



67A. Leucistic peahen with normal coloured peahen on 7th March 2017;
67B. Leucistic peahen on 21th April 2017.



68A,B. Leucistic peahen with normal coloured peacock on 27th August 2017.

Both: P. Bharath Simha Yadav

BSI staff quarters are adjacent to the Boluvampatti Reserve Forest of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Coimbatore. Since 2013, we have observed a free-roaming wild population of Indian Peafowl that also roost in the coconut trees *Cocos nucifera* on the campus. We are not aware of any aviculture activities within the neighbourhood and certainly not inside the premises of BSI staff quarters, which belongs to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India. On the basis of this, it is likely that our bird was in fact a wild mutant.

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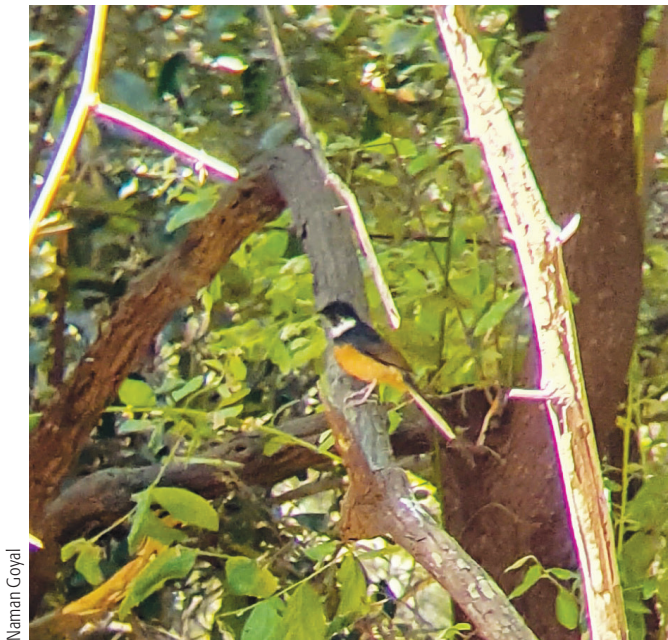
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An aberrant White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* with a white throat

On 14 March 2020, we visited Mamanduru Reserve Forest, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh, for bird watching. The reserve forest consists of moist vegetation with interspersed patches of bamboo thickets, which are fed by seasonal streams that flow through this forest. Sightings of White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* in these bamboo thickets are very common. On our way back from the Mamanduru Stream, VKL and NG heard a song at 1013 h (13.76°N, 79.47°E) from a nearby bamboo thicket and identified it as that of a White-rumped Shama. Upon searching for it, they came across an individual with unusual, prominent white throat [69]. The observed individual did not show any usual signs of albinism such as total lack of both melanins in feathers, eyes, and skin; or leucism such as partial or total lack of eumelanin or pheomelanin in the feathers (Grouw 2006).



Naman Goyal

69. Photograph of the White-rumped Shama showing the noted aberration.

Although the White-rumped Shama is sexually dimorphic, this particular individual had brownish wings and black body which created confusion in determining its sex. Nonetheless, it had a prominent white rump and rufous vent, which is typical for the species, along with the long tail, clinching the bird's specific identity. We are not aware of any instance of colour aberration in this species from India (Mahabal et al. 2016). We reviewed the literature post that paper, as well as online citizen science platforms (eBird 2020; Oriental Bird Images 2020) from India, and found no record of the observed plumage.

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Leucism in Brahminy Starling *Sturnia pagodarum*

On 15 April 2020, while I was sitting at a window of my home in Shevgaon (19.35°N, 75.22°E), Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra, at 0930 h, I saw this unusual bird that I photographed [70]. The plumage defied me and I could not immediately identify it though, from the behavior and calls, it resembled other Brahminy Starlings *Sturnia pagodarum* that accompanied it. The bird has been a regular visitor since then till 05 June 2020. When I shared these pictures with other birding friends, they suggested an

albino Brahminy Starling. However, further research led me to the conclusion that this was, more likely, leucism, as the eyes of the bird are normal in colour (van Grouw 2013). This is probably the first instance of leucism reported in this species from India (Mahabal et al. 2016).



Mahesh Phalke

70. Leucistic Brahminy Starling.

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Sighting of the White-capped Bunting *Emberiza stewarti* in West Bengal, India

On the afternoon of Sunday, 24 November 2018 we were birding at Brindabanpur (22.30°N, 86.97°E), Jhargram District, West Bengal. The area had rocky slopes interspersed with grass. We watched Rosy Starlings *Pastor roseus*, Brahminy Starlings *Sturnia pagodarum*, Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striata*, Black Drongos *Dicrurus macrocercus*, and Blue-throated Barbets *Megalaima asiatica*. Suddenly we noticed a small bird in a tree that looked a little different. From a distance it looked like a warbler, but when BM, who first photographed it [71], realized that it was a bunting; subsequently others also photographed it. It had a grey head, black eye-stripe and throat, chestnut breast-band, and chestnut rump, and it uttered a sharp 'tzi-tzi-tzi-tzi' while perched. All these features helped AD identify it as a male White-capped Bunting *Emberiza stewarti*.



Biswarup Mandal

71. White-capped Bunting in Jhargram District, West Bengal.