A Cream-colored Courser *Cursorius cursor* in western Maharashtra, India

At 1300 h on 28 September 2020, an unknown man rescued a bird from the mudflats of Thane Creek, Maharashtra (19.12°N, 72.98°E) and brought it to the office of the Range Forest Officer, Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (Mangrove Cell, Maharashtra Forest Department), Airoli, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra. NGK called SSS and MP to the office to have a look at 'a never seen before wading bird'. After reaching the office, they immediately identified the bird as a Cream-colored Courser *Cursorius cursor* **[49]** (Surve 2020) owing to its shape, long legs, and sandy-coloured appearance, contrasting with the Indian Courser *C. coromandelicus*. The rescued bird was then placed in a basket, covered with a cloth and timely offered insects. However, the bird refused to feed, and died the following day. The specimen was then sent for taxidermy, which on completion would be placed on display at the Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Centre, Airoli—a nature information centre under the management of the Mangrove Cell, Forest Department, Government of Maharashtra—along with other specimens displayed there.

Shaheed Bamne

49. A vagrant Cream-coloured Courser captured from the mudflats of the Thane Creek, Maharashtra.

The Cream-colored Courser is a winter visitor to Pakistan and north-western India. A majority of its population winters in the arid and semi-arid regions of Rajasthan and Gujarat. The occurrence of this species in Navi Mumbai is unusual as that is neither its habitat, nor its range as described in Grimmett et al. (2011), and Rasmussen & Anderton (2012). Similarly, Prasad (2004) did not mention any records from western Maharashtra. Also, while toggling between the 'Months category' under the species maps on eBird (2022a,b), it was observed that the birds tends to reach India between August and September; and that this bird could be a vagrant, hence, making it the first record of this species from Maharashtra.

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Frog in the diet of Dark-sided Thrush *Zoothera marginata*

At 1600 h on 17 December 2021, we were watching birds in a woodland situated in the Kamalabari area of Majuli Island (26.946°N, 94.161°E), near the Tuni River (a small tributary of River Brahmaputra that flows through Majuli). The area is not more than 0.2 sq. km. Inside the woodland there is a small, dried pond with damp soil, covered by leaf litter and some undergrowth, where we saw a Dark-sided Thrush *Zoothera marginata*. It was beautifully camouflaged amongst the rotting leaves, and quietly foraged just few meters away from us, in the open area, not bothered by our presence at all. We noticed that the bird fed on insects and other invertebrates in the leaf litter on the wet soil. It was hopping and foraging in the dark by placing its bill gently between the leaves on the ground. Sometimes it scratched and cleared the soil surface using its bill and removed debris to catch hidden insects.

On 4 January 2022 we revisited the area and observed something unique. At 0700 h, we heard soft crackling sounds from the leaf litter. Upon scrutiny, we saw the Dark-sided Thrush holding a small frog (probably belonging to Dicroglossidae family) in its bill **[50]**. It swallowed the entire frog in five to ten seconds and continued its search for food in the dry leaf litter. Compared to the earlier observations in the damp area, it was now seen foraging in the drier part of the woodland, near human habitation, and was quite conscious about our presence. We observed it for a few minutes and took photographs of the behaviour. After a few more minutes we observed the bird feeding on several invertebrates hidden under the dry leaves.

We found this behaviour to be unique, after comparing the diet of all 22 members of the *Zoothera* genus, which mostly comprises invertebrates and fruits (Collar 2020; Winkler et al. 2020). Typically, Dark-sided Thrushes forage in damp areas, but we found this bird feeding on a frog in a comparatively drier area. Only the New Britain Thrush *Zoothera talaseae* is known to feed on small animals (del Hoyo et al. 2020), which may, or may not, include frogs.

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