

Notes on Indian rarities—2: Waterfowl, diving waterbirds, and gulls and terns

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[Continued from *Indian BIRDS* 8 (5): 125.]

In this part, we present annotated notes on 36 species, from the following families:

- Anatidae (Swans, geese, and ducks)
- Podicipedidae (Grebes)
- Gaviidae (Loons)
- Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants)
- Laridae (Gulls and terns)

Table 1. Abbreviations used in the text

Abbreviations	Reference
AWC	Asian Waterbird Census (www.wetlands.org/awc)
BMNH	Natural History Museum, London (www.nhm.ac.uk)
BNHS	Bombay Natural History Society (http://www.bnhs.org)
BSA2	Rasmussen & Anderton (2012)
FMNH	Field Museum of Natural History (http://fieldmuseum.org)
Hbk	Ali & Ripley (2001)
OBI	Oriental Bird Images (www.orientalbirdimages.org)
ZSI	Zoological Survey of India (http://zsi.gov.in)

Methodology used in this paper is already described in Praveen *et al.* (2013); nonetheless, some basic criteria and key points in our methodology are summarised here as well. Specimens, and published photographs (in print or on the Internet), with well-established provenance followed by documented instances of birds in the hand, are given the highest priority in terms of reliability of a record. In the absence of such robust proof, detailed published notes are given preference over published / unpublished information that is found wanting in details. For this project, we follow Dickinson & Remsen (2013) for taxonomy and species sequence. In this series, we intend to provide concise accounts of rarities—species that do not have more than ten independently confirmed records, from India. These may sometimes include species not reported from India but listed in some checklists on the basis of reports from neighbouring countries. Wherever it is required to discuss the status of a species in other parts of South Asia, we have done so. For species with more than three confirmed records, a table is provided, and for species with more than five confirmed records, a distribution map is also provided. At the end of this series, an updated India Checklist, defined by political boundaries as recognised by the Government of India, will be compiled and

published; this list will include all the species that have been reliably recorded, in an apparently wild state, in the country. In addition, species from naturalised populations, either established within the country or outside, from which individual birds sometimes straggle to the region would also be included in the Checklist. For this part of the series, we have excluded some anatids that have become rare in recent years having undergone a grave population decline, but were widely reported in India during the nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. This list includes White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*, Baikal Teal *Anas formosa*, Smew *Mergellus albellus*, Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri*, and Pink-headed Duck *Rhodonessa caryophyllacea*, the last now probably locally extinct. Although these taxa fall outside the scope of this series by virtue of existence of over ten confirmed records from the country, each of them deserves separate documentation to assess their current rarity status even though most of them, being recognised as globally threatened, have already been covered in detail by Rahmani (2012). We also do not cover relatively rare and extremely localised species of terns that are often locally common in the region, namely Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* (Vengurla and Andamans), White-cheeked Tern *S. repressa* (Vengurla and Goa), and Black-naped Tern *S. sumatrana* (Andamans).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* (J. F. Gmelin, 1789)

While BSA2 considered it a vagrant in the past, Hbk mentioned only a single sight report dated 11 November 1922, of an individual from Kasurdi [=Kesurdi], Pune–Solapur Road (18°28'N, 74°13'E), Maharashtra, India (Trevenen 1923; Prasad 2006). Original observations were sufficiently detailed for a clinching identification and the bird was thought to have been driven by 'severe storms in the north', though the author did recognise the possibility of the bird being an aviary/zoo escapee. The only other record from Indian Territory was of two birds collected in 1897 at Chilas (35°25'N, 74°05'E), Gilgit, Kashmir (McMahon 1899); but these specimens could not be traced though apparently many specimens listed by the author were examined at the Indian Museum. All wild specimens from the Indian Subcontinent in the collections of the BNHS (Abdulali 1968), the ZSI (Gopinathan Maheswaran, *pers. comm.*, June 2014), and the BMNH (Robert Prys-Jones, *pers. comm.*, September 2014) were from Pakistan, where it had occurred at least 15 times (Baker 1929) during cold winters (e.g., 1878, 1900, 1910, 1911). We include this species in the India Checklist based on the Kashmir specimens (though

untraceable, several specimens from Pakistan during the same period exist), while the bird from Maharashtra was also, in all probability, a wild one.

Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus* (Ord, 1815)

Hbk included two races, *C. c. bewickii*, and *C. c. jankowskyi*¹ (= *jankowskii*), from India based on specimens in BNHS (Abdulali 1968). However, BSA2 stated that *jankowskyi* was probably not a valid race, and Dickinson & Remsen (2013) also subsumed it within *bewickii*. Apart from a single juvenile specimen (#15241) in BNHS (Abdulali 1968), from Rajpur (29°04'N, 77°00'E) near Delhi (now in Haryana), there are no other claims of *bewickii* from India. There is confusion about this locality as the specimen is probably the same reported from 'Sutana about 45 miles north of Delhi' on 26 December 1937 (Lewis 1938; also see the editorial note therein). Rajpur is 73 km (~45 miles) north of Delhi while Sutana is further north by an additional 50 km. Incidentally, this record was shown on the Haryana-Rajasthan border in Grimmett *et al.* (1998) followed by Kazmierczak (2000), in an apparent transcription error (Tim Inskipp *pers. comm.* August 2014). K. S. Madansinhji recovered a live injured specimen in Bhuj (23°11'N, 69°39'E), Gujarat, on 09 April 1947; one of a pair seen in that locality for four–five days. This bird lived in captivity at the Mumbai Zoo till 14 April 1947 when it succumbed to injuries that were probably inflicted upon it by a crocodile (Ali 1947). This specimen (#15243), identified as *jankowskyi*, is now in the BNHS collection (Abdulali 1968). Two birds from Gandhigram (27°16'N, 96°54'E), Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh, were tentatively identified as this species on 13 December 2008 (Srinivasan *et al.* 2010) though the photographs taken were inconclusive (Umesh Srinivasan, *pers. comm.*, August 2013); earlier, Singh (1999) had reported *C. cygnus* from the same neighbourhood. Apart from these records, a bird was observed very close to the Indian border, downstream of the Rapti- and Narayani Rivers in Nepal, on 23 February 1978 (Gooders 1979), which was the first well-documented record for Nepal. We include this species in the India Checklist based on the two specimens in the BNHS collection.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Hbk indicates less than a dozen records from the Indian Subcontinent, listing twentieth century records from Kashmir, Punjab, and Rajasthan. BSA2 does not mention any specific records. We include it in the India Checklist based on the two well-preserved specimen records and one recent photograph (Table 2).

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis* (Pallas, 1769)

Hbk includes it based on three sighting reports; one from Madhya Pradesh and two from Assam. BSA2 lists it as hypothetical. After a visit to the Leiden [=Leyden] Museum, Edward Blyth in his notes on Indian birds (Blyth 1870) made a suggestion on a certain Indian specimen of this species. He referred to a probable record based on a group of four seen near Nagpur [=Nagpore] in the erstwhile Central Provinces (currently in Maharashtra, but erroneously stated as Madhya Pradesh in Hbk and BSA2) (Bertram 1836). The description is very unconvincing: 'I once, and only once, saw a very small wild goose, differing from both the above [Greylag Goose *Anser anser* and Bar-headed Goose *A. indicus*]. It was of a fine reddish brown throughout, (excepting a little variegation with white on the quill feathers,) with a crest of reddish feathers. This very lovely specimen, in company with three others only, came across me some fourteen years ago near Nagpore.' Surprisingly, Hume (1879) provided some support for this record; however, it was dismissed by Blanford (1898), and Finn (1915). We have also confirmed independently that such an Indian specimen does not exist now in Leiden Museum (Steven van der Mije, *pers. comm.*, April 2014). Baker (1904b) identified this from the description provided by M. S. Mondy [*sic.* Mundy] who saw four, on the banks of River Brahmaputra, along with Greylag Goose sometime in the 1904 winter. Though Baker mentions the observer took a, 'very careful note of its appearance', and provided a, 'minute description', these details are found wanting in his published note, apart from a mention of red on the neck. However, Baker later (1921, 1929) informed that Mondy saw only a 'single' bird, while he himself saw a 'flock of five' that went past his steamer while travelling on the Brahmaputra

Table 2. Whooper Swan records

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
6 January 1900	Talwara on Beas River, Hoshiarpur, Punjab	31°57'N, 75°53'E	One shot from a flock of four, specimen (#22226) in the BNHS coll.	Aitken (1900); Osborn (1909)
1925	Khetri, Rajasthan	28°03'N, 75°47'E	A specimen (#15240) in the BNHS coll., in grey plumage	Baker (1929); Abdulali (1968)
19 February 1945	Dara Shikoh Bagh (=Badshahi Bagh), Srinagar, Kashmir	33°47'N, 75°06'E	A specimen shot by a local sportsman, examined by F. Ludlow, but probably not preserved and hence details unavailable for verification.	Ludlow (1945)
November 1998	Neo-Dehing River, Ramnagar, Arunachal Pradesh	27°10'N, 96°54'E	Sight report of two flocks of four and three birds. Reportedly, the birds readily took to wings when disturbed indicating the birds were not feral in origin. The fact that the birds were calling in flight eliminated Mute Swans. Yellow patch on the bill noted, but this could also have been <i>C. columbianus</i> , which is also possible in the north-east.	Singh (1999)
December 1999	Neo-Dehing River, Ramnagar, Arunachal Pradesh	27°10'N, 96°54'E	Sight report of three birds, no details available but probably same species as from 1998. Apparently village folk familiar with this bird and its arrival times every year. See under Tundra Swan for a record from a nearby site.	Singh (1999)
29 January 2013	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	Two birds well-photographed and seen by several birders at least till 12 February (Arora 2013)	Dhadwal (2013)

¹ Original spelling as verified in Dickinson & Remsen, 2013.

in March 1907, contradicting his own earlier documentation. We, therefore, have apprehensions over the credibility of these sight-reports from Assam. A single bird was photographed on 13 March 2014 at Ganga Barrage (29°22'N, 78°02'E), Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh (Panwar & Panwar 2014), and should be treated as the first and the only well-documented record of this bird from the Indian Subcontinent. We include this species in the India Checklist based on this photographic record.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Hbk does not include this species while BSA2 treats it as hypothetical. The first claimed record of this goose, from India, was a mistaken partial albino Greylag Goose (BNHS Reg. # 15297) shot at Haigham Jheel, Kashmir, on 26 February 1950 (Editors 1950; Abdulali 1966). More recently, it was observed and photographed [154, 155] in January 1989 at Muli Reservoir (22°39'N, 71°30'E), Surendranagar District, Gujarat (Mundkur *et al.* 1992), along with Bar-headed Geese. Though photographs were not published then, photographic slides made at that time were sent to us by the author for re-examination; unfortunately the slides have now become worn out with time and the features are barely visible, yet, field notes published in detail leave little doubt as to the identity of the species. However, it is not clear if the bird was a vagrant from a truly wild or naturalised population, or an escapee from a captive facility.

Snow Geese breed in small colonies along the northern arctic shorelines from Chukotka in the Far East, westwards. The

bulk of the breeders migrate to the Americas, with a very small population migrating to East Asia, at least as south as Poyang Lake (29°08'N, 116°22'E) (Markkola *et al.* 1999; Lindie 2012; Taej Mundkur, *pers. comm.*, August 2014). It is possible that a stray wild bird from this wintering population could have moved to Tibet/Central Asia, where Bar-headed Geese would breed, joined them, and landed in India along with them.

Alternatively, a stray individual from the widely naturalised population of Snow Geese in the Western Palearctic (Cramp 1985) could have been carried by Greylag Geese *A. a. rubriostris* to India. However, long-distance vagrancy is seldom observed in this naturalised population with the most remarkable one being only till Morocco across the Mediterranean Sea (Carboneras 1992). Interestingly, Askania-Nova Nature Reserve, Ukraine has a few semi-captive breeding birds that were originally brought from Wrangel [=Vrangel] Island, offshore Far Eastern Russia and ring-recoveries of birds from this population have been made in western Europe. However, Zubko *et al.* (1996) state that the birds of this stock apparently ceased to show any migratory behaviour by mid to late 1980s and nearly all the movements of the birds were westward with no eastward trend observed.

Another possibility is that the bird could be an escapee from captivity, as Snow Geese are a popular species in aviaries, menageries, and private collections, at least in Europe, and escapees from these facilities are not uncommon (Mike Prince, *pers. comm.*, August 2014; Bill Harvey, *pers. comm.*, August 2014). Though the species is not known to be kept in captivity, nor traded by aviculturists in India (Rajat Bhargava, *pers. comm.*, September 2013), we are unable to completely rule out the presence of captive birds in private collections outside India including Tibet, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Middle East. Particularly interesting is the possibility of a Tibetan escapee, as carrier species for the Gujarat bird is assumed to be Bar-headed Geese that breed in Tibet (though it is not necessary that vagrants always need carrier taxa). Some of the Tibetan monasteries do keep captive animals and birds as pets, but mostly of local origin (rescued from the wild and rehabilitated) or common species in the pet trade.

