The species was first described as Eurycercus burnesii and named after the collector, Sir Alexander Burnes, who collected it from the Indus Territory in Pakistan (Blyth 1844). Jerdon (1863) observed this species in Monghyr (=Munger), Bihar, near the River Ganges, from where there are no recent records. Whistler (1912) observed *L. burnesi*, and its nest. in tall grass jungle along the Sutlej River in Ferozepore (=Ferozpur) District, Punjab. He (Whistler 1919) also described it from near the bridge on the Sutlej River at Ladhowal village, Ludhiana. Betham (1916) described the species from a narrow stretch of reeds along the GT road near Ferozpur, the place he described as 'Bulbul Cantonment'.

We searched bibliography and accessed online data available on http://www.ebird.org, http://www.xeno-canto.org, and http:// www.facebook.com (accessed on 01 August 2020). The records from Delhi (Vyas 2019), and Kalesar, Yamumanagar, (Kalsi et al. 2019) are not verified. The earlier record as mentioned by Rahmani, 2012 are also not verified. Recent records suggest that the species is recorded mainly from Punjab, mostly from the Harike Bird Sanctuary, with the remaining records are from Ferozpur, Faridkot, and Jalandhar. Two records are from Jammu & Kashmir (Jourian and Samba), and one record is from Suratgarh, Rajasthan (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Sites for Rufous-vented Grass Babbler in India.

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## A high elevation record of the Yellow-legged Buttonguail Turnix tanki from Nainital, Uttarakhand

We report a recent sighting of a single immature female Yellowlegged Buttonquail Turnix tanki in Nainital, Uttarakhand (Rawat et al. 2020). The bird [33] accidentally entered CR's residence from an adjacent forest patch at 1630 hrs on 11 July 2020, at an altitude of 1,992 m (29.38°N, 79.45°E). We identified the bird by the distinct yellow legs and bills in comparison to the other two buttonquails, i.e., the Small T. sylvaticus and Barred T. suscitator. The bird had uniform upperparts without any scaly or striped pattern and the buff coverts had distinct black spots (Grimmett et al. 2011). The bird was later released in the same adjacent forest patch immediately. This bird was found in a highly populated residential area of Nainital with scattered trees of Quercus leucotrichophora and Cornus macrophylla, mainly with the stinging nettle Urtica dioica in the surroundings. However, the upper region of the present location has lush green Q. leucotrichophora forest.

The present sighting is the first photographic evidence of this bird from high elevations of the Indian Himalayan region. The species is known to chiefly occur below 1,200 m (Ali & Ripley 1980; Kazmierczak 2000; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; Debus & Kirwan 2020) but exceptionally reported to occur at higher altitudes - upto 2,000 m (Ali & Ripley 1980, Baker 1928, Kazmierczak 2000) in South Asia, while other references include a slightly higher altitude as 2,200 m (Baker 1928, BirdLife International 2020, Madge & McGowan 2002, Robson 2005). Geo-referenced eBird data revealed that the three highest altitudes for this species, recorded in the Indian Subcontinent,



**33.** Yellow-legged Buttonquail in Nainital.

were all from southern India: 1,880 m in Idukki District, Kerala (Robson 1984); 1,190 m in Chamrajnagar District, Karnataka (Jacob 2013); and 1,170 m in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu (Raghunathan 2014). The top three global altitudinal records were all from China, all above 4,000 m: Sichuan Province (Artuso 2005; Pepper T 2013), and Qinghai Province (Eaton 2014). The species range map in www.ebird.org clearly shows the bird's records in the Himalaya are all along the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), i.e., in the foothills of Himalaya and hence this sighting record is significant. The species inhabits, grasslands, scrub, and crop fields (Debus & Kirwan 2020). However, the present sighting is from a forested area with sparse grassy habitat. This species is not included in Mohan & Sondhi (2017) though the authors mention that it could occur in wetlands in the Uttarakhand plains. We cannot rule out a possible escapee, but Yellow-legged Buttonquails entering homes during migration is well known. There are many photographic records in eBird, of captured individuals, with two records from Bengaluru, one record each from Kottayam, Idukki, Mysuru, and Mumbai in India, and from Bangkok and Udon Thani in Thailand (eBird 2020).

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# Large flocks of Sarus Crane Antigone antigone and Painted Stork Mycteria leucocephala in Nepal

'Congragating' is a common behaviour amongst waterbirds, some storks and cranes use it strategically in their behavioural repertoire (BirdLife International 2008). Information on congregations is useful as it can aid in monitoring populations as well as conserving key sites. In this note, we report on the large flocks of Sarus Crane *Antigone antigone* and Painted stork *Mycteria leucocephala* in Nepal.

### Sarus Crane Antigone antigone

At 1630 h, on 11 May 2017, 120 Sarus Cranes were recorded at Jagadishpur Reservoir (27.62°N, 83.10° E) in Kapilvastu District **[34]**. Moreover, we had counted 94 Sarus Cranes in fields of harvested wheat, 50 m southwards of the same reservoir on 17 April 2018 **[35]**. A flock of mixed age group (i.e., juveniles and adults) were spotted during both observations, though the ratio of adults and juveniles was not estimated. Preening, courtship displays, and feeding were the dominant behaviours at the time of observation.