

- Maharashtra, India. *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 7 (2): 486–492.
- Koparde, P., & Raote, N., 2016. Areas of avian richness across an urban-rural setting: A case study of selected water-bodies from Pune, Maharashtra, India. *Indian BIRDS* 12 (2&3): 50–55.
- Masero, J. A., Estrella S. M., & Sánchez-Guzmán J. M., 2007. Behavioural plasticity in foraging mode of typical plovers. *Ardea* 95 (2): 259–265.
- Prasad, A., 2004. Annotated checklist of the birds of Western Maharashtra. *Buceros* 8 (2&3): i–ii, 1–174 (2003).
- Rao, G. B., Babu, S., Quadros, G., & Anoop, V., 2019. Bird diversity in the coastal talukas of Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra, India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 11 (9): 14166–14186. doi: <http://10.11609/jott.4007.11.9.14166-14186>.
- 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.
- Sumant, O., Lonkar, R., Pawar, R., & Pande, S., 2019. Checklist of birds and mammals of Kolvihi, a threatened grassland in Purandar Taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra, India. *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 8 (1&2): 535–548.
- Wadkar, J., Kasambe, R., & Wagh, G., 2010. *Checklist of birds of Amravati District*. Amravati: Wildlife & Environment Conservation Society. Pp. i–ii, 1–22.
- Wiersma, P., Kirwan, G. M., & Boesman, P. F. D., 2020. Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D. A., & de Juana, E., Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. Website URL: <https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.corplo.01>. [Accessed on 30 September 2020.]

– **Shubham Ashok Giri, Prashant Kacharu Nikam & Pavan Chikkarayanawamy**

Shubham Ashok Giri, Kathora Road, Near Pote College, Trimurti Nagar, Amravati 444602, Maharashtra, India. E-mail: shubhamaagiri@gmail.com

Prashant Kacharu Nikam, Gopalkrushna Colony, Shegaon Rahatgaon Road, Amravati 444602, Maharashtra, India. E-mail: pp38143@gmail.com

Pavan Chikkarayanawamy, House No.78, Esthur Hosahalli village, Bendiganahalli Post, Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District 562129, Karnataka, India. E-mail: pavangaddenna@gmail.com [Corresponding author.]

Frugivory in the Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida abbotti*

Members of the Pittidae are generally known to be insectivores that forage on the forest floor. They are usually heard or seen skulking in thick undergrowth and are highly active around dawn and dusk. The Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida abbotti* of the Great and Little Nicobar Islands, India, is an endemic subspecies of the widely distributed Hooded Pitta and is found in the thick, evergreen forests of the islands (Ali & Ripley 1983: 255; Rao et al. 2013).

Hooded Pittas, like their congeners, are widely known to feed on earthworms, snails, ants, beetles, bugs, and invertebrates, and also on small skinks, frogs, and snakes (Lok et al. 2009). However, pittas have also been known to feed on fruit. Corlett (1998) found that fruits made up c.20% of the diet of the Rusty-naped Pitta *P. oatesi*. He opined that consumption of fallen fruit might be overlooked in other pittas. Frugivory was also reported for the Noisy Pitta *P. versicolor* by Shanahan et al. (2001).

On 13 March 2021, at 1115 h, we observed a Hooded Pitta in the forest near Zero Point, Great Nicobar Island, feeding on figs that had fallen out of a ficus tree, probably *Ficus altissima* [151]. The large fig tree, laden with fruits, was frequented by a plethora of bird species, like pigeons (Columbidae), drongos (Dicuridae), parakeets (Psittacidae), and orioles (Oriolidae), resulting in a large quantity of fruits dropping to the forest floor. We observed an individual Hooded Pitta feeding on the fruits, though there were at least three other conspecifics in the immediate surroundings. Though fruit might not be a significant part of its diet, unlike the Rusty-naped Pitta, it does seem that a Hooded Pitta will feed on fallen fruit if the opportunity arises. We did also consider the possibility of the pitta eating the fruit due to the presence of the

fig wasps' eggs or larvae; neither is there enough evidence to prove this. The Hooded Pitta ate the entire fruit, which might have not been the case if it just wanted to eat just the larvae, or the eggs of the wasps, for obtaining which it need have just pecked them from the fruit. It would be interesting to learn if the pursuit of wasps is potentially the driving agent for these insectivores to eat fruit.



Soham Dixit

151. Hooded Pitta feeding on a fallen fig in the Great Nicobar Island.

References

- Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D., 1983. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Forgmouths to pittas*. 2nd (Hardback) ed. Delhi: (Sponsored by Bombay Natural History Society.) Oxford University Press. Vol. 4 of 10 vols. Pp. i–xvi, 1–267+5.
- Corlett, R. T., 1998. Frugivory and seed dispersal by vertebrates in the Oriental (Indomalayan) Region. *Biological Reviews of the Cambridge Philosophical Society* 73 (4): 413–448. DOI: <http://10.1017/s0006323198005234>.
- Rao, D. V., Chandra, K., & Devi, K., 2013. *Endemic fauna of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Bay of Bengal*. Kolkata, India: Director: Zoological Survey of India. Pp. 1–292.
- Shanahan, M., So, S., Gompton, S. G., & Gorlett, R. T., 2001. Fig-eating by vertebrate frugivores: A global review. *Biological Reviews of the Cambridge Philosophical Society* 76 (4): 529–572.