As expert opinions are equally divided over these possibilities and in the absence of any further corroborative information that would give an edge to one theory over others, we conclude that the Gujarat bird, though identified correctly, is of unknown origin and therefore tentatively excluded from the India Checklist. We, however, wish to state that it would be maintained in the database in a separate category ('unknown origin') until there is evidence to the contrary.

Pink-footed Goose

Anser brachyrhynchus Baillon, 1834

Ripley included it in the 1st ed., of his *Synopsis* (1961), but not the 2nd (1982). Hbk deleted it from the India list (see vol. 1: #76–77). BSA2 followed Hbk, but erred in its citation (2: 605), where 'HB 26' should have been '*Synopsis* (1961, p. 26)'. Baker's (1929) inclusion of this goose was challenged by Ticehurst (1930), and since then no conclusive evidence of its occurrence in India has emerged. Blyth identified it from a drawing of a specimen shot in the Punjab in 1843 (Jerdon 1864; Oates 1899), apparently by one Mr. Bartlett (Blyth 1852) [Baker (1929) erred in dating this reference of Blyth as 1849]. Gen. McLeod shot one from a gaggle of 20 near Kahnawan [=Kanawan] Lake, Gurdaspur, Punjab, in 1853 (McLeod 1881).



154. Snow Goose at Muli Reservoir, Gujarat (extreme right)



155. Snow Goose at Muli Reservoir, Gujarat (extreme right)

Col. Irby saw a specimen killed at Alumbagh, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, in January 1858 (Irby 1861; Reid 1881), which is, perhaps, now in the Lucknow State Museum, as two specimens are listed in its collection catalogue (Reid 1886; Hume 1887). A. O. Hume shot two birds in 1864 on the Yamuna River, in Etawah District (Hume 1873); but these were not critically examined then, nor were their skins preserved (Hume 1879). Baker's comment 'In 1879 Hume again records it' (Baker 1929) was probably an error as Hume (1879) was only commenting on these birds shot in Etawah in 1864 and this record did not figure in any of Hume's writings. Col. Graham believed it to be 'not uncommon in Assam' (Hume 1879), but this must have been some other species as nobody else, since then, has come across it in that state (Hume 1888). Blanford (1898) treated all the nineteenth century claims with considerable doubt due to the lack of any preserved skins. Baker (1929) listed them all but indicated that most of them could have referred to some form of Bean Goose *A. fabalis* (see under that species) and the only record which applied beyond doubt, according to Baker, was of a goose shot from a dozen (Baker 1921) by one of his collectors in Surma [=Sarma] Valley, Cachar, Assam. The bird had a smaller bill (40.6 mm), which eliminated the larger Bean Goose. However, Baker himself said elsewhere (Baker 1921) that the specimen was in a dilapidated condition and the bill colour was therefore of no use in eliminating the possibility that it was a first winter *A. albifrons*. Ticehurst (1930) considered the bill (40.6 mm) too small for *A. brachyrhynchus* [but see Editors (1946) for an alternate view] and rejected this as well as the earlier records. Another specimen (BNHS Reg. # 15293) that was considered a definite record of this species from Bikaner, Rajasthan (Editors 1946), proved to be a first-winter Greater White-fronted Goose *A. albifrons* upon re-examination (Abdulali 1966). First winter *A. albifrons* sports a black nail on a similar-sized bill; a feature not well appreciated earlier (Blanford 1898; Baker 1929), but considered diagnostic for *A. brachyrhynchus*. Hence, it is likely that many of the nineteenth century records of this species were first-winter *A. albifrons*. The Pink-footed Goose is a bird of rather limited, and distinctly westerly distribution, and is an extreme rarity even in Eastern Europe (Ticehurst 1930; Scott & Rose 1996). In view of all these arguments, we concur with BSA2 in excluding this species from the India Checklist.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* (Latham, 1787)

Included in Hbk based on historical records, a majority of which remain unverified and probably refer to other *Anser* species, and in BSA2 based on recent sightings. More than one species probably involved, but taxonomy is unresolved; most authorities recognise five taxa within the species complex—*fabalis*, *johanseni*, *middendorffii*, *rossicus*, and *serrirostris*. Sangster & Oreel (1996) considered the former three as Taiga Bean Goose *A. fabalis*, and the latter two as Tundra Bean Goose *A. serrirostris* (see BSA2 for details of structural and plumage differences between these two taxa). However, Ruokonen *et al.* (2008) considered *A. middendorffii* a monotypic species, with the other four being races of a single species. In view of this uncertainty in taxonomy, we follow Dickinson & Remsen (2013) who treated them as a single species with five races; nevertheless, we attempt here to scrutinise all the past records at subspecific levels as we anticipate changes in species status in the near future.

Hume & Marshall (1881) indicated that there were no specimens of *A. fabalis* from India but stated that Hume knew

of its occurrence in Oudh (=Avadh, Uttar Pradesh), Central Provinces, and the Deccan (quoting Blyth 1868). Blyth's comment was based on a specimen in Gould's collection, but that specimen does not exist in BMNH where Gould's collection is housed (Oates 1899). When Oates (1906) discredited Baker's (1898, 1904c) specimens of *A. brachyrhynchus*, Baker retorted that all three (yet untraced!) specimens from Dibrugarh District, Assam, reportedly collected by Baker, Dr Moore, and N. Mundy (though Baker wouldn't make any mention of Mundy in his note in 1906) were, in fact, *A. [fabalis] middendorffii* (Baker 1906, 1929). Oates (1906) removed *A. brachyrhynchus* from the India list, suggesting that the birds that Blyth and Hume referred to were also probably this species; a statement that Baker later echoed (1929). In summary, except for the unsubstantiated claims of Oates and Baker that these birds could be *A. fabalis*, there exists no unassailable evidence for the occurrence of this species in India from historical records. Lt. Cd. J. Hurrell collected a specimen, now in BNHS (#15292; Abdulali 1968), of a Bean Goose labelled *A. neglectus* (=Sushkin's Goose) from Manipur (Hurrell 1947) shot in December 1946 (but dated 20 January 1947 on the specimen tag), with measurements as wing=467 mm (465 in Hurrell 1947), tarsus=70 mm (80 in Hurrell 1947), and bill=63 mm. Though it is clear from the photographs of the BNHS specimen that it is certainly a Bean Goose and may, structurally, belong to the long necked *fabalis* / *johanseni* / *middendorffii* group, this specimen requires critical re-examination, as Abdulali (1968) listed it under *A. fabalis* but did not ascribe a race to it (the tag is inscribed '*Anser fabalis brachyrhynchus* Sushkin'; Rahul Khot, *pers. comm.*, December 2013), and both Hbk and BSA2 are mute on this point. *A. neglectus* does not have a taxonomic standing anymore and probably refers to a mixed swarm of *A. fabalis* and *A. rossicus* (see Ripley 1961). Johansen (1945) treated *neglectus* as a race of *fabalis*, and later considered it merely a colour phase (Johansen 1962). The birds, which were formerly labelled '*A. neglectus*', were found to be quite diverse in morphology and genetics and were variously assigned to *A. rossicus* and *A. fabalis* (Ruokonen & Aarvak 2011).

There are three recent records of Bean Goose from India, all of them well photographed and confirmed to belong to the Bean Goose group. However, opinion about race, based upon the pictures, was equivocal. Bill Harvey and others saw and photographed one amongst a gaggle of Greylag Geese, assumed to be the carrier species, in Harike (31°09'N, 74°58'E), Punjab, in February 2003 (Harvey *et al.* 2006); opinions on the racial identity from circulated photographs (Prince 2003) varied and it is best left unassigned to any particular form (Mike Prince, *pers. comm.*, August 2014). A single Bean Goose, identified as *middendorffii*, was photographed (photographs not available now, Craig Robson, *pers. comm.*, January 2014) amongst a flock of Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea* and a single Common Shelduck *T. tadorna* by Craig Robson and others on 01 April 2007 on the banks of the Dibru River, Dibru Saikhowa National Park (27°34'N, 95°23'E), Assam (Robson 2007), which, interestingly, is the same region where Baker is supposed to have procured his three specimens! Another single bird was photographed along with Bar-headed Geese on Tumariya Reservoir (29°18'N, 78°57'E), near Corbett Tiger Reserve, Nainital District, Uttarakhand (Bhattacharjee 2013). Though no race was claimed in the published paper, Thomas Heinicke, of the Goose Specialist Group, Wetland International / IUCN Species Survival Commission, commented that this belonged to *rossicus* / *serrirostris* based on structural

characteristics and plumage (Anushree Bhattacharjee, *pers. comm.*, December 2013). Apart from this, there are two records from Nepal (Inskipp & Inskipp 1991): one of 09 February 1993 by H. Young, from Chitwan National Park, reported as *rossicus* in Robson (1993b), and another by S. Chaudhary *et al.*, again from Chitwan on 15 February 2004 (Robson 2004b; Inskipp 2004). Two reports of this species from Bangladesh (Mountfort 1969; Husain 1975; Khan 1982) lacked details and hence considered unconfirmed (Siddiqui *et al.* 2008). With this background, we accept Bean Goose in the Indian Checklist based on the three recent photographic records and an old specimen. It is, however, not possible to comment on the races of these records given the poor diagnosability of all the evidences.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

There are a few well-documented records from India, as presented in both Hbk and BSA2. The species is categorised as Vulnerable (BirdLife International 2014), and has been treated in detail by both, BirdLife International (2001), and Rahmani (2012). Nonetheless, a majority of these records from India are still disputed and are best considered tentative (Table 3). Reports that are equivocal on identification, vis-à-vis *A. albifrons*, are not considered here. Almost all confirmed records are from the northern plains drained by the tributaries of the Indus-, Ganges-, and Brahmaputra- Rivers, and it is yet to be recorded

Table 3. Lesser White-fronted Goose reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
24 October 1859	Near Sitapur [=Seeta-pore], Uttar Pradesh	27°34'N, 80°40'E	Three birds of which two were shot, but specimens untraced. Author identified this species much later after seeing live individuals in Zoological Gardens, Reagent's Park. In the absence of any definite description, this report is treated inconclusive as <i>A. albifrons</i> was not ruled out and author did not report that species.	Irby (1861)
Pre-1881	Hardoi [=Hurdui], Uttar Pradesh	27°23'N, 80°07'E	A. Anderson obtained an unknown number of specimens. Further details unavailable and whereabouts of such specimen(s) unknown and hence this record is treated as tentative.	Hume & Marshall (1881)
Pre-1881	Fatehgarh, Uttar Pradesh	27°22'N, 79°37'E	A. Anderson obtained an unknown number of specimens. Further details unavailable with whereabouts of specimen(s) unknown and hence this record is treated as tentative. Hume & Marshall (1881) erred in stating this as Fatehpur [=Futtehpur], North West Provinces and this error was continued in subsequent works like Baker (1898, 1921), Hbk, and Rahmani (2012). But BirdLife International (2001) has rectified this mistake.	Hume & Marshall (1881)
Pre-1881	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	26°50'N, 80°56'E	One shot by Dr Bonawia near Lucknow and specimen examined by A. O. Hume; probably referred to BMNH 1894.6.1.78. The 'Oudh specimen' in various references probably related to this.	Hume & Marshall (1881); Oates (1899)
March 1870	Sultanpur, Haryana	28°27'N, 76°53'E	Listed for Sultanpur—original record not traced. A transcription error and meant to be one of the BMNH specimens from 1879 (Tim Inskipp, <i>pers. comm.</i> , August 2014)	BirdLife International (2001)
3 March 1879	Sultanpur, Haryana	28°27'N, 76°53'E	Three specimens (BMNH 1894.6.1.75–77) shot by N. W. Chill on 03, 12, and 29 March 1879	Hume (1879); Hume & Marshall (1881)
1901	Kashmir	NA	Baker's correspondent shot four at an unknown location in Kashmir. No further details available for independent assessment.	Baker (1898); Baker (1921)
October 1903	Sookerating, Lakhimpur, Assam	27°33'N, 95°33'E	A young male shot by R. Johnston. Baker examined and provided a short description of the specimen, which remains untraced. Details provided are not sufficient to ascertain the identification independently and hence we follow BSA2 in considering this record as suspect.	Baker (1904a)
Pre-1907	Wular Lake, Kashmir	34°21'N, 74°32'E	One shot 'some years back' with no further details available for independent assessment.	Ward (1907)
23 February 1911	Faizabad [=Fyzabad], Uttar Pradesh	26°48'N, 82°08'E	One (probable female) shot from a gaggle of four amidst <i>A. indicus</i> on River Ghaghara [=Gogra] by Capt. G. H. Plinston of 11 th Rajputs. BirdLife International (2001) erred in treating it as Faizabad of W. Punjab, Pakistan, while Rahmani (2012) rectified it. Note that the River Gogra (<i>sic</i>) as mentioned in the original note by Capt. Plinston, flows past the Indian town of Faizabad (U.P.). Operations of 11 th Rajputs included Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh during the First World War (Ahmad 1997). Specimen, now untraceable, was examined at BNHS and editors confirmed it as this species.	Plinston (1911); BirdLife International (2011); Rahmani (2012)
1918–1919	Pune, Maharashtra	18°31'N, 73°51'E	One shot in cold weather; no further details. Treated as tentative following BSA2 though Prasad (2006) considered it valid without citing any particular reason.	Trevenen (1922); Prasad (2006)
Undated	West Bengal	NA	Indicated as 'Accidental', with no details on actual records.	Savage & Abdulali (1970)
Undated	Rajasthan	NA	A record shown in maps of popular field guides from Rajasthan close to the western border of Rajasthan and Haryana (away from Bharatpur).	Grimmett <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Pre-1947	Manipur	NA	Passing mention of a record; no details.	Hurrell (1947)
15 February 1948	Karagola [=Karah-gola], Sahibganj, Bihar	25°28'N, 87°22'E	Two shot from a flock of eight by J. L. Hay. Perhaps this referred to the north-eastern Bihar specimen 'traced' by BSA2; however the current whereabouts of the specimens are unknown. The description is clear enough to enable a positive identification.	Editors (1948)

