

Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* from Bondla WLS: An addition to the avifauna of Goa

The current Goa checklist (Baidya & Bhagat 2023) includes 486 species of birds. This note reports the first known record of the Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* from Goa, India. On 27 December 2023 at 1057 h, a single immature individual was observed and photographed [64] at the Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS). It was initially overlooked as a juvenile Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*. Another bird, possibly the same individual, was spotted on 02 January 2024 at 1035 h [65] at the Bondla WLS. The bird was identified in the field as an immature Blue-and-white Flycatcher with the help of Merlin. The immature of this species is distinct from any other species found in the area.



Aidan Fonseca

64. Immature Blue-and-white Flycatcher, Bondla WLS



Omkar Dharwadkar

65. Immature Blue-and-white Flycatcher, Bondla WLS

The forest at the Bondla WLS (15.442°N, 74.111°E) is a mix of secondary moist deciduous and semi-evergreen forests. The bird preferred to be in the middle canopy and was not in the company of any other species during both sightings. At first glance, the bird looked larger than any other flycatcher in the region. It had a white belly and a greyish-brown head and mantle, and the color extended to the upper breast. The upper body was blue with dark primaries. The bird did not vocalize. On both occasions, sightings were brief.

The Blue-and-white Flycatcher breeds in northeastern Asia, from Korea to Japan, and winters in Taiwan and Southeast Asia

(Clement & Marks 2020). Most sightings within Indian limits occurred between December and March (Barve & Kamat 2016; Vittapu & Dey 2021; eBird 2024), which could mean that this species is a rare winter visitor to India. The migration ranges of Zappey's Flycatcher *Cyanoptilia cumatilis* and Blue-and-white Flycatcher overlap. However, it is impossible to distinguish between immature individuals of both species due to the great similarity in their plumages. Since all records within the Indian limits have been identified as Blue-and-white Flycatchers, we consider this to be the same species until there is a confirmed record of Zappey's flycatcher within the Indian limits.

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Anthropogenic nesting material in the nest of a Laggar Falcon *Falco jugger*

The Laggar Falcon *Falco jugger* is a large, resident, Near Threatened falcon (Cade 1982; Naoroji 2006; BirdLife International. 2020), which is widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent. Its distribution extends from the extreme ends of south-eastern Iran to north-western Myanmar (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2005; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). This species prefers open arid habitats up to an elevation of 1,000 m asl (Ali & Ripley 1983; Naoroji 2006; Finlayson 2011; Grimmett et al. 2011; Clark et al. 2020). Here, we describe a unique nesting substrate for this species.

On 20 January 2024, we were birding at 1130 h at Rundera (24.613°N, 74.082°E), in the Udaipur district of Rajasthan. The area is a mix of scrubland and farmlands dotted with transmission towers, and is situated very close to the Udaipur-Chittorgarh Highway. We saw a Laggar Falcon sitting in a nest on a transmission tower. On closer observation, we observed that along with dry sticks and twigs, the nest also contained various anthropogenic materials, such as different types of ropes, pieces of clothes, different types of threads, and pieces of hosiery and woolen clothes.

The guidelines for nesting biology (Barve et al. 2020) were carefully followed during our documentation. We spent approximately 45 min at the location. At this time, the individual was continuously sitting in the nest (assumed to be incubating eggs). During this time, we saw a Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, trying to mob the falcon sitting on the nest. A few minutes later, another Laggar Falcon (assumed to be the partner) brought a kill (a half-eaten unidentified bird) on a nearby tower and ate it. It then proceeded to mob an Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, which ventured close to the nest and then took off in the opposite direction.



66. Various anthropogenic materials in the nest.



Both: Rajat Chordia

67. Laggar falcon with kill of an unidentified bird.

Although falcons are not known to use such materials in their nest, Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* nests are known to contain many anthropogenic items such as pieces of clothes and other plastic items (Mori 2019). This area is frequented by Egyptian Vultures. Laggar Falcons are known to take over empty and abandoned nests of other birds, such as Egyptian Vultures (Mori et al. 2023); therefore, it is possible that the nests we observed initially belonged to an Egyptian Vulture. However, urbanization can affect different aspects of nest design of birds (James et al. 2019). Several studies have highlighted a change in nesting materials along an urbanization gradient (e.g., Wang et al. 2009; Radhamany et al. 2016; Reynolds et al. 2016). The proximity of the nest site to a Highway along with farmlands in this situation made such nesting materials more readily available. Further studies are required to understand the effect of such anthropogenic materials in the nest of Laggar Falcon.

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Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*: A new species for Goa, and a review of its status in the Indian mainland

On 06 January 2024, SF and AF visited the Maina-Curtorim wetlands opposite the Sonbem Lake in Curtorim (15.299°N, 74.006°E) to conduct a birding trip. At approximately 0810 h, SF noticed a medium-sized wader with a flat back, pot belly, long rear end, small head, and slightly decurved bill tip actively feeding in a mixed flock of other waders, such as the Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura*, Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*, Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* and a few Common Redshanks *Tringa totanus*. It was initially difficult to identify as we were unfamiliar with it. The bird looked like a Ruff *Calidris pugnax* but was different. Gradually, it made its way onto the bund [68], allowing SF to obtain good photographs. The bird was repeatedly observed in the area for 17 days, from 06 January to 22 January 2024, during which it was photographed by MD and OD [69–71].

The photos were subsequently uploaded to social media, where the species was identified as a Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*. We also used literature (Hayman et al. 1986; Harrop 1993; Grimmet et al. 2011; Vinicombe et al. 2014) to confirm the identification. This bird appeared slightly larger than Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, with a small head on a neck that appeared short