

McGowan & Kirwan (2020) gave the incubation period for the Blue-breasted Quail as 16–18 days. The young are capable of flight about four weeks, but remain with the adults until the following nesting season; reaching sexual maturity in three months. Working backwards from 17 July, when they took their first flight, the chicks must have hatched before the third week of June, and the eggs must have been laid in the last week of May, or first week of June. If that were the case, the males would have been calling in May.

The Blue-breasted Quail has been recorded earlier from southern West Bengal. It was mentioned in Hume & Marshall (1880) as occurring in the neighbourhood of Kolkata, in the cold season and leaving the locality by the rainy season. Hume (1875) gave their breeding season as from the end of June till the second week of August in the sub-Himalayan tracts. Biswamoy Biswas collected it in eastern Calcutta's wetlands in 1964–1969 (Anonymous 2000). However, there have been no reports in recent years and no information of breeding from West Bengal, and this is the first photographic record from the state.

We sincerely thank the Birdwatchers' Society of Bengal for sharing information on the species.

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An influx of Short-tailed Shearwaters *Ardenna tenuirostris* during to the tropical cyclone 'Amphan' in West Bengal

The pelagic Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris* is a medium-sized, trans-equatorial migrant that breeds on the south-eastern coast of Australia, and migrates to the northern Pacific Ocean in its non-breeding season (Carboneras et al. 2020). It is a dark brown bird with a short tail, rounded head, and slender,

dark bill. A darker wing-lining and the short bill are typical of this species (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012).

From 21–23 May 2020, a major cyclonic storm, 'Amphan', in the Bay of Bengal (hereinafter, BoB) hit the coast of West Bengal and blew inland many Short-tailed Shearwaters. We report below all the confirmed and putative reports of this species from that period of time.

After 'Amphan' hit West Bengal in the evening of 20 May 2020, we scoured the rivers near our respective hometowns, situated in southern West Bengal, from 21 to 24 May, for wind-blown seabirds (Table 1). We obtained nine reports of shearwaters, some of them reliably identifiable as Short-tailed Shearwaters (Table 2, Map 1).



Fig. 1. Map showing the locations where shearwaters were recorded. Source: Google Earth



107. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 21 May 2020, 1724 h.

Sannidhya De

Table 1. Details about the location of our sightings

Observer	Coordinates	City, District	Points on map	River	Mode of observation
SD	22.75°N, 88.35°E	Serampore, Hooghly	A	Hooghly	Stationary
AM	22.85°N, 88.36°E	Chandannagar, Hooghly	B	Hooghly	Travelling (1 km)
SM	22.59°N, 88.35°E	Kolkata	C	Hooghly	Stationary
AB & SA	22.43°N, 87.88°E	Naupala, Howrah	D	Rupnarayan	Travelling (5 km)

Table 2. Sighting details of Short-tailed of Shearwater in West Bengal, after super-cyclone Amphan in 2020

No	Date	No. of individuals	Time	Direction of flight	Identification	Location (observer)
1	21 May	1	1724 h	North	107. All dark, small shearwater with short bill and tail is indicative of this species	Serampore (SD)
2	22 May	1	1438 h	South	108-110. Pale central area in the wings diagnostic and is less towards the margins, which is indicative of Short-tailed (vs Sooty). Small bill, with sloping fore-crown also visible	
3	22 May	2	1755 h	South	No photographs. Dark shearwaters believed to be of this species	Chandannagar (AM)
4	23 May	1	0827 h	South	A photograph of a dark shearwater flying away was probably this species	
5	22 May	6	0830h	To and fro	111-112. Shows dark shearwater with a couple of them showing white inner wing patches. Most likely this species (vs Sooty)	Naupala (AB & SA)
6	22 May	20	1700h	To and fro	No photographs taken. Presumed to be this species	
7	23 May	15	0700-0800 h	To and fro	113-115. Video 1. Diagnostic underwing pattern with no balck primary wedges, short weak-looking bill, slightly hooded appearance and in some angles show feet projecting beyond the tail – all diagnostic of Short-tailed Shearwaters	
8	23 May	1	0830 h	North	116-117. Dark shearwater with weak bill and white patch on underwing – most likely this species	Kolkata (SM)
9	24 May	2	0750 h	South	118-121. Dark shearwater with feet clearly projecting beyond the tail and white on the central underwing – all diagnostic of Short-tailed Shearwaters	



All: Samridhya De

108-110. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 22 May 2020, 1438 h.

Both: Suprakash Adak

111-112. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 22 May 2020, 0830 h.

Anish Bera

113. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 23 May 2020, 0700-0800 h.