Table 3. Lesser White-fronted Goose reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
17 January 1968	Bor Beel, Bagori, Kaziranga NP, Assam	26°35'N, 93°17'E	One seen with <i>A. indicus</i> flock by Sam Mackenzie. Details unavailable.	Mackenzie (1969); Barua & Sharma (1999)
1980–1985	Bhindawas, Haryana	28°31'N, 76°33'E	An unconfirmed record of an adult shot in early 1980s reported to Suresh C. Sharma by Nirmal Ghosh (Suresh C. Sharma, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2014).	Harvey <i>et al.</i> (2006)
March 1981	Sultanpur, Haryana	28°27'N, 76°53'E	One adult seen by Bill Harvey and Michael (now Lord) Jay. Five adult <i>A. albifrons</i> were also present for direct comparison.	Harvey <i>et al.</i> (2006)
Undated	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	An unconfirmed record citing Islam & Rahmani (2004). However the original reference did not have this species. This probably was an error and may actually be referring to the <i>A. fabalis</i> record – see under that species.	Rahmani (2012)
1996	Keoladeo Ghana NP, Bharatpur, Rajasthan	27°10'N, 77°31'E	One adult seen with a flock of <i>A. anser</i> by Asad R. Rahmani. Treated as unconfirmed in BirdLife International (2001). Further details unavailable.	BirdLife International (2001); Rahmani (2012)
17 April 2003	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	One bird observed by Jan Willem den Besten (Robson 2003). No further details available. But den Besten (2004) did not list this species. Report seems to have been retracted as the bird was later identified as a juvenile <i>A. albifrons</i> (Mike Prince, <i>pers. comm.</i>).	Robson (2003); den Besten (2004)
December 2004	Chilika Lake, Odisha	19°52'N, 85°29'E	Two birds recorded in the marshes between Sundarpur and Bhusandpur in the northern sector of Chilika Lake. Further details unavailable.	Balachandran <i>et al.</i> (2009)
13 January 2008	Asan Barrage, Uttarakhand	30°26'N, 77°40'E	Recorded by Arun P. Singh on 13 January 2008 and seen by several others on subsequent days, at least until 19 January. Photographs on OBI.	Vijay & Bhutia (2008); Rahmani (2012)
24 November 2008	Dibru River, Dibru Saikhowa NP, Assam	27°35'N, 95°21'E	Recorded on the banks of Dibru River for the entire winter until last week of March 2009 from the Maguri–Motapung Beel. Photographs on OBI. Probably the same bird moved around and was photographed from Kaziranga in January 2009 (Sant 2009).	Das (2008); Robson (2009); Rahmani (2012)
3 November 2009	Maguri–Motapung Beel, Dibru Saikhowa NP, Assam	27°34'N, 95°23'E	Recorded by Binanda Hatibaruah. The bird stayed till last week of March 2010. Possibly the same bird as in previous winter. Photographs on OBI.	Rahmani (2012)
25 February 2014	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	Four birds photographed. Also suspected to have seen the same flock on 15 February 2014 (C. R. Abhinav & Devinder Singh Dhadwal <i>in prep.</i>).	Dhadwal (2014); Robson (2014)
24 December 2013	Little Rann of Kutch, Gujarat	24°02'N, 70°08'E	One bird photographed in an <i>A. albifrons</i> flock and multiple birds observed by several bird-watchers from various parts of Kachchh since then. Up to six observed on 27 January 2014.	Shreeram & Deomurari (2014)



Fig. 1. Lesser White-fronted Goose.

with certainty from peninsular India. Based on the four specimens in BMNH and five recent well-photographed records, we include this species in the India Checklist.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Hbk considered it a rare winter straggler and listed two records for India. BSA2 stated, 'winter vagrant to scattered localities

across N Subcontinent.' Two specimen records from Arunachal Pradesh, and Kashmir, exist, as do three recent photographic records from 2013 (Table 4). More records from the Indian Subcontinent include sight reports from two different places: Kosi Barrage—1980, 1982, 1997 (Inskipp & Inskipp 1991; Robson 1997b), and Jagdishpur Reservoir—1997 (Robson 1997b).



Fig. 2. Long-tailed Duck.

Table 4. Long-tailed Duck reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
23 January 1935	Messaki (Sadiya Frontier Tract), Tinsukia District, Assam–Arunachal Pradesh border	28°00'N, 95°24'E	A male shot on the Brahmaputra River but skin not preserved. Photographs of the skin were published; its tail feathers sent to BNHS, but now not traceable there (Rahul Khot, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2013).	Parsons (1935); Abdulali (1968)
17 October 1939	Hokersar Lake (=Hokra Jheel), Kashmir	34°06'N, 74°42'E	A male shot by the Maharaja of Kashmir and identified by Ludlow; specimen received at BNHS but now not traceable (Rahul Khot, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2013).	Ludlow (1940); Editors (1940); Abdulali (1968)
19 January 1991	Asan Barrage (=Dhalipur Lake), Dehradun, Uttarakhand	30°26'N, 77°40'E	Mohan <i>et al.</i> (1992) described a single bird spotted on water and in flight, with sufficient diagnostic field details. Singh (1991) mentioned two males that were observed on the same date. We have reconfirmed that there were two birds (Arun P. Singh, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2013).	Singh (1991); Mohan <i>et al.</i> (1992)
07 February 2001	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	A single bird seen on two days till 10 February, sketch published.	Prasad (2008a)
23 February 2013	Gazaldoba (also spelt as 'Gajaldoba' or 'Gajoldoba'), West Bengal	26°45'N, 88°34'E	A female photographed by a few people and at least present till 03 March.	Prasad (2013)
March 2013	Gharana Wetland, Jammu & Kashmir	32°50'N, 74°35'E	One female in winter plumage apparently photographed (and identified at BNHS); but photograph could not be verified, as it is not included in the published note.	Raj (2014)
18 April 2013	Umiam Lake, Meghalaya	25°40'N, 91°53'E	Unpublished observation of a flock of five, with one drake in non-breeding plumage, and four ducks.	Aasheesh Pittie, <i>pers. obs.</i> , April 2013
25 June 2013	Spangmik, Pangong Tso, Ladakh	33°54'N, 78°27'E	Two females photographed. Probably more birds may have been around as Hymakar (2013) photographed a male in the same wetland in September 2013.	Borse (2013); Hymakar (2013)

Almost all records from India are well documented and we include this species in the India Checklist.

Velvet Scoter/White-winged Scoter *Melanitta fusca* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Hbk did not include this species. BSA2 considered it hypothetical for the Indian Subcontinent; presumably a winter vagrant with two records, including a sight report from the Pakistan coast, and another from Kabul, Afghanistan. The former was a flying drake at Clifton Beach, near Karachi in February 1988 (Hirschfeld *et al.* 1988); perhaps the one indicated as 'photographed' in some of the field guides (e.g., Kazmierczak 2000). When queried, the observers were confident of their identification and seemed familiar with this species and other potentially confusing taxa. Their observation notes were reportedly sent to T. J. Roberts (Erik Hirschfeld, *pers. comm.*, August 2013) but were never formally published, and are probably lost now. In the absence of any report from India, this species is not included in the India Checklist though it is a strong contender for the Indian Subcontinent list.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* Linnaeus, 1758

Included in BSA2 based on specimens from Pakistan and vaguely mentioned as a straggler to the east. Hbk listed two records for West Bengal; a specimen procured from Kolkata market on 17 December 1889, presumably collected from that neighbourhood, and citing Biswas, another collected from 24-Parganas District in January 1961. Though it is likely that the Kolkata specimen was procured locally, there had been instances (e.g., *A. erythropus*) where specimens procured from West Pakistan reached the Kolkata market, and hence the provenance of this specimen is not fully established. Though this specimen from the market was housed in the Indian Museum (Finn 1898; Baker 1900), no Indian specimen of the species is currently in the ZSI Collection (Gopinathan Maheswaran, *pers. comm.*, June 2014). At least

four sight reports from Nepal, all from Kosi Barrage, include reports from 1987, 1989, 1995, and 2008 (Inskipp & Inskipp 1991; Robson 1989; Lama 1995; Basnet 2008). However, in view of the uncertainty over the provenance of the Indian specimens, which are in any case, untraceable, we do not include this species in the India Checklist.

Chinese Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha* Swinhoe, 1866

Included in Hbk and BSA2 and long considered a subspecies of the Indian Spot-billed Duck *A. poecilorhyncha*. There are five

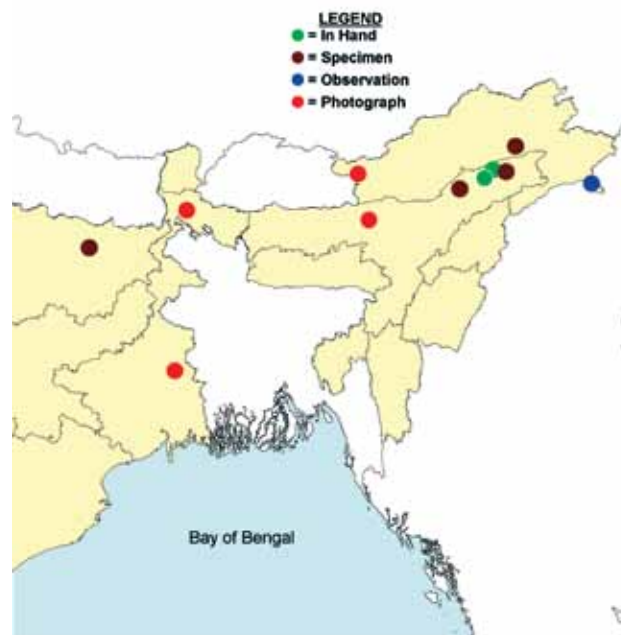


Fig. 3. Chinese Spot-billed Duck.

