern India (and one from Bhutan), during March and April, are in line with the spring records from northern India. As well as being a regular breeding bird in Gilgit-Baltistan, other records of Northern Wheatear from Western Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan regions indicate that it should be regarded as a rare but regular passage migrant in these regions. There are no autumn records from northern India although Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) mentioned its autumn passage during September and October from western and northern Pakistan. The species could be overlooked during this time, as few birders visit these high altitude areas at this time of year, or they could be taking a more westerly route.

Two of the three records from peninsular India are from October, and one from March. These suggest that vagrants may be encountered almost anywhere outside of the breeding season. Note that the Northern Wheatear has possibly the widest geographical record of vagrancy of any passerine (Collar & Christie 2019).

It is interesting that there were no records of the Northern Wheatear in India for over 130 years, but there have now been multiple records since 2013. This increase is perhaps due to an increasing number of birders in the country, covering suitable locations for this species at appropriate times of year. It was perhaps overlooked in the past and we should expect more records in the future. It seems less likely that there has been an actual increase in number of individuals crossing through the region, or a change in regular migration routes.

The records described in this note, from Chandra Taal and Chicham, are respectively the first and second records for Himachal Pradesh. The Tunganath record is the second record

of the species for the state of Uttarakhand, following one from the same location (Mondal & Mondal 2013). The Karnataka record is also a state first. To summarise, we consider that the Northern Wheatear is not solely a vagrant to India, as noted by previous authors, but a common and regular summer breeder and passage migrant in Gilgit-Baltistan, a rare but regular passage migrant through western Himalayan and trans-Himalayan regions, probably less regular in the eastern Himalaya, and a vagrant in southern India.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to Imran Shah for providing details of his many sightings from Gilgit-Baltistan, including wonderful photos that have documented the first confirmed breeding records from the Indian Subcontinent, at a stage when this paper was almost ready for publication. We also thank Rajesh Panwar for providing details of his sightings and wonderful photographs, and all other observers who responded to requests for photos. MGP and CGRB thank the many observers who travelled to see the Karnataka bird after they first publicised it, especially those that uploaded their sightings to eBird, enabling a clear picture to be gathered of its length of stay. CA thanks Prasad Ganpule and Harkirat Singh Sangha for helping in obtaining important references.

References

- Abdulpurkar, S., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54267123>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D., 1997. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Warblers to redstarts*. 2nd (Hardback) ed. Delhi: (Sponsored by Bombay Natural History Society.) Oxford University Press. Vol. 8 of 10 vols. Pp. i-xiv, 1–281, 8 ll.
- Bairlein, F., Norris, D. R., Nagel, R., Bulte, M., Voigt, C. C., Fox, J. W., Hussell, D. J. T., & Schmaljohann, H., 2012. Cross-hemisphere migration of a 25 g songbird. *Biological Letters* 8: 505–507. Website URL: <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2011.1223>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Baker, E. C. S., 1924. *The fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma. Birds*. 2nd ed. London: Taylor and Francis. Vol. II of 8 vols. Pp. i–xxiii+1, 1–561.
- Biddulph, J., 1881. On the birds of Gilgit. *Ibis* 23 (1): 35–102.
- Biddulph, J., 1882. On the birds of Gilgit. *Ibis* 24 (2): 266–290.
- Chow, K., 2013. Northern Wheatear at Kannur! Keralabirder. Website URL: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/keralabirder/conversations/messages/9211>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Clements, J. F., Schulenberg T. S., Iliff, M. J., Roberson D., Fredericks T. A., Sullivan B. L., & Wood C. L., 2018. The eBird/Clements checklist of birds of the world: v2018. Website URL: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist/download/>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Clement, P., & Rose, C., 2015. *Robins and chats*. UK: Christopher Helm. Pp. 1–688.
- Collar, N. & Christie, D. A., 2019. Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*). 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. Website URL: <https://www.hbw.com/species/northern-wheatear-oenanthe-oenanthe> [Accessed on 30 June 2019].
- Couzens, D., 2005. *Bird migration*. New Holland Publishers. Pp. 1–136.
- Damle, S., & Inskipp, T., 2014. Sighting of Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* from the Nubra Valley, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, and a review of previous records from the Indian Subcontinent. *Indian BIRDS* 9 (5&6): 139–141.
- del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., & Christie, D., (eds.) 2005. *Handbook of the birds of the world. Volume 10. Cuckoo-shrikes to Thrushes*. 1st ed. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions. Vol. 10 of 17 vols. Pp. 1–895.
- Erterius, D., & Roberson, D., 2019. Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* in Bhutan. *Indian BIRDS* 15 (3): 96–96A.
- Feijen, C., & Feijen, H. R., 2008. A review of the breeding birds of Bhutan. *Forktail* 24: 1–24.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 1998. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 1st ed. London: Christopher Helm, A & C Black. Pp. 1–888.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 2011. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press & Christopher Helm. Pp. 1–528.