Suprakash Adak

114. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 23 May 2020, 0700–0800 h.



Anish Bera

115. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 23 May 2020, 0700–0800 h.



Both: Santanu Manna

116–117. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 23 May 2020, 0830 h.



All: Santanu Manna

118–121. Short-tailed Shearwater in West Bengal. 24 May 2020, 0750 h.

From the identification pointers in Table 2, we can confirm that some of the birds (#7 and #9) were definitely Short-tailed Shearwaters while others (#1, #2, #5 & #8) were most likely this species, vis-à-vis the Sooty Shearwater. Independently verifiable evidence from the other three sightings is lacking, but those birds could very well have been this species too.

Though there are a few historical sightings of this species from Baluchistan in 1889, and Sri Lanka in 1949 and 1994, it is a very rare vagrant to India, especially to its eastern coast (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; Praveen et al. 2013). There are only few records from the eastern coast of the Indian Subcontinent: From Namkhana, West Bengal, which was the first record from India (Giri et al. 2013), and from St. Martin's Island, Bangladesh

(Thompson et al. 2013). It has been reported only four times from India since then, twice from Kerala in 2014, and twice from Gujarat in 2017 (Praveen et al. 2015; Shah et al. 2018), apart from the Maldives (Anderson et al. 2016). There have not been any further reports from the coastline of BoB.

This is the first record of a large influx of these birds from the Indian mainland. However, Short-tailed Shearwaters are regularly being sighted from the western coast of Thailand, and northern Malaysia, 'At sea, off Tanjung Dawai, Kedah' (eBird 2020a), where this species was a regular visitor during April–May from 2016 to 2019. There was also a recent sighting at 'Sungai Burung, Pulau Pinang' (eBird 2020b) on 14 May 2020, wherein the bird was 'driven close to shore by an approaching storm' (Kee 2020). It is possible that they were present on the western coast of Thailand before 'Amphan' formed. The depression area of this storm was 10.9°N, 86.3°E, as uploaded in a bulletin of the India Meteorological Department (2020), which is situated directly west of the western coast of Thailand. We think it is possible that the cyclone brought those birds 142 km into West Bengal from there.

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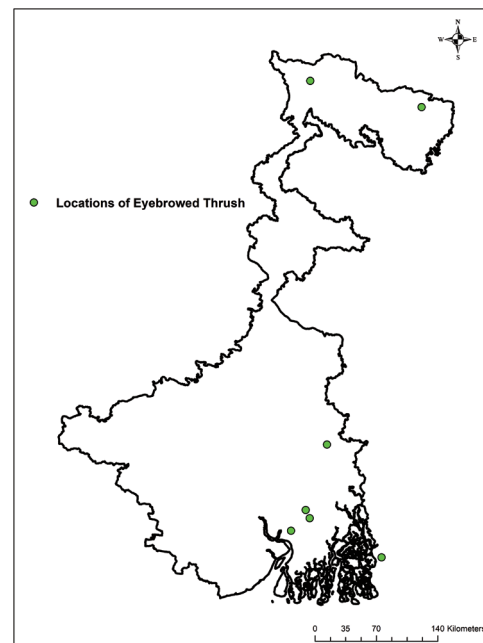
The Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* in West Bengal, India

The Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* breeds in central and eastern Siberia to Kamchatka, Mongolia, Amurland, and Sakhalin, and winters in the north-eastern part of the Indian Subcontinent, eastwards to Taiwan, southwards to the Greater Sundas and the Philippines (Collar 2020). In the Indian Subcontinent it has been mainly recorded from north-eastern India, with vagrants elsewhere in the peninsular India (Grimmett et al. 2011; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; eBird 2020).

On 03 November 2018 at 0813 h one *T. obscurus* was sighted at Lion's Safari Park, Kolkata, West Bengal, India (22.51°N, 88.36°E), well camouflaged in leaf litter under the shade of dense *Neolamarckia cadamba* trees [122]. The bird had a prominent white supercilium, and dark lores underlined by a white stripe. It also has dark brown ear-coverts, and a pale white throat bordered by a dark brown malar stripe. It was a first-winter male (they are generally brighter than females), with more grey on ear-coverts and upper breast. It was being chased by six Jungle Babblers *Turdoides striata*. At 0922 h the bird was seen feeding on an earthworm in one of the farthest corners inside the park. A few seconds later, due to some disturbance in its surroundings, it moved away and went inside the denser regions of the park which were difficult to access.



122. A camouflaged Eyebrowed Thrush in leaf litter at Lion's Safari Park, Kolkata, West Bengal, India.



Map 1. Locations of Eyebrowed Thrush sightings in West Bengal