Table 5. Chinese Spot-billed Duck reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
Pre-1904	On River Brahmaputra, northern Lakhimpur	27°12'N, 94°11'E	N. Mundy collected the specimen which is now in AMNH (#731753)	Baker (1929)
06 February 1904	Kamitga on Sessa, northern Lakhimpur	27°12'N, 94°11'E	E. C. S. Baker collected the specimen which is now in AMNH (#731754)	Baker (1929)
06 March 1904	Sissi Beel, Assam	27°25'N, 94°41'E	Mr. More (=Mr. Moore? vide Higgins 1931) shot two ducks out of a flock of 40.	Baker (1904c)
28 December 1908	Sibsagar District, Assam	26°58'N, 94°39'E	J. C. Higgins and others shot three birds and the specimens probably not preserved. Exact location not clear.	Higgins (1931)
27 March 1929	Uma Jheel, Pacha-gachhia, Darbhanga District, Bihar	25°58'N, 86°34'E	C. M. Inglis collected the specimen; now in the Yale Peabody Museum (YPM ORN 042003), examined by BSA2. This is the western-most record for the species.	Inglis (1930)
06 February 1930	Manipur	NA	Col. M. Goodall shot one; specimen presumably not preserved. This was probably shot on Loktak Lake where most of the game hunting happened in Manipur. It was mentioned in the Manipur Club's game-book records alongside 3439 Spotbill Ducks shot during 1910-1931.	Higgins (1931)
18 January 1931	Loktak Lake (?), Manipur	NA	J. C. Higgins shot one; specimen presumably not preserved. Extremely rare in Manipur according to him. Just two birds (this and the previous one) noted between 1910 and 1931 of the 2267 Spot-bill Ducks he examined carefully.	Higgins (1931)
29 December 1933	North bank of River Brahmaputra, Dibrugarh District, Assam	27°35'N, 94°52'E	One out of a pair and another out of a gaggle of eight-ten birds shot by J. C. Higgins. Specimens presumably not preserved.	Higgins (1934)
26 November 1936	Pasighat, Sadiya, Arunachal Pradesh	28°04'N, 95°20'E	A specimen in BNHS (#15353) shot by R. A. Parsons; formerly considered an intergrade between <i>haringtoni</i> and <i>zonorhyncha</i> by E. C. S. Baker but established as <i>zonorhyncha</i> by Abdulali (1967).	Parsons (1937); Abdulali (1967)
1965-1966	Chabua, Assam	27°33'N, 95°08'E	Two shot by J. M. S. Mackenzie and deposited with BNHS (specimen #22255 & #22320) to prove his statement in Mackenzie (1965) that it is '...regularly found in the Assam during the cold weather.'	Abdulali (1968)
02 March 1996	Sohola Beel, Assam	26°40'N, 93°39'E	About 30 birds seen; no further information.	Choudhury (2000)
10 December 2007	Sela Pass, West Kameng, Arunachal Pradesh	27°30'N, 92° 06'E	Photograph of a bird in OBI.	Holmes & Holmes (2007)
16 February 2008	Purbasthali Oxbow Lake, West Bengal	23°27'N, 88°20'E	A male photographed. Photographs by Sumit Sen, in OBI.	Grimmett <i>et al.</i> (2011)
05 January 2009	Shidiku, Namdapha, Arunachal Pradesh	27°17'N, 96°53'E	Two ducks and a drake observed in flight and on water, identified by the 'purple (not green) colour of the speculum, dark stripe on the cheek and lack of a red bill-spot'.	Srinivasan <i>et al.</i> (2010)
26 December 2010	Gazaldoba (=Gajaldoba or Gajoldoba), West Bengal	26°45'N, 88°34'E	Up to nine seen and photographed on several days by many people; birds present at least till 29 January 2011. Photographs by Amit Thakurta, in OBI.	Mike Prince, Dipu Karuthedathu, <i>pers. comm.</i> , December 2013
January 2014	Orang National Park, Assam	26°33'N, 92°20'E	Five photographed showing all relevant field characters.	Ahmed (2014)

specimen records (six specimens), which are listed in Table 5; most records are from north-eastern Assam or adjoining Arunachal Pradesh, corroborating the statements in Hbk and BSA2 that it is a frequent straggler to those areas. Baker (1929) identified several of his and others' northern Lakhimpur specimens as *haringtoni*. Under this species, he wrote, 'Stevens obtained many of these ducks in North Lakhimpur; Moore and Mundy got several in Dibrugarh each year from 1902 to 1905. I obtained my first specimens in the same district in 1903 and others each year subsequently until I left'. Baker seemingly did not see any differences between these specimens and all of them could then belong to *zonorhyncha* as suggested by Abdulali (1967) and BSA2. Hbk considered it a frequent straggler to eastern Assam and from available evidence it appeared that the species was a regular winter visitor to north-eastern Assam (Abdulali 1967), and probably still is. Random reports without details do not establish

that the equally likely nominate, or *haringtoni*, subspecies of the Indian Spot-billed Duck have been eliminated. We include it in the India Checklist based on the five specimen records and several recent photographs.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Hbk considered this an exceptional vagrant, citing two specimen-based records from Assam and Manipur, and a sighting report from Assam. BSA2 considered it a, 'winter vagrant to NE'. There are five records from north-eastern India of which three are from Manipur (Table 6). Apart from these records, three individuals, including one male in breeding plumage, were recorded at Sat Tal (29°20'N, 79°31'E), Uttarakhand on 13 February 1999 (Vrezec *et al.* 2006). Interestingly, this species has been recorded in an aviary at Niles Inn, Bhim Tal in 2003 (Rajat Bhargava, *pers.*

Table 6. Mandarin Duck reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
Undated. Probably August 1901	Rungagora Tea Estate, Tinsukia District, Assam	27°28'N, 94°54'E	The Assam specimen in BSA was a female shot by Mr. Stevens from a flock of six on a backwater near the estate. The current whereabouts of this specimen are unknown.	Baker (1902)
July 1901	On Subansiri River, junction with the Ranganadi River in Lakhimpur District, Assam	26°59'N, 94°00'E	F. J. Greening and E. C. S. Baker saw six birds flying across the river and were confident of their identification. However, the authors did not provide any detailed plumage or field characters in the note for an independent assessment.	Baker (1902)
03 March 1934	Mayangkhang Valley, Manipur	25°15'N, 94°01'E	Four birds were shot of which two specimens (#15282, #15283) are in the BNHS collection labelled 'Imphal'. Referred to as Mayangthang Valley in Hbk.	Gimson (1934); Abdulali (1968)
1997	Sugnu, Chandel District, to-wards the south-eastern corner of Loktak Lake, Manipur	25°15'N, 94°01'E	One caught and kept in captivity at the Imphal Zoological Gardens.	Rahmani & Islam (2008); Choudhury (2009)
11 December 2013	Jawa Lamjao area of Loktak Lake, Manipur	24°35'N, 93°50'E	A male photographed.	Kasambe & Singh (2014)

comm., September 2013), which is less than two kilometers from Sat Tal. As native ducks are banned from being held in captivity, there is an increasing demand in Indian aviaries for this ornamental species, along with Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*, even in sub-Himalayan regions like Dehradun (Rajat Bhargava, *pers. comm.*, September 2013); some of them escape and are reported by birdwatchers. It is well known that feral populations of this species exist in Great Britain and Europe (Carboneras 1992; Woolham 1987), and hence care must be taken when including random records from places that are away from its regular non-breeding range in south-eastern China and Japan. For example, a Mandarin Duck was recently reported from Meenakshipuram (10°37'N, 76°51'E), on the Kerala–Tamil Nadu border (India), a few thousand kilometers away from its known regular range and the bird was tracked through aviculturists' forums to its rightful owner, who had 'lost' it from his aviary, and was thus confirmed as an escapee from captivity (Praveen 2010). Considering the circumstantial evidence, we believe the bird seen at Sat Tal, Uttarakhand had probably escaped from captivity. The only other recent records from the Indian Subcontinent are from Nepal on 21 January 1991 (Gardiner 1991), from Bangladesh on 27

January 1993 (Thompson *et al.* 1994), and a recent, much photographed one from Bhutan in March–April 2014 (Arnab Bose *in prep.*). We include this species in the India Checklist based on the two specimen records and two recent observations.

Red-necked Grebe

Podiceps grisegena (Boddaert, 1783)

Included in Hbk's Appendix based on sight-reports from Pakistan. BSA2 considered it a winter vagrant to NW of the region with records from 'W India in W Gujarat, NW Himachal (Gaston & Pandey 1988), W Gangetic Plain; also reported Assam.' Though no specimens exist from the region, past reports indicate that it may be a widespread vagrant in northern India, but not all records (Table 7), including the six reports from eastern and north-eastern India, are well-documented for an independent verification. This species does not regularly occur in South-east Asia (Robson 2008) but there have been four sight reports during 2008–2009 from neighbouring Bangladesh (Pender 2010) that are considered reliable (Paul Thompson, *pers. comm.*, September 2013), and hence some of the reports from

Table 7. Red-necked Grebe reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
02 December 1985	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	Two birds in winter plumage—swimming and flying—with detailed notes. Possibly, the same record was referred to in den Besten (2004) as 'Sanjeeva Pandey, 1987'.	Gaston & Pandey (1988)
11 December 1986	Nyari Reservoir, Rajkot, Gujarat	22°14'N, 70°42'E	Two birds in winter plumage observed twice on the same day; identification based on yellow base of bill, and being intermediate sized between <i>P. ruficollis</i> and <i>P. cristatus</i> , both present for direct comparison.	Mundkur & Parvez (1990)
21 February 1989	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	15 birds reported in a paper on Pong Dam avifauna with no further details; Krishna & George (1990) pointed out the importance of this record and called for further confirmation.	Pandey (1989)
09 March 1991	Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur District, Assam	27°10'N, 94°30'E	Observed a lone, silhouetted grebe, intermediate in size between <i>P. cristatus</i> and <i>P. nigricollis</i> on the Brahmaputra River. In hindsight, probably this species according to the author, and hence not considered here as a confirmed report.	Choudhury (1996)
1992–1993	Haduk Beel [sic. bee], Pobitora WLS, Assam	26°15'N, 92°03'E	Two birds photographed by C. R. Bhobora in winter; later identified as this species by A. U. Choudhury. The available photograph is not sharp enough for a certain identification though the bird seem to have white cheek and red neck.	Choudhury (1996)
16 January 1994	Keoladeo Ghana NP, Bharatpur, Rajasthan	27°10'N, 77°31'E	Two birds seen during this period by multiple observers including Per Undeland, Paul Holt, and Patrick Bierens at least till 11 February.	Anonymous (1994); Robson (1994)

Table 7. Red-necked Grebe reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	Reference
18 January 1996	Saraloni Beel, Laokhowa WLS, Assam	26°31'N, 92°44'E	Two birds in non-breeding plumage observed during AWC; identified using field guides. No photographs were taken, but observer confident about field identification (Hilloilyoti Singha, <i>pers. comm.</i> , August 2013). Field notes are inaccessible and hence independent assessment not possible.	Singha (1996)
23 January 1996	Umiam Lake, Meghalaya	25°40'N, 91°53'E	Eight birds with one flock of four and the rest single. Some of them were in partial breeding plumage enabling identification (Anwaruddin Choudhury, <i>pers. comm.</i> , December 2013). Though very much likely, the site being close to Bangladesh where the species is seemingly regular, further corroboration is desirable.	Choudhury (2003), Choudhury (in press)
January 1997	Pobitora WLS, Assam	26°14'N, 92°03'E	A single bird seen during AWC; no further details available.	Barua et al. (1998)
14 January 1997	Pariej Lake, Kheda District, Gujarat	22°33'N, 72°36'E	Five birds seen in direct size comparison with <i>P. cristatus</i> —yellow beak and grey neck noted—apparently in non-breeding plumage from the description.	Tatu (1998)
08 December 2002	Asan Barrage, Uttarakhand	30°26'N, 77°40'E	One in non-breeding plumage giving 'good telescope views of its diagnostic, straight yellow-based bill, white cheeks and dusky neck'.	Harvey (2002)
16–17 February 2003	Purbasthali, Bardhaman District, West Bengal	23°27'N, 88°19'E	Six birds in non-breeding plumage; but diagnostic details unavailable for independent assessment. Sharma (2004) commented that this record was not surprising as there are several published reports from eastern India—citing most of the references above.	Dasgupta (2003); Sharma (2004)
Undated	Tripura	NA	Listed in the Tripura checklist as an uncommon winter visitor with no further details. This apparently refers to a sighting made during AWC; but the details are untraceable (Anwaruddin Choudhury, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2013) and this record is treated as unconfirmed.	Choudhury (2010)
13 December 2010	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	One bird in non-breeding plumage, well photographed from a boat near Bathu temple (C. Abhinav & Devinder Singh Dhadwal <i>in prep.</i>)	Dhadwal (2014)
12 June 2013	Spitik, Leh, Ladakh	34°08'N, 77°30'E	One bird in breeding plumage seen and photographed by several people during this period at the same tank till 18 August 2013.	Khadilkar (2013)



Fig. 4. Red-necked Grebe.

the eastern part of the country may be valid, though poorly documented. Unpublished AWC counts held every January over several years, (www.worldbirds.org), include 12 from Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh (2004), one from Gayalabanko (Mahanadi-Sector), Odisha (2003), three from Sendha Reservoir, Chattisgarh (2002), two from Sankarpur Gangetic Complex, West Bengal (1999), 22 from Fateh Sagar Lake, Rajasthan (1999), and 25 from Naregal Tank, Karnataka (1998); but being unverifiable, these reports are not considered here. A record from Patna Wildlife Sanctuary (27°35'N, 78°45'E), Uttar Pradesh, on 07 January 1991 (Rahmani & Arora 1991), based on a sighting by the second author, stands withdrawn (Asad Rahmani, *pers. comm.*, September 2013). Though there are no specimens, birds in the region presumably belong to the nominate form. The species is unmistakable in breeding plumage, though not quite

so in winter when it is easily confused with Great Crested Grebe *P. cristatus*. We include it in the India Checklist based on the well-documented observations from Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Gujarat, and the photographic evidence from Ladakh.