– **Soham Dixit*, Shashank Dalvi, Omkar Dharwadkar, Tejas Thackeray**

Thackeray Wildlife Foundation 601, Vaibhav Chambers, 6th floor, Bandra Kurla Complex, opposite IT Office, Bandra East, Mumbai 400051, Maharashtra, India. *E-mail: sohamsanjaydixit@gmail.com [Corresponding author.]

Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama* from the Sikkim Himalaya

On 10 April 2021, while birding in Lachen, North Sikkim (27.72°N, 88.55°E; 2,987m asl), we heard a new bird call near the forest. As we pursued the sound toward the forest, we noticed a strange bird foraging on a Sea Buckthorn tree *Hippophae rhamnoides* and photographed it [152]. At first we were confused whether it was a Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* or the larger Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*. When we checked in Grimmett et al. (2016), we realised that the bird looked greyer, and was distinctly longer-billed than a Booted Warbler. Whereas it seemed confusable with a Blyth's Reed Warbler; yet it had a more distinct supercilium behind the eye, paler greyish-brown upperparts, pale sides to tail and edges to remiges, square-ended tail, and shorter



152. Sykes's Warbler.

Tamdang Chewang Lachenpa

undertail and upper tail coverts. Therefore, this bird seemed like a Sykes's Warbler *I. rama*. Furthermore, for identification and confirmation, we posted the photograph of the bird in the WhatsApp group of North-East Birding. After much discussion, it was finally concluded that the colour of upperparts, the horizontal stance, and the distinctly long pale bill of the bird confirmed its identification as a Sykes's Warbler.

Sykes's Warbler's breeding range extends from north-eastern Arabia to Turkestan, western China, and Afghanistan (Svensson & Kirwan 2020). Within our region, it breeds in Pakistan and north-western India (Grimmett et al. 2016). The present record may indicate that it could be a passage migrant through the Sikkim Himalaya towards China. There has not been any report of this species from the Sikkim Himalaya nor from most of the eastern Himalaya (Ali 1962; Acharya & Vijayan 2011; ENVIS Centre Sikkim 2015; Grimmett et al. 2016; Grimmett et al. 2019; eBird 2021), and our sighting seems to be a new record for the avifauna of the Sikkim Himalayas. We recommend that birders in the high Himalaya look out for this species during March/April for more details about its breeding ground.

We thank the senior birder group for the identification of the species. A special thanks to members of the birder group of Sikkim Himalaya, and Bijoy Chhetri for their constant guidance and encouragement.

References

- Acharya, B. K., & Vijayan, L., 2011. The birds of Sikkim: An analysis of elevational distribution, endemism and threats. Pp. 255–282. In: Arawatia, M. L., & Tambe, S., (eds.). *Biodiversity of Sikkim: Exploring and conserving a global hotspot*. Gangtok, India: IPR Department, Government of Sikkim. Website URL: http://sikkimforest.gov.in/Reports%20and%20Publications/Biodiversity-of-Sikkim/14%20Birds%20Bhoj_255-280%20web.pdf. [Accessed on 09 April 2021.]
- Ali, S., 1962. *The birds of Sikkim*. 1st ed. Madras, India: Oxford University Press. Pp. i–xxx, 1–414.
- eBird (2021). eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. [Accessed on 09 April 2021.]
- ENVIS Centre Sikkim. 2015. Website URL: <http://sikenvis.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/List%20of%20Birds%202015.pdf>. [Accessed on 09 April 2021.]
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 2016. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press & Christopher Helm. Pp. 1–528.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., Inskipp, T., & Sherub. 2019. *Birds of Bhutan and the Eastern Himalayas*. India: Bloomsbury Publishing India Pvt. Ltd. Pp. 1–416.
- Svensson, L., & Kirwan, G. M., 2020. Sykes's Warbler (*Iduna rama*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (J. del Hoyo, A. Elliott, J. Sargatal, D. A. Christie, and E. de Juana, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. Website URL: <https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.sykwar2.01>. [Accessed on 09 April 2021.]

– **Tamdang Chewang Lachenpa & Prem K. Chhetri**

Tamdang Chewang Lachenpa, Lachen North Sikkim 737120, Sikkim, India.

E-mail: denzoporrough@gmail.com

Prem K. Chhetri, Forest & Environment Department, Government of Sikkim, Barapathing Range 737102, Sikkim, India. E-mail: chhetriprem22@gmail.com [Corresponding author.]