

January 2025, a juvenile was observed within the same forest patch between 1715 and 1730 h.

On 11 May 2025, calls of Malayan Night Herons were again recorded at the same site. On 12 July 2025, a nest was observed on the same tree but on a different branch at a similar height [122c]. Nesting in close proximity to the previous site suggests strong nest-site fidelity, a behaviour reported for the species (Kushlan & Hancock 2005). The nest was monitored during subsequent visits in July [122d]. However, from the first week of August 2025 onwards, no adults were observed attending the nest, indicating a second probable nest abandonment.



Photo: B. Kilsan Kiragori

122a. First photograph of the nesting of Malayan Night Heron on 09 October 2024. **122b:** Early morning picture while observing the nest on 10 October 2024. **122c:** Nesting on same tree but on a different branch, photograph taken on 12 July 2025. **122d:** Last sighting of the bird on the nest on 26 July 2025.

All observations and call recordings were uploaded to eBird by the author. Additionally, an independent record of nest building on 05 May 2025 was reported from Diglipur, North Andaman (Rajan 2025). Repeated nesting attempts in the same tree across consecutive seasons at Brookshabad, together with the record from North Andaman, suggest that the Malayan Night Heron may have a breeding population in the Andaman Islands. The apparent variation in breeding timing between northern and southern Andaman could reflect differences in climatic conditions or population origins. The population in the Nicobar group of islands is taxonomically distinct, as the subspecies *G. m. minor*, while the breeding population in Andamans have not been sampled and may represent another taxonomically valid unit (Praveen 2025).

Continued monitoring of known locations like Brookshabad forest patch and nearby habitats may provide further insights into the breeding ecology and population status of this species in the Andaman Islands.

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– B Kilsan Kiragori

Department of Ocean Studies and Marine Biology, Pondicherry University, Brookshabad Campus, Srivijayapuram, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India.
Email: kilsontennyson@gmail.com.

A Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* on the Kalpeni Island, Lakshadweep, India

During a coastal walk on the Kalpeni Island in the Lakshadweep archipelago (10.071°N, 73.648°E) on 02 June 2025, MJKK encountered an unfamiliar seabird resting quietly on a mooring buoy near the shore of the leeward side of the atoll. The bird appeared calm and alert, showing no signs of distress or exhaustion. He observed it for approximately two hours as it occasionally preened and balanced itself against the light breeze, before eventually taking flight toward the southwest over the lagoon. Based on visual assessment and subsequent photographic confirmation, the bird was identified as an immature Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* a rarely recorded seabird in Indian waters [123]. Notable identification features included a pale blue bill with a darker base, bare blue facial skin with a blackish throat patch, vivid red webbed feet, and predominantly dirty white plumage with contrasting dark brown primaries, which aligned with field descriptions by Harrison et al. (2021).



Photo: Mohammed Jabir, K. K

123. Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* observed in Kalpeni Island, Lakshadweep, India, in June 2025.

The Red-footed Booby is a widely distributed seabird that breeds on remote tropical islands across the world's oceans (Schreiber et al. 2020). Within Indian waters, however, sightings are rare. Reports are generally of at-sea observations or of individuals that have been driven ashore during storms. Until 2013, there was only one confirmed record of the Red-footed Booby from India, of a grounded individual from New Digha, West Bengal (Praveen et al. 2013). By 2020, there were six records from India, five of them being from the west coast, and four of them being beached birds (Rodrigues & Roshnath 2020). Since then, there have been four more reports from the west coast, of which three of them were rescued birds from land while

one was at sea (eBird 2026). In the Lakshadweep Sea, the Red-footed Booby has previously been reported between Bangaram Island and Minicoy Island, with a flying encounter recorded near Bangaram Island (Vishnualal et al. 2025). That constituted the first record for the archipelago (Raju et al. 2021) though there have been historical claims without adequate documentation (see Praveen et al. 2013). Also, our observation documents the first confirmed record of a Red-footed Booby spotted on land in the Lakshadweep Archipelago. The individual, a healthy bird, was observed walking and resting on the island rather than flying over nearby waters. In fact, this would be the first report a healthy Red-footed Booby from the land, from anywhere in India – all previous reports were of beached or exhausted birds (seven) or at-sea observations (four).