Slavonian Grebe/Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Not included in Hbk. BSA2 included it based on recent sight reports. BSA2 considered this species to be a 'winter vagrant to NW of region'. The first record for India was of a bird in non-breeding plumage on the Kosi River near Ramnagar (29°23'N, 79°08'E), Uttarakhand, on 28 December 1993 by Raf Drijvers, and subsequently by a few others who photographed it (Anonymous 1994; Drijvers 1995). Up to five Horned Grebes were present from 01 to 14 February 2001 at Harike (31°09'N, 74°58'E), Punjab, and were seen by several birdwatchers at different points of time (Robson 2002a; Prasad 2008c). This species is included in the India Checklist based on these two records, one of them supported with photographs; however, we believe it might be under-reported from northern, and north-western India due to its potential confusion with Black-necked Grebe *P. nigricollis*, particularly in its non-breeding plumage, as there are further reports from neighbouring Pakistan (Roberts 1991).

Red-throated Diver/Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* (Pontoppidan, 1763)

Provisionally included in Hbk based on the record from the Mekran Coast, Pakistan. This record is also included in BSA2 in addition to a recent sight report from Nepal. A fisherman killed

one off the coast of Ormara (25°16'N, 64°35'E), Balochistan, Pakistan, on 17 November 1901 and brought the dead bird to W. D. Cumming. According to the fisherman, several of the same species were seen at sea and a few visited the coast occasionally (Ticehurst 1927). However, there have been no follow up records of this species from anywhere along the western coasts of South Asia. A more recent sight report was of a bird in non-breeding plumage at Koshi Barrage (26°20'N, 86°46'E), Nepal, between 15 and 25 February 2002 (Robson 2002b; Tebb *et al.* 2004, Inskipp 2004). Apart from these two records, there are no other South Asian reports and none from India—hence the species is not included in the India Checklist.

Black-throated Diver/Arctic Loon *Gavia arctica* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Included in Hbk and BSA2 based on a single historical record from Western Yamuna [=Jumna] Canal, Jagadhri (30° 07'N, 77°18'E), Yamuna Nagar (erstwhile Ambala) District, Haryana, where a first-winter female was shot on 18 February 1922 by A. E. Jones and identified by Hugh Whistler at the BNHS (#19392) as *G. a. suschkini* (now subsumed within the nominate race) (Jones 1922). However, Ticehurst (1930), and Abdulali (1968) challenged Whistler's identification of race as it was based on a single specimen, and without recourse to comparison with other skins. Hence we do not ascribe a definite race to the Indian vagrants until the BNHS specimen is critically examined, though we consider it more likely the nominate form, given the taxon's known wintering range. Apart from this historical specimen, the only other record is of a single bird that flew high above the Jia Bhoroli [=Gia Bhorali] River on 01 January 2008 at Potasali (26°54'N, 92°50'E), Nameri National Park, Assam, and the accompanying photographs showed the prominent white flashes on the sides of the vent (Steijn & Vries 2009), confirming the identification. We include this species in the India Checklist based on these two well-documented records.

Pygmy Cormorant *Microcarbo pygmeus* (Pallas, 1773)

Hbk and BSA2 listed the record of a specimen (#15009) in BNHS collected by J. E. B. Hotson on 03 September 1917 from 'Gujar, Mashkai (?), south-southwest of Kalat, Balochistan' (Abdulali & Pereira 1966). BSA2 listed a few additional specimens from

Afghanistan but there are no reports from Indian limits and hence we do not include this species in the India Checklist.

Lesser Noddy *Anous tenuirostris* (Temminck, 1823)

The species account in Hbk (*A. t. worcesteri*) included records of both, Lesser- *Anous tenuirostris*, and Black Noddy *A. minutus*, as both species were earlier considered conspecific. BSA2 stated, 'Non-breeding visitor to Sri Lanka; several recent sight reports and at least one verified specimen (Colombo Museum). Evidently breeds in Maldives and definitely in Chagos but some reports of this may be of Black Noddy.' BSA2 also stated that old specimens from the Bay of Bengal, and another from off South Andaman (=Port Blair), examined and referred to as *A. senex* by Hume (1874, 1876), were actually *tenuirostris*, and the conclusion was based on Hume's detailed description of a lost specimen. The two specimens in BMNH have been re-identified as Black Noddy. The species is included in the India Checklist based on the lost, but well-described, specimen from Port Blair, and the two recent published photographs from southern India (Table 8). We do acknowledge that some of the past records for which photographs reportedly existed, but could not be verified by us, are likely authentic. Though the racial identity of the regional birds is unknown, they probably belong to the nominate taxon [Note that the form *worcesteri* is now assigned to *A. minutus* with the split].

Black Noddy *Anous minutus* Boie, 1844

Not included by itself in Hbk, but was included in the species account of *A. tenuirostris worcesteri*. BSA2 stated that several historical specimens of this species were erroneously assigned to Lesser Noddy in regional literature. For example, a BMNH specimen (BMNH 1891.5.20.754) taken near Minicoy (08°30'N, 73°00'E), Lakshadweep Islands, and another (BMNH 1878.2.13.41) taken just west of the Nicobars (08°N, 91°E; Robert Prŷs-Jones, *pers. comm.*, November 2013; Bourne 1997b) were previously attributed to Lesser Noddy. A third specimen from the mouth of the River Ganges, now in the ZSI Coll., (Gopinathan Maheswaran, *pers. comm.*, June 2014) is also this species as stated by Hume, 'The specimen in the Indian Museum, No. 1,716, entered as *tenuirostris* and from the mouth of the Ganges, is also clearly I think *leucocapillus* [=*A. minutus*].

Table 8. Lesser Noddy reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
Undated	Bay of Bengal	NA	Specimen(s) examined by Hume. Exact location unknown and hence unsure if it falls within Indian maritime limits.	Hume (1874, 1876)
Undated	Port Blair, Andamans	11°37'N, 92°45'E	Specimen 'known' to Hume; '...I have examined specimens from the Bay of Bengal, and I know of one specimen at any rate having been shot at Port Blair.'	Hume (1874, 1876)
23 December 1983	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	Three birds observed closely by several people and apparently photographed. Published details do not eliminate <i>A. minutus</i> . Balachandran <i>et al.</i> (1986) suggested that Tony Diamond identified them from the photographs; but he, however, does not recall the record (Tony Diamond, <i>pers. comm.</i> , July 2013). Report, therefore, remains unverifiable.	Balachandran <i>et al.</i> (1986)
20 June 2004	Mumbai	19°02'N, 72°49'E	Rescued and successfully released; photographs unavailable for verification. No descriptions noted, and cannot be assessed independently.	Shashank Dalvi, <i>pers. comm.</i> , July 2013
24 July 2008	Marari, Alappuzha, Kerala	09°35'N, 76°18'E	A bird recovered and photographed by Shibu Bhaskar showing all diagnostic features.	Sashikumar <i>et al.</i> (2011)
07 September 2013	Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu	08°04'N, 77°33'E	A single bird photographed from boat and experts concur on the identification as this species.	Manivannan <i>et al.</i> (2014)

It has a bill nearly 1.9 in [=inches] length and blackish lores...’ (Hume 1876). As per BSA2, recent sight records from Sri Lanka (De Silva 1992) were probably Lesser Noddy *A. tenuirostris*, and Black Noddy is listed in the list of unconfirmed reports of the Ceylon Bird Club (<http://www.ceylonbirdclub.org/>). BSA2 cautioned that exceptional views and careful study were needed in regional waters to separate this from Lesser-, and its dark lores (contra pale greyish lores of Lesser-) were considered diagnostic. We include this species in the India Checklist based on the three specimens collected, one each, from the Nicobars, the Lakshadweep Islands, and the mouth of the River Ganges; we recognise that the last location could also be in Bangladesh, and as such, we prefer to treat that specimen as a record for both countries. Race is probably *worcesteri* but requires confirmation. Apparently, there are no recent records of this species, even of suspected individuals.

Atoll Tern/White Tern *Gygis alba* (Sparrman, 1786)

Hbk included it as a breeding species for the Maldives, while the only regional record of interest being a specimen taken from the Bay of Bengal by Jean Jacques Dussumier (Hume 1878). BSA2 included this and another recent sighting from the Andamans, which probably referred to Yahya & Ahmad (2002). The exact location of the Bay of Bengal specimen, now mounted in the Naturalis Biodiversity Center at Leiden (RMNH.AVES.185127), the Netherlands, is not known as it only bears a tag ‘Bengale’ (Steven van der Mije, *pers. comm.*, September 2013); thus we cannot validate whether it falls within Indian waters. This must be the same specimen about which Hume said, ‘There is a specimen of this species in the Leyden Museum, which was obtained by Dussumier, in the Bay of Bengal, and I myself have twice seen what I believe to have been this species...’ (Hume 1878). Though reported from Narcondam Island on 06 March 2000, and from ‘another island’, which is near Narcondam (H. S. A. Yahya, *pers. comm.*, July 2013), on 28 March 2000 (Yahya & Ahmad 2002), it is strange that no other observer has reported it since, despite the Andamans being reasonably well-visited in the last decade. The only other sighting report is from 160 km (‘100 miles’) west of Ratnagiri, reported in the ‘BirdsofBombay’ e-group on 27 April 2003 (Prasad 2006). The original description posted as ‘The fairy like buoyant flight and pure white flash of wings, as it flew low over the sea surface was observed,’ (Singh 2003) was found wanting in details and Prasad (2006) felt this record required further validation. The species breeds in the Chagos

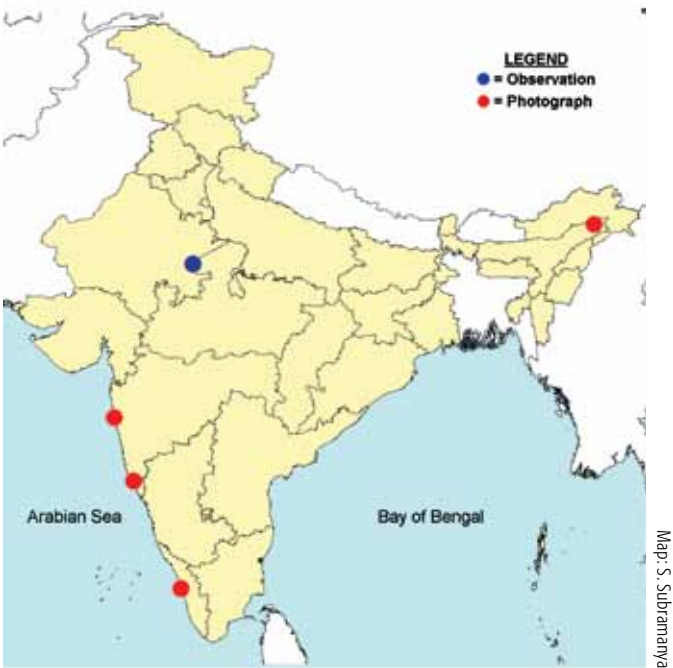


Fig. 5. Black-legged Kittiwake.

Archipelago, and Addu Atoll, Maldives, while it’s rare in northern Maldives with just two records (Anderson 2007). The only Indian record with independently verifiable evidence was a storm-blown bird photographed at Athirapally (10°17’N, 76°34’E), Kerala, c. 45 km inland on 22 July 2013 (Jayson *et al.* 2013); the species is included in the India Checklist based on this record. Race, however, is not established.

