



72. Brandt's Mountain Finch from Khalatse, Ladakh.



Both: Subramanian Sankar

73. Brandt's Mountain Finch shows narrow rosy edges to lesser coverts.

know where those four Stresemann specimens are now; probably they are in the Berlin Museum, whose catalogue I do not have access to, and there are no online catalogues available.

Apart from this discovery, I was also curious to see the specimen of Naga Wren Babbler *Spelaeornis chocolatinus* as I was involved in the discovery of the new population of *Spelaeornis* from south-eastern Arunachal Pradesh. They had a male specimen collected by S. D. Ripley from Mt. Japfo in Nagaland.

I wish to thank Jeremiah for having me on short notice and obliging with the specimens and Kate for conducting me around the museum on a tour of an astounding avian collection.

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Leg colour in male breeding plumaged Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*

After the publication of the Gujarat field guide (Ganpule et al. 2022), the Bird Conservation Society, Gujarat, started work on making a Gujarati field guide. In relation to this work, translations of species descriptions are being carried out. While working on the description of Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*, I made a surprising discovery. The reference text describes the leg colour in the breeding male Watercock as bright red (see Table 1).

However, on cross-checking with photographs of breeding plumaged male Watercock in 'eBird' (eBird 2024) and on social media [74, 75], the leg colour in breeding male Watercock appears greenish-yellow, yellow or greyish-yellow.

There are no photographs showing a bright red or red leg colour in breeding plumaged Watercocks. Only Puan et al. (2020) reported that the legs and feet of a male are briefly red at the height of breeding but are usually greenish yellow. Such a brief change in bare skin parts during courtship has been reported in



74. Male Watercock with greenish legs.

Vijendra Desai

Table 1. Details of leg colour in breeding plumaged male Watercock in various references

Reference	Description of leg colour in text	Details of leg colour in illustration or photographs
Dharmakumarsinhji (1955)	Red	Greyish yellow
Ali & Ripley (1980)	Bright red	Not illustrated
Sonobe & Usui (1993)	Bright red	Bright red
Kazmierczak (2003)	Not mentioned	Red
Grimmett et al. (2011)	Bright red	Bright red
Rasmussen & Anderton (2012)	Red	Red
Taylor & Kirwan (2020)	Bright red	Bright red
Ganpule et al. (2022)	Bright red	Greenish-yellow (in photographs)
Puan et al. (2020)	Bright red	Not illustrated



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75. Male Watercock with greenish legs.

other bird species; for e.g., the legs of the Great Egret *Ardea alba* turn reddish, and those of the Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* turn pinkish-red (Grimmett et al. 2011). Through this note, I would encourage photographers to keep a look out for and to document red legged Watercock to understand more about this interesting and little-known phenomenon.

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In Memoriam

BENJAMIN FRANK KING
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In Memoriam

ASIR JAWAHAR THOMAS JOHNSINGH
(14 OCTOBER 1945 – 07 JUNE 2024)