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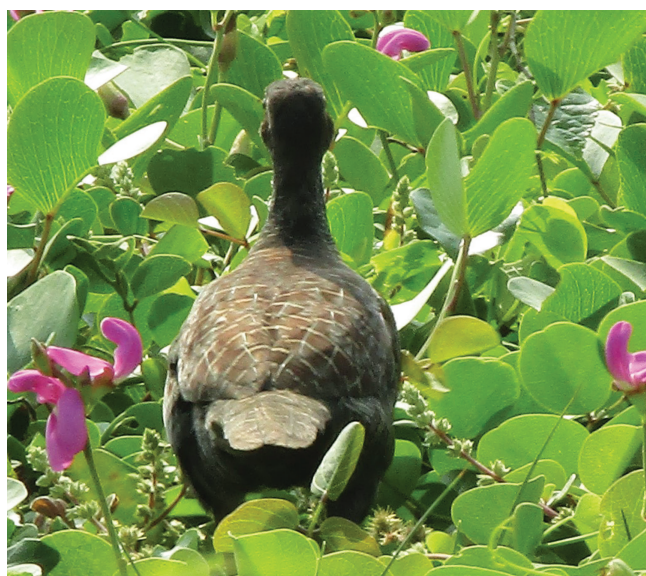
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A dark colour-aberrant Grey Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus*

On 05 December 2019, BV was on one of his routine birding trips along the beaches of Chennai specifically looking for shore- and seabirds. He noticed two unusually dark-coloured Grey Francolins *Francolinus pondicerianus* on Thiruvanmiyur Beach (12.97°N, 80.26°E). These birds looked almost black [237]. The birds ran into the bushes and disappeared while he barely managed to take a photograph.



B. Vinoth

237. Dark morph of the Grey Francolin in Chennai.

Mahabal et al. (2016) mention one instance of a dark-coloured Grey Francolin reported from Surendranagar of Gujarat in 2010 (Roy 2011). Ours might be the first instance of this colour aberration in Grey Francolin from southern India.

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Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus* in Kaziranga National Park, Assam

On 23rd December 2019, at 1500 h I saw a solitary Tundra Swan *Cygnus colombianus* in Daphlong Beel (26.60°N, 93.20°E) in the central range of Kaziranga National Park, Assam. On the same day, Bablu, Takib, Parag Hazarika, and Pallab Saikia also saw it. Next day it attracted more birders and was photographed [238]. It was initially thought to be a Whooper Swan *C. cygnus* but when the images were circulated over social media, the correct identification as Tundra Swan (the Eurasian race *bewickii*) got established. The key identifiers were: yellow bill patch was not pointed or triangular as in a Whooper, the head was rounded unlike flattened and triangular in a Whooper, and the neck was relatively short. The bird stayed for four weeks, which enabled birdwatchers from around the country to visit and see this rarity. It was last it recorded on 26 January 2020. Most of the time it was spotted in Daphlong Beel, and also in Donga Beel in the western range of Kaziranga National Park.



Harish Thangaraj

238. Tundra Swan in Kaziranga National Park, Assam.

The Tundra Swan is a rarity in India. There are two documented historical specimens: *A bewickii* subspecies from Haryana, and a *jankowskyi* subspecies (not always recognised) from Gujarat (Praveen et al. 2014). A photograph of a swan taken in Gandhigram, Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh, in December 2008 was believed to be this species. Two sight records of flocks of swans from the same area, in 1998 and 1999, though claimed to be Whoopers, could also have been this species (see Praveen et al. 2014 for details of all past records of swans from India).

References

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Gould's Shortwing *Heteroxenicus stellatus* and Chestnut-crowned Bush Warbler *Cettia major* in the Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh

On 15 June 2019, at 0915 h, while birding in the Great Himalayan National Park (henceforth, GHNP) in Kullu District, Himachal Pradesh, at 3,500 m asl, two kilometers from Gumtrao, on the trail from Gumtrao to Dhel (31.72°N 77.48°E), we observed one adult male Gould's Shortwing *Heteroxenicus stellate*, and two Chestnut-crowned Bush Warblers *Cettia major*. The two species were sighted c.100 m away from each other.