Black-legged Kittiwake
Rissa tridactyla (Linnaeus, 1758)

Not included in Hbk. BSA2 listed a recent sighting from Goa. It has been photographed four times in India, all images being available on OBI. The first record was from Rajasthan in 2001, followed by one from Goa in 2005, and the remaining were in 2012–2013 (Table 9). All the birds were either in first winter- or juvenile- plumages. The species appears to regularly straggle to our region and birders should carefully check for it in flocks of

Table 9. Black-legged Kittiwake reports				
Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
03 February 2001	Sangam, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan	25°50’N, 76°33’E	A first winter bird seen and sketched.	Ullman (2014)
16–17 January 2005	Morjim, Goa	15°37’N 73°44’E	A first winter bird photographed.	Newsome (2005)
18 February 2008	Kadalundi–Vallikkunnu Community Reserve, Kerala	11°07’N, 75°49’E	One first winter bird photographed and reported in newspaper but not formally published; identification evidently made only after Das <i>et al.</i> 2013. Provenance of the photograph not fully established.	Anonymous (2013)
24 November 2012	Akshi, Alibag District, Maharashtra	18°36’N, 72°53’E	One first winter/juvenile photographed.	Rahane & Bramhankar (2013)
30 November 2012	Majuli Island, Assam	27°38’N, 95°16’E	One first winter/juvenile photographed.	Chatterjee (2012)
25 December 2012–01 February 2013	Puthankadapuram, Thrissur District, Kerala	10°35’N, 75°59’E	Two first winter birds seen for more than a month.	Das <i>et al.</i> (2013)

Table 10. Little Gull reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
November 1909	Mumbai	18°52'N, 72°50'E	A very small gull which may have been this species.	Magrath (1910); Prasad (2006)
21 September 1936	Spituk, Ladakh	34°07'N, 77°30'E	Specimen of a juvenile female from the Koelz Coll. in FMNH has #229168. Ladakh (Pituk) in BSA2, Piting, Ladakh in Hbk, Ladakh, Pituk in Vaurie (1972), and Pitug, Himachal Pradesh in FMNH online catalogue, all probably referring to present day Spituk near Leh, Ladakh (Otto Pfister, <i>pers. comm.</i> , July 2013).	Vaurie (1972), Hbk, BSA2
April 1956, April 1957, March 1960	Great Rann of Kutch, Gujarat	24°02'N, 70°08'E	Distant flocks of 'puzzling gull', which could be this species.	Ali (1976)
January 1974	Great Rann of Kutch, Gujarat	24°02'N, 70°08'E	Most likely this species. A fairly large flock of small gulls, smaller than Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> , with dark bill, no fork on tail, darkish underwings, no black on primaries, tern-like flight, but identification not considered definite by the author in the absence of a specimen!	Ali (1976)
27–28 August 1980	Choglasmar, Ladakh	34°06'N, 77°34'E	A first winter bird included with detailed field description leaving little to doubt its identity.	Williams & Delany (1985); Pfister (2004); Delany et al. (2014)
29 August 1981	Tikse, Ladakh	34°03'N, 77°39'E	One juvenile; no other detail recorded in notes (Simon Delany, <i>pers. comm.</i> , July 2013) for independent assessment.	Delany et al. (2014)
27 November 1987	Rudramata dam, Gujarat	23°21'N, 69°42'E	One bird; no description available.	Bapat & Himmatsinhji (1992)
19 December 1989	Shinay dam, Gujarat	23°02'N, 70°03'E	Three birds; no description available.	Varu (1991); Bapat & Himmatsinhji (1992)
21 December 1989	Shinay dam, Gujarat	23°02'N, 70°03'E	One juvenile/immature, small size, tern-like habit of picking up food from surface of water, zigzag pattern on the wings, dark patch on the crown, no black feathers on under side of the wings, a black band at the end of the tail, dull red legs and feet, dull red beak with a dark tip.	Varu (1991); Bapat & Himmatsinhji (1992)
17 March 1991	D'Ering Memorial (Lali) WLS, Arunachal Pradesh	27°52'N, 95°25'E	A possible in flight with under wing dark greyish and a conspicuously black bill.	Choudhury (1994)
12 January 1992	Bhavnagar New Port, Gujarat	21°46'N, 72°11'E	Three birds along with Brown-headed Gulls—half their size with black bill, no wing bars, indistinct spot behind eye, light grey on wings and white rest of the body. One was a juvenile with a transverse black band.	Parasharya & Mathew (1993); Parasharya et al. (1994)
31 December 1992	Okhla Sailing Club, Delhi	28°33'N, 77°17'E	One adult bird reported by Paul Holt. Details unavailable.	Robson (1993a); Urfi (2003); Harvey et al. (2006)
19 March 1994	Sohola Beel (Agaratoli), Kaziranga NP, Assam	26°37'N, 93°31'E	An immature with no further details. Field notes not accessible at the moment.	Barua & Sharma (1999)
19 June 1995	Startsapuk-Tso, Ladakh	33°15'N, 78°02'E	One record (Otto Pfister, <i>pers. comm.</i> , July 2011). No description available.	Pfister (2001, 2004)
25 January 1996	Nalsarovar, Gujarat	22°48'N, 72°00'E	One bird among a foraging flock; diagnostic features unavailable.	Parasharya et al. (1999)
13 October 1996	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	A first-winter bird observed by Per Undeland; further details unavailable.	Robson (1997a)
29 December 1996	Okha port, Gujarat	22°15'N, 69°01'E	Four birds amongst 500 other gulls; diagnostic features unavailable.	Parasharya et al. (1999)
31 August 2002	Nirma Salt pans, Bhavnagar, Gujarat	22°49'N, 72°17'E	Single bird observed through spotting scope by B. M. Parasharya & I. R. Gadhvi.	B.M.Parasharya, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2013
25 January 2004	Nalsarovar, Gujarat	22°48'N, 72°00'E	One bird seen as a part of wetland survey with no further details.	Muni (2004)
Undated	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	Three sightings/numbers. Details unavailable.	den Besten (2004)
30 April 2012	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	A bird in breeding adult plumage photographed. Three more sight reports awaiting formal publication (C. Abhinav & Devinder Singh Dhadwal <i>in prep.</i>)	Dhadwal (2014)

other gulls. The recent drop in Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus* sightings from the region, corresponding with increased sightings of this species, gives reason to suspect that some of the past Little Gull records could have been this species but misidentified (see under Little Gull), as older regional field-guides did not include it. Since no specimens have been taken, the racial status is unknown though likely to be the nominate form. The species is included in the India Checklist based on the basis of detailed field documentations including photographs.

Sabine’s Gull *Xema sabini* (Sabine, 1819)

Recent record; not included in Hbk or BSA2. A single second summer bird was photographed at Puthankadapuram beach (10°35’N, 75°59’E), Thrissur District, Kerala, on 03–04 May 2013, showed all diagnostic features (Sreenivasan *et al.* 2013); those photographs are considered sufficient for the entry of this species into the India Checklist.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus* (Pallas, 1776)

Hbk and BSA2 included it for the region based on the sole specimen from Spituk, Ladakh, in the Koelz collection in FMNH. Ali (1976) documented sightings of flocks from the Great Rann of Kachchh, over four years, but treated his records as tentative for want of specimens (despite providing clear descriptions of the birds in the field). Though several subsequent sight reports exist from different parts of the country, BSA2 considered a majority of them unlikely. These include three autumn records from Ladakh indicating passage migration through the Indus Valley. It has been reported from the Gujarat region at least ten times between 1956 and 2004, apart from single sightings at Kaziranga, Harike, Delhi, possibly Arunachal Pradesh, and Mumbai (Table 10); almost all these records, though not verified, have been published in regional field guides. Amongst the records that are considered definite, we have only two cases where notes were published and are independently verifiable. One was of a juvenile (Varu 1991; Bapat & Himmatsinji 1992), while the other was a sighting of two adults and a juvenile (Parasharya & Mathew 1993; Parasharya *et al.* 1994). Unfortunately both the descriptions, counting on apparent small size and black bill of the species, are inadequate for positive conclusion. Considering

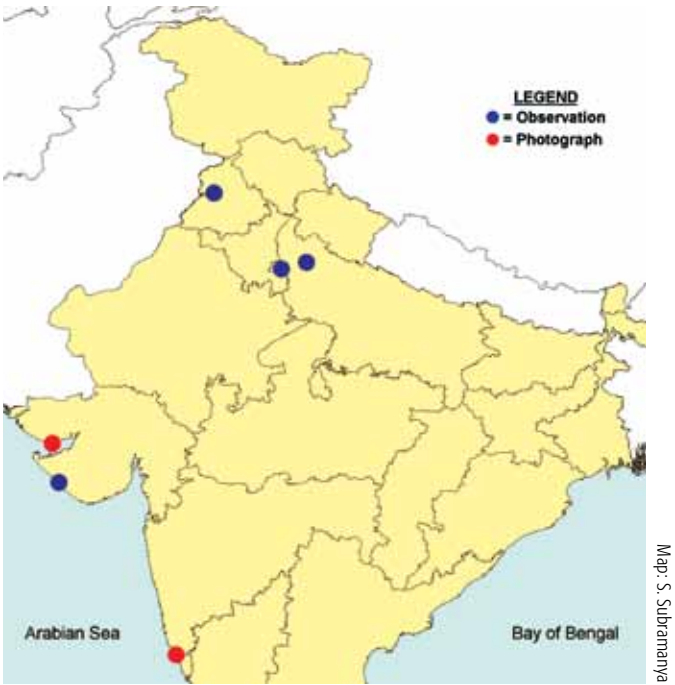


Fig. 6. Mew Gull.

the multiple reports from Gujarat, it is likely that some birds do occur (or straggle) there. However, the state has been heavily visited in the last decade by resident and visiting birdwatchers and photographers alike but this species has not yet been documented reliably from there. It may also be true that the best sites for gulls and terns in Gujarat are less birded compared to other areas (Prasad Ganpule, *pers. comm.*, June 2013). The species is included in the India Checklist based on the FMNH specimen collected from Ladakh, and photographic record from Pong Dam, though we recognise that some of the sight reports from northern India could also be valid.

Franklin’s Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* (Wagler, 1831)

Recent record; not included in Hbk or BSA2. A single adult in

Table 11. Sooty Gull reports				
Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
Undated	Madras (=Chennai), Tamil Nadu	13°02’N, 80°17’E	A specimen of this bird, labelled ‘Madras’, is displayed in the local museum. Now re-examined and confirmed as this species. Its provenance is unknown but believed to be from the neighbourhood as most other specimens in the museum.	Dewar (1905); Satyamurti (1970); Kesavabharati (2014)
January 1875	Near Prongs Lighthouse, Colaba Point, Mumbai, Maharashtra	18°53’N, 72°48’E	Sight report by Hume. Details of identification not provided. But widely believed to be reliable given the author’s experience with handling of the Karachi specimen.	Hume (1876); Aitken (1903); Prasad (2006)
24 January 2005	Sundarbans Delta, West Bengal	21°42’N, 88°51’E	Sight report with no photographs. Field description given is not verifiable to warrant a confirmation of this record so far east of its normal range.	Sharma (2006); Sharma & Zöckler (2007)
21 April 2005	Chapora Estuary, Goa	15°36’N, 73°44’E	Sight report of one in second-winter or non-breeding plumage, with no further details	Lainer & Alvares (2013)
22 March 2009	c. 27 km (15 NM) from Mumbai coast past Prongs Reef Lighthouse, Mumbai	18°49’N, 72°38’E	Sight report from boat documented with sufficient identification details.	Macker (2013)
09 November 2011	Between Gateway of India, Mumbai and Mandwa Jetty, Alibaug, Maharashtra	18°50’N, 72°51’E	Sight report from ferry documented with details of identification.	Macker (2013)

Table 12. Mew Gull reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
19 January 1992	Yamuna River, Delhi	28°38'N, 77°15'E	A first winter bird seen by Per Alström and others.	Alström (1994)
05 March 1993	Gajroula, Uttar Pradesh	28°50'N 78°05'E	A second year bird seen by Paul Holt.	Robson (1993a)
09–15 January 1994	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	A first winter seen by Per Undeland.	Robson (1994)
14 December 1996	Morjim, Goa	15°37'N, 73°44'E	One first winter bird.	Holt (2008)
01–14 February 2001	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	Several independent sightings during this period.	Prasad (2008b); Robson (2001)
Undated	Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	31°58'N, 75°56'E	One sighting, details unavailable.	den Besten (2004)
21 January 2006	Navbandhar, Gujarat	21°26'N, 69°47'E	One bird recorded by K. M. Olsen as a part of a bird tour.	Olsen (2006)
02 February 2008	Morjim, Goa	15°37'N, 73°44'E	A well-photographed first winter bird shows all diagnostic details.	Tams (2008)
08 December 2011	Nainital, Uttarakhand	29°22'N, 79°27'E	A distant gull flock in flight identified to have one adult and one first winter.	Kennerley (2011)
30 January 2013	Bhuj, Gujarat	22°45'N, 69°35'E	One well-photographed first winter bird during a birding tour.	Eaton (2013)

winter plumage was seen thrice at different times of the day on 12 November 2012 from the mouth of Chapora River at Morjim, Pernem (15°36'N, 73°44'E), in Goa (Holt *et al.* 2014). Though a photograph was taken, it was of poor quality. Its different jizz compared to other Asian gulls, dark grey mantle, half hood

on its head-rear, extensively blackish ear-coverts, bold white eye-crescents and broad white tips to several of its outermost primaries were noted by observers. This field description is considered detailed enough to eliminate all potential confusion species and hence it is included in the India Checklist.