- Hussell, D., 2012. The amazing migrations of the Northern Wheatear. *BirdWatch Canada* 61: 8–9.
- Islam, R., 2014. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S52617202>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Jerdon, T. C., 1863. *The birds of India being a natural history of all the birds known to inhabit continental India: with descriptions of the species, genera, families, tribes, and orders, and a brief notice of such families as are not found in India, making it a manual of ornithology specially adapted for India.* . 1st ed. Calcutta: Published by the author (Printed by The Military Orphan Press). Vol. II-Part I. of 2 vols. Pp. 1–439.
- Jinesh, P. S., 2015. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S25732728>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Kazmierczak, K., 2000. *A field guide to the birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives.* 1st ed. New Delhi: Om Book Service. Pp. 1–352.
- Mohan, D., & Sondhi, S., 2017. *An updated checklist and bibliography of the birds of Uttarakhand.* Dehradun, India: Uttarakhand Forest Department. Pp. i–vi, 1–98.
- Mondal, A., & Mondal, S., 2013. Oriental Bird Images. Website URL: http://orientalbirdimages.org/search.php?Bird_Image_ID=76345&Bird_ID=2583 [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Panwar, R., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S57586746>. [Accessed on 15 July 2019.]
- Pathak, J., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S57231666>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Perreau, G. A., 1910. Notes on the birds of Chitral (October 1902 to October 1903). *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 19 (4): 901–922.
- Pfister, O., 2004. *Birds and mammals of Ladakh.* 1st ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. Pp. i–xvii, 1–361.
- Prince, M. G., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/india/view/checklist/S53659113>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Rajeevan, P. C., 2013. Oriental Bird Images. Website URL: http://orientalbirdimages.org/search.php?Bird_Image_ID=96477&Bird_ID=2583. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- 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.
- Sangwan, P., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S57285095>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Scully, J., 1881. A contribution to the ornithology of Gilgit. *Ibis* 23 (3): 415–453.
- Shah, I., 2016a. Facebook group 'Birds of Pakistan'. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10208520276798107&set=gm.979536548834191&type=3&theater&ifg=1> [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2016b. Flickr. Website URL: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gilgit2/39702601362/> [Accessed on 11 October 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2016c. Facebook group 'Birds of Pakistan'. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10208715621081592&set=gm.996975433756969&type=3&theater&ifg=1> [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2016d. Facebook group 'Birds of Pakistan'. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10208801987600701&set=gm.1004627529658426&type=3&theater&ifg=1> [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2016e. Facebook group 'Birds of Pakistan'. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10209078227506526&set=gm.1028970433890802&type=3&theater&ifg=1> [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2017. Facebook group 'Birds of Pakistan'. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10211876564383199&set=gm.1348145805306595&type=3&theater&ifg=1> [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2019a. Flickr. Website URL: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gilgit2/40893265383/> [Accessed on 11 October 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2019b. Flickr. Website URL: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gilgit2/47851236762/> [Accessed on 11 October 2019.]
- Shah, I., 2020. Birds of Gilgit-Baltistan. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/birdsgb/photos/a.115429613287627/116278546536067/?type=3&theater> [Accessed on 28 January 2020.]
- Sharma, A., 2016. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/india/view/checklist/S29415289>. [Accessed on 14 June 2019.]
- Shekhawat, D., 2013. Indian Birds Facebook group. Website URL: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=606860112706750>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Suvarna, R., 2018. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S48060682>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Thomas, R., 2015. Oriental Bird Images. Website URL: http://orientalbirdimages.org/search.php?Bird_Image_ID=110619&Bird_ID=2583. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- VertNet 2019. Website URL: <http://portal.vertnet.org/search?q=specificepithet:oenanthe+genus:oenanthe+country:%22india%22>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Vyas, R., 1993. Checklist of the birds of Kota District in south-east Rajasthan. *Newsletter for Birdwatchers* 32 (11-12): 8–10.
- Wanvari, T., 2019. eBird. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/india/view/checklist/S54538045>. [Accessed on 30 June 2019.]
- Ward, A. E., 1908. Further notes on birds of the provinces of Kashmir and Jammu and adjacent districts. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 18 (2): 461–464.

With the compliments of

G.B.K. CHARITABLE TRUST

Unit No. T-6C, Phoenix House, S. B. Marg, Lower Parel,
Mumbai 400013, India.