Table 13. Recent changes in the species limits of 'large white-headed' gulls, and their implications for South Asia (Dickinson & Remsen 2013)

Species	Subspecies	Status in India	Previous / alternative treatments
Kelp Gull <i>Larus dominicanus</i>	Five races normally recognised; but revision awaited	Extralimital	<i>L. fuscus dominicanus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>L. fuscus</i>	<i>graellsii</i>	Extralimital	<i>L. affinis</i> <i>L. argentatus heuglini</i> <i>L. heuglini</i> <i>L. fuscus taimyrensis</i> <i>L. heuglini taimyrensis</i> <i>L. taimyrensis</i>
	<i>intermedius</i>	Extralimital	
	<i>fuscus</i>	Unconfirmed record	
	<i>heuglini</i> (incl. <i>taimyrensis</i>)	Confirmed records (<i>heuglini</i> sensu stricto)	
	<i>barabensis</i>	Confirmed records	<i>L. cachinnans barabensis</i> <i>L. argentatus barabensis</i> <i>L. heuglini barabensis</i> <i>L. barabensis</i>
['European'] Herring Gull <i>L. argentatus</i>	<i>argenteus</i>	Extralimital	
	<i>argentatus</i>	Extralimital	
Armenian Gull <i>L. armenicus</i>	Monotypic	Records withdrawn	<i>L. argentatus armenicus</i> <i>L. cachinnans armenicus</i>
Yellow-legged Gull <i>L. michahellis</i>	<i>atlantis</i>	Extralimital	<i>L. fuscus atlantis</i> <i>L. cachinnans atlantis</i> <i>L. argentatus atlantis</i>
	<i>michahellis</i>	Extralimital	<i>L. argentatus michahellis</i> <i>L. cachinnans michahellis</i>
Caspian Gull <i>L. cachinnans</i>	Monotypic	Unconfirmed records	<i>L. argentatus cachinnans</i>
American Herring Gull <i>L. smithsonianus</i>	<i>vegae</i> ['Vega Gull']	Extralimital	<i>L. argentatus vegae</i> <i>L. vegae</i>
	<i>mongolicus</i> ['Mongolian Gull']	Confirmed records	<i>L. argentatus mongolicus</i> <i>L. vegae mongolicus</i> <i>L. cachinnans mongolicus</i> <i>L. mongolicus</i>
	<i>smithsonianus</i>	Extralimital	
Great Black-backed Gull <i>L. marinus</i>	Monotypic	Unconfirmed records	

White-eyed Gull

Ichthyaeetus leucophthalmus (Temminck, 1825)

Not included in Hbk. BSA2 considered this hypothetical for South Asia as the immature specimen (Salvadori & Giglioli 1888) collected in June 1879 from the Maldives was probably ship-borne and not a genuinely wild vagrant. Notably, the species is confined to Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, both a key passage to South Asia for sea vessels from the west. An adult captured and well photographed (Tim Inskipp, pers. comm., September 2014) in 1983 from an unknown locality in the Maldives, and references to more individuals being captured every year by fishermen or brought to the isles by sailors (Ash & Shafeeg 1991), were also treated as records of unknown provenance or ship-borne by BSA2. No reports from India and hence not included in the India Checklist.

Sooty Gull *Ichthyaeetus hemprichii* (Bruch, 1853)

Hbk and BSA2 included it based on several well-documented specimens from the Pakistan coast where the species is reportedly an abundant winter visitor, while the only record from India is an old sight report from Mumbai. BSA2 additionally indicates the presence of a nineteenth century specimen from Chennai. Dewar (1905) recognised this specimen, labelled 'Madras', in the Chennai Museum; it is still on public display. Though chemical preservatives have distorted its plumage, the photographs showing its comparative size and shape are diagnostic enough to identify it as this species (Kesavabharati 2014). Apart from these, there are three recent sight records, two from the Mumbai coast, one from Goa, and one from the Sundarbans Delta—the last being open to question. It has also been recorded from Sri Lanka (Warakagoda 1993), and the Maldives (Ash & Shafeeg 1991), though the provenance of the records from the latter area, though well photographed (Tim Inskipp, pers. comm., September 2014), is 'unknown' or 'shipborne'. We accept this species into the India Checklist based on the verified specimen at Chennai, and well-documented sight reports from Mumbai (Table 11).

Mew Gull *Larus canus* Linnaeus, 1758

Not included in Hbk. BSA2 considered it a winter vagrant to the region with no specimen records. At least six records, including two photographic reports (Table 12), are known from north-western, northern, and western India since 1992; a handful of records from Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan also exist (Prasad 2008b). Since almost all the sightings are made by experienced birdwatchers with sufficient corroborative information including photographs, the species is included in the India Checklist. No specimens have been taken and racial status of the regional taxa is unknown.

Large White-headed Gulls

The taxonomic treatment of this group has been in flux in the past and still remains so. Contemporary treatments differ markedly in the number of species they recognise. Table 13 lists all the taxa involved, their alternative treatments and their implications for South Asia. However, it is to be noted that research on systematics of this group is ongoing and species limits are likely to change in future. We evaluate only full species and hence the Indian records of nominate and *taimyrensis* races of the Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus* are not discussed here as the species itself, with two widely wintering subspecies, is not a rarity.

Kelp Gull

Larus dominicanus M. H. C. Lichtenstein, 1823

Not included in Hbk or BSA2. However there is a record of a bird from Nelsons Island, Chagos Archipelago on 07 February 1975 (Baldwin 1975). Though published description is brief, it is apparently considered adequate to conclusively identify this distinctive species (Carr 2011). However, this has not been reported from anywhere in India and hence not included in the India Checklist.

['European'] Herring Gull

Larus argentatus Pontoppidan, 1763

Hbk, following the taxonomy prevalent in the late twentieth century, treated both *heuglini* and *mongolicus* (= *barabensis* vide BSA2) under *L. argentatus*. This has since been followed in several regional publications. As such, all the records of *argentatus* from India, some explicitly, and others implicitly, referred to the occurrence of either *heuglini* or *barabensis* (e.g., Abdulali 1970; Breeden & Breeden 1982; Balachandran 1995b; Lainer 1999; Sinha *et al.* 2010).

Both *heuglini* and *barabensis* are now considered subspecies of Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus* following the revision of species limits (Table 13) in the *argentatus* and *fuscus* complex (Sangster *et al.* 2007; Collinson *et al.* 2008; Dickinson & Remsen 2013). There are no known records of *L. argentatus sensu stricto* from the Indian Subcontinent. We, therefore, remove *L. argentatus* from the India Checklist as it no longer refers to the taxa recorded from India.

Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus* Buturlin, 1934

Not included in Hbk. BSA2 treated it as hypothetical as the recent sight reports, and inconclusive photographs from Harike Lake, Punjab, evidently require corroboration. The species is almost identical to the *barabensis* form of Lesser Black-backed Gull in all its plumages, and this extreme similarity poses a great challenge in the field. Reports of the species from Harike, Punjab, and Yamuna, Delhi (Harvey *et al.* 2006), including photographs of an individual taken in February 2002 from Harike, all now stand withdrawn, as these were most probably *barabensis* (Bill Harvey, pers. comm., July 2013). Hence, the species is removed from the India Checklist as there are no other claims to even consider this as hypothetical.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* Pallas, 1811

Included in Hbk based on the taxonomic arrangement that was prevalent then. BSA2 treated it as hypothetical as all specimens were evidently re-identified as *barabensis*. [There is, however, an interesting specimen in the BNHS collections, labelled '*Larus argentatus mongolicus*', from Chitral (NWFP, Pakistan); it is evidently very pale-mantled and with short and slender bill (Abdulali 1970). Bill length (51 mm) and paler mantle indicate that it could be a female *Larus cachinnans* (see Panov & Monzikov 2000; Gibbins *et al.* 2010); specimen needs close re-examination]. There are also several photographs of pale-backed, large white-headed gulls from India identified as this species on various image resources on the Internet, including OBI. All these photographs were pooled, and expert opinions sought, to confirm if these were indeed *cachinnans*. However, a vast majority of them were identified with certainty as *barabensis* while a few of

them, notably from Kachchh, Gujarat (photographed by Prasad Ganpule), and Harike (photographed by Atanu Mondal), could not be assigned to any particular taxon and may have been an intergrade of *barabensis* and *cachinnans* (Hans Larsson, *pers. comm.*, July 2014). Hence, there are no well-known and definite records of *L. cachinnans* from within Indian Territory and so we do not include the same in the Indian Checklist.

American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus* Coues, 1862 [*'Mongolian Gull'* *L. [s]. mongolicus* Sushkin, 1925]

Not included in Hbk; what was described as *L. argentatus mongolicus* in Hbk, was evidently *L. fuscus [heuglini] barabensis*, vide BSA2 (but see the account of Caspian Gull above for one possible *cachinnans* from Pakistan). We believe it is a case of misclassification rather than misidentification since *barabensis* was described as a distinct race of *L. cachinnans* (Johansen 1960) only around the same time as the *Synopsis* (Ripley 1961), the taxonomic basis for Hbk, was published. Curiously, Indian birds were originally attributed to *cachinnans* (Ripley 1961) before they were re-assigned to *L. argentatus mongolicus*. We suspect a similar case in Roberts (1991) as well, but *mongolicus* records from Pakistan are now rejected as the claim's basis was solely on bare-part colouration, a character of little or no diagnostic value (Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997; Yésou 2001). The lack of taxonomic clarity over *mongolicus* from the Indian Subcontinent would mean that all the previous records purported to be of this taxon probably referred to Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus barabensis*. There seems to be no trace of any old documentation of 'true' *mongolicus* from India. However, an individual was photographed recently at Chilika Lake (19°30'N, 85°05'E), Odisha, in January 2013 and identified as *mongolicus* (Dutta 2013). A year later, another individual, very likely this species (Hans Larsson, *pers. comm.*, July 2014) was photographed at Balasore, Odisha, on 02 February 2014 (Sarkar 2014). There may be more photographs of the species from India (e.g., Gupta 2012) that need confirmation and formal publication. On the basis of the confirmed Odisha record (Dutta 2013), we include this species in the India Checklist. Though the taxon, along with the extralimital *vegae*, is currently treated as a race of the polytypic American Herring Gull (vide Sangster *et al.* 2007), both *vegae* and *mongolicus* are potential splits in future.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* Linnaeus, 1758

A markedly extralimital species that breeds along the Atlantic coasts of eastern North America and western Europe, wintering further down to the Caribbean Sea and Iberia. It was included in Hbk on the basis of Richard Meinertzhagen's claim of having shot an individual at Deoli Tank in Nasirabad District, Rajasthan, on 16 November 1899 (Meinertzhagen 1900). The specimen was, however, not preserved, as Meinertzhagen, reportedly, did not realise the significance of the record for the Indian Subcontinent. Bourne (1997a) questioned the identification on account of the wing-length (the only attribute given in the original description), which matched that of Heuglin's [Lesser Black-backed] Gull *L. [fuscus] heuglini*, and the fact that the bird, normally a coastal species, was shot far inland. BSA2 rejected the species on those grounds, and Meinertzhagen's notorious reputation of specimen fraud and falsification of data (Knox 1993; Rasmussen & Collar 1999).

Two recent reports from the Indian Subcontinent—one from Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat (Kumar *et al.* 2007), and another from Sindh, Pakistan (Rais *et al.* 2008)—are discounted here as neither gave details to clinch identification. We strongly suspect that Great Black-headed Gull *L. ichthyaetus*, a fairly common winter visitor to the region, but missing from both lists, was instead intended. Or, this could also be the result of a nomenclatural mix-up while drafting the reports. Rais *et al.* (2008: 24), e.g., gave *L. marinus* the English name 'Great Black-headed Gull', and Balachandran (1995b) called *L. fuscus*, 'Great Black-backed Gull'—both, perhaps victims of transcription errors. In view of these facts, and in the absence of any further records, we exclude the species from the India Checklist.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* (Linnaeus, 1758)

One of the most contentious species recorded in India. Hbk based its inclusion on a sight report from Delhi (Alexander 1950). BSA2 admitted the tern could be a very rare visitor to the Indian Subcontinent, yet treated it as hypothetical for want of proper corroboration. BSA2 also pointed to a misidentified specimen from southern India in the BNHS collection; this must have been acquired after the early 1970s, as Abdulali's (1970) catalogue recorded no specimens. Abdulali & Ambedkar (1984) reported an old BNHS correspondence between P. B. Shekar,

Table 14. Black Tern reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
October 1949	River Yamuna, Delhi	28°40'N, 77°14'E	Sight report. Identification was based on a dark patch (not solid) on the sides of upper breast. This bird was in moult and its tail square-shaped. Since moulting White-winged Tern is known to sport a brownish breast patch and a noticeably squarer tail, we cannot rule out the possibility of it being the latter as has been pointed out elsewhere (see Ganguly 1975).	Alexander (1950)
December 1970	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	A Moscow ring, claimed to have been placed on a juvenile Black Tern from Turkmenistan, recovered. Morphometrics presented tend to match Whiskered Tern that breeds extensively at ringing site. Black Terns are known to breed further north. Identity remains inconclusive.	Abdulali & Ambedkar (1983)
?	River Yamuna, Delhi	28°40'N, 77°14'E	Sight report of an adult. Unpublished report. No substantiation as to the identity provided.	Tostain & Balança (1985)
December 1988	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	Ringling record of two adults and one juvenile. Identification questionable. Birds reportedly had silvery grey mantle and slate-grey rump, which are actually more typical of Whiskered Terns (Alexander 1950; Cramp 1985). Morphometrics of the two adults do not match those of Black Tern (especially, tail fork, bill length, and tarsus length—traits diagnostic of Black Tern) as given in Cramp (1985). On the contrary, these measurements fall in the range for White-winged Tern! But see Balachandran (1995a) who also classified them as Black Terns (probably in error).	Natarajan & Balasubramanian (1991)

Table 14. Black Tern reports

Date	Location	Coordinates	Remarks	References
May 1989	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	Rescued bird. Apparently identified by BNHS staff. But morphometrics far exceed the range of any of the marsh terns. Balachandran (1995a) rejected the identification as Black Tern and inferred that it could be a Common Tern <i>S. hirundo</i> .	Menon (1992)
October 1990	Pulicat Lake, Andhra Pradesh	13°33'N, 80°12'E	Ringling record. Identification based on dark shoulder patch on the sides of the upper breast. Morphometrics, however, largely overlap with those of other two marsh terns and a key variable (i.e., tail-fork) is missing for clear conclusion over species identity. Included in checklists of Pulicat since then (Kannan <i>et al.</i> 2009; Guptha <i>et al.</i> 2011).	Mohapatra & Rao (1994);
March 1991	Kaliveli Tank, Near Pondicherry	12°07'N, 79°51'E	Ringling record. Out of 51 terns ringed, seven were identified as Black Terns. Also indicated that the species was regular in Point Calimere with 25 birds ringed during 1990–1992. No further substantiation as to the identity of the species is provided. Apparently one breeding plumaged bird was photographed during this ringling exercise; the slide is unfortunately misplaced (S. Balachandran, <i>pers. comm.</i> , June 2014) and hence could not be verified.	Balachandran (1994)
August–September 1991	Vastrapur, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	23°04'N, 72°53'E	Sight report, by Ketan Tatu, of two individuals in a flock of Whiskered Terns. Field descriptions were sketchy and do not completely rule out immature / first-winter Whiskered Terns.	Anonymous (1991)
November 1991	Thol Lake, Ahmedabad District, Gujarat	23°08'N, 72°24'E	Sight report of three individuals foraging. Identification based on field-characters. Substantiation inadequate.	Tatu (1992)
1989–1991	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	Commented on Menon 1992. Indicated that 48 individuals of Black Tern were ringed at Point Calimere during 1989–1991. Reasons for identification not substantiated. Compared morphometrics of previous Indian records with those given in Cramp (1985). However measurements attributed to Cramp (1985) in Balachandran (1995a) varied from original text in Cramp (1985) and measurements of Indian birds also did not completely match with the latter.	Balachandran (1995a)
November 1993	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	One sight report and one ringling record. Identification based on dark patch on sides of lower neck. Curiously, the morphometrics given for the netted individual matched those of White-winged Tern rather than Black.	Sangha (1994)
07 May 1996	Harike, Punjab	31°09'N, 74°58'E	One in summer plumage with White-winged Terns observed by Per Undeland. No further details available. BSA2 treats it as 'best considered hypothetical until proven'.	Robson (1996)
September 1998	Okhla Barrage, Delhi	28°33'N, 77°18'E	Sight report of two birds. Field characters described in detail were typical of Black Tern for at least one individual. Record is, however, treated here as tentative, on par with other sight reports.	Vyas (2002)
October 1998	Pulicat Lake, Andhra Pradesh	13°33'N, 80°12'E	Ringling record. One individual was netted and ringed. But details on identification were not given.	Sangha (1999)
13 September 1999	Divar Island, Goa	15°31'N, 73°54'E	Sight report. A juvenile. No further details on identification given.	Lainer (2004)
15 October 1999	Chapora Estuary, Goa	15°36'N, 73°44'E	Sight report. A juvenile. No further details on identification given.	Lainer (2004)
26 January 2000	Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu	10°18'N, 79°51'E	One seen during a birdwalk from 'pump house to beach' and an unknown number ringed on the same day by Chris Hassell. No further details recorded in field notes (Chris Hassell, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2014). This record was also communicated to us by S. Balachandran (S. Balachandran <i>pers. comm.</i> , August 2014).	Chris Hassell, <i>pers. comm.</i> , September 2014
April 2002	Lingambudhi Lake, Mysore, Karnataka	12°16'N, 76°36'E	Sight report of one adult in full breeding plumage. Report not considered substantiated.	Thejaswi (2005)
27 October 2003	Chapora Estuary, Goa	15°36'N, 73°44'E	Sight report by Anand Prasad. No further details published. White-winged Terns were also present for comparison on multiple days in September–October 2003 and another possible Black Tern was seen on 16 October at the same site. However, original field notes are not accessible at this point in time (Anand Prasad, <i>pers. comm.</i> , August 2014) and hence could not be verified.	Robson (2004a)
October 2009	Bhaskarpura marsh, Surendranagar District, Gujarat	22°55'N, 72°03'E	Photographic record. Three individuals seen along with Whiskered Terns. Apparently, photographs presented were of multiple birds and some of them are actually Whiskered Terns <i>C. hybrida</i> . The pictures are, however, not sharp enough to identify the terns with any certainty and there are no further images. Record under scrutiny as expert opinion is divided.	Tatu (2010); Harvey (2013); Tatu (2013)
August 2011	Bhavnagar, Gujarat	21°45'N, 72°15'E	Photographic record of one individual. Image is unclear and species identification indeterminate though Tatu (2013) suggested it was very likely this bird.	Varu (2012)
17 May–21 June 2014	Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat	22°49'N, 72°02'E	A first summer bird conclusively photographed. The bird was present at the location for an extended period of time with several sightings.	Bhatt <i>et al.</i> (2014)

who had recovered a specimen, bearing a ring from Moscow, at Point Calimere on 07 December 1970, and the USSR Academy of Sciences, which informed that the ring was placed on a juvenile Black Tern at Gyzyletrek (37°21'N, 53°56'E), a.k.a. Kyzyl-Atrek (=Artek, Krasnovodkii), on the banks of Atrek River, western

Turkmenistan (=Turkmen SSR, USSR) on 18 July 1970. It is not clear whether the ringed bird was captured alive and released, or obtained dead, at Point Calimere. If it was indeed the latter, current whereabouts of the specimen are not known. The wing length measurement (221 mm) provided is beyond the range for

juveniles of both Black- (201–215 mm), and White-winged- Tern *C. leucopterus* (198–216 mm), but falls within that of Whiskered Tern *C. hybrida* (c. 8 mm less than the adult range 228–250 mm) (morphometric data from Cramp 1985).

Black Tern is restricted to the extreme south-east of Turkmenistan and only Whiskered Tern is known to breed regularly along the Atrek River near the Caspian Sea coast (Cramp 1985; Burger & Gochfeld 1996). Dementiev & Gladkov (1969) reckon that the Black Tern probably breeds along the lower Amu-Darya in the south-eastern part of the country (with unconfirmed records from lower Atrek, Karadegish), while Ayé *et al.* (2012) allude to only post-breeding movements through the eastern part. The fact that the bird was ringed in mid July [too early for a juvenile to pass through as adults start dispersing only towards July end much before the immature birds (Dementiev & Gladkov 1969)] means that the bird was most probably ringed at its nesting quarter. Incidentally, Cramp (1985), and Burger & Gochfeld (1996) showed a small breeding population of White-winged Tern along the south-eastern coast of the Caspian Sea in western Turkmenistan (in contrast to Ayé *et al.* 2012). To sum up, Whiskered is the only marsh tern recognised by all the authorities as a regular and common breeding visitor to Atrek Basin, where the Point Calimere bird was reportedly ringed, and hence in all likelihood, this 'Black Tern' record was a case of misidentification.

The Bird Migration Project of the BNHS has reportedly captured and ringed several birds from the south-eastern coast of India, notably Point Calimere and Pulicat, since the 1990s (Balachandran 1995a). More recently, two reports from Gujarat, along with photographs purported to be of this species, have been published, and one was conclusively photographed at Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary (Bhatt *et al.* 2014). A summary of all the records of Black Tern from India is presented in **Table 14**.

The controversy over its inclusion is largely because of the rather equivocal manner in which the species is generally diagnosed and reported in India. For example, the dark-patches on the sides of the upper breast / lower neck (a standard field-character of non-breeding Black Terns according to regional field-guides) can also be shown, albeit to a lesser degree in hue and extent, in juvenile and first-winter transition plumages of both Whiskered Tern, and White-winged Tern (Cramp 1985: 141, 162). Though morphometric measurements (particularly tail fork, bill length, and tarsus length) are more valuable in distinguishing non-breeding adults of Black Terns from those of White-winged Terns, inclusion of juvenile measurements in the overall diagnostic range of species morphometry can potentially lead to misclassification.

Notwithstanding these caveats, we do acknowledge that some of the earlier Black Tern records from India, e.g., Tatu (2010), are likely to hold. However, we prefer to include this species solely based on the photographs from Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary (Bhatt *et al.* 2014) as the first confirmed record for the country as it is exemplarily well-documented, peer-reviewed, and readily verifiable. The only other well-documented record of this species from South Asia was of two individuals in near-breeding plumage photographed on Chagos Islands on 26 July 2010 (Carr 2013).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* Pontoppidan, 1763

The only record for India, which was the basis for its inclusion in Hbk and BSA2, was an individual in full breeding plumage collected at Zuildo, below Rangdum Gompa (34°03'N, 76°19'E),

along Suru River in Zaskar Valley, Ladakh, Kashmir, on 02 July 1928 (Whistler 1936); the specimen is now at BMNH. BSA2 also mentioned several sight reports of birds in breeding plumage in August from Chagos and these must have been referring to observations by Peter Carr who first recorded Arctic Terns in non-breeding plumage on 27 March 1996 followed by a few birds in breeding plumage in August 1997 (Carr 2011). Eight more putative sightings from Chagos since then, between 2005 and 2011, exist (www.worldbirds.org) but photographs supplied (Peter Carr, *pers. comm.*, August 2014) for some of those records were actually of Common Terns *S. hirundo*. The species is included in the India Checklist based on the specimen from Ladakh. We suspect that it is probably overlooked in Indian waters during its migration.

Table 15. Summary of Decisions

Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	Included
Tundra Swan <i>C. columbianus</i>	Included
Whooper Swan <i>C. cygnus</i>	Included
Red-breasted Goose <i>Branta ruficollis</i>	Included
Snow Goose <i>Anser caerulescens</i>	Excluded
Pink-footed Goose <i>A. brachyrhynchus</i>	Excluded
Bean Goose <i>A. fabalis</i>	Included
Lesser White-fronted Goose <i>A. erythropus</i>	Included
Long-tailed Duck <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Included
Velvet Scoter/White-winged Scoter <i>Melanitta fusca</i>	Excluded
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	Excluded
Chinese Spot-billed Duck <i>Anas zonorhyncha</i>	Included
Mandarin Duck <i>Aix galericulata</i>	Included
Red-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	Included
Slavonian Grebe/Horned Grebe <i>P. auritus</i>	Included
Red-throated Diver/Red-throated Loon <i>Gavia stellata</i>	Excluded
Black-throated Diver/Arctic Loon <i>G. arctica</i>	Included
Pygmy Cormorant <i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>	Excluded
Lesser Noddy <i>Anous tenuirostris</i>	Included
Black Noddy <i>A. minutus</i>	Included
Atoll Tern/White Tern <i>Gygis alba</i>	Included
Black-legged Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Included
Sabine's Gull <i>Xema sabini</i>	Included
Little Gull <i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	Included
Franklin's Gull <i>Leucophaeus pipixcan</i>	Included
White-eyed Gull <i>Ichthyophaga leucophthalmus</i>	Excluded
Sooty Gull <i>I. hemprichii</i>	Included
Mew Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Included
Kelp Gull <i>L. dominicanus</i>	Excluded
['European'] Herring Gull <i>L. argentatus</i>	Excluded
Armenian Gull <i>L. armenicus</i>	Excluded
Caspian Gull <i>L. cachinnans</i>	Excluded
American Herring ['Mongolian'] Gull <i>L. smithsonianus</i> [<i>L. [s.] mongolicus</i>]	Included
Great Black-backed Gull <i>L. marinus</i>	Excluded
Black Tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Included
Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Included

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