Remote islands such as Kalpeni may serve as occasional resting or stopover sites for such species traversing the Arabian Sea, considering its proximity to the breeding colonies in the Chagos Archipelago (Votier et al. 2024), located c.1,825 km south of Kalpeni Island.

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- Mohammed Jabir K. K., Zainul Abid P. M. & Madhu V. R.
 Mohammed Jabir K. K., ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Matsyapuri, W. Island, Cochin -29. E-mail: mohammedjabz44@gmail.com. MJKK [Corresponding author]
 Zainul Abid P. M., ICAR- Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Ernakulam North P. O., 682018, Kerala [ZAPM]
 Madhu V. R., ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Matsyapuri, W. Island, Cochin – 682029, Kerala, India.

Observations on predation of Indian Courser *Cursorius coromandelicus* chicks by a Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

At a grassland patch, near the village Kumbhari (17.666°N, 75.975°E; 480 m asl), in the Akkalkot Tehsil of Solapur district, Maharashtra, we documented previously unreported prey by Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*, a raptorial songbird. While observing a pair of Indian Coursers *Cursorius coromandelicus*, during the breeding season of the species, which lasts from late February to August (Sangha et al. 2025), we witnessed a predation event involving the Great Grey Shrike and Indian Courser chicks.

The Great Grey Shrike is highly opportunistic and flexible in the use of different food spectra and hunting tactics (Yosef et al. 2025). Its diet mainly consists of invertebrates, small vertebrates, as well as, occasionally, carrion and plants (Yosef et al. 2025).

Shrikes are also known to target young, ailing, wounded or exhausted migratory passerines (Ali & Ripley 1987; Lefranc 1997; Yosef et al. 2025).

On 20 March 2016, at 1800 h, a pair of breeding Indian Coursers, accompanied by two chicks, was being observed. The coursers were observed displaying an alarmed stance, which is likely indicative of the presence of predators. One adult Indian Courser was then observed initiating a protective posture by sitting on the ground with its neck lowered, which was suggestive of the presence of either a nest or young ones nearby [124]. Shortly thereafter, the Great Grey Shrike landed on the ground at a distance of a meter away from the courser, triggering defensive responses from the courser pair, such as giving alarm vocalisations, and performing threat displays, such as stretching the wings wide open and fanning the tail. The adults started giving specific threat calls, similarly documented by Sureja et al. (2021), which likely alerted any nearby chicks or nestlings, and would make the young ones hunker down and remain completely still. At this point, one of the adult coursers was also observed to perform the broken-wing display [125]. Such strategic movements used by birds to distract or avoid detection by predators are known as paratrepsis; these behaviours of distraction displays are closely related to the broader concepts of camouflage and predator-prey interactions, used to lure predators away, and is generally associated with protecting nests or young (Caro 2005). A flock of around 10–12 adult coursers joined them to distract the predator away from the chicks. Despite these defensive efforts, the shrike successfully preyed upon one chick located a meter away from one of the adult coursers. At the time of the attack, the adult courser was positioned directly between the chick and the shrike, with the shrike having landed a meter away on the opposite side. Although the chick relied on its camouflage for protection, the shrike successfully seized it and flew away [126].

Due to the low-light conditions and the distance between the observers and the bird, we could not locate where the shrike flew away with its prey. In European studies, wintering shrikes typically moved every 8.6 min and used 5.6 perches per km to travel 11.8 km daily (Olsson 1984). The Great Grey Shrike generally searches the ground for hours on end, perched on a number of quite high vantage spots, ideally at a height of 3–10 m (with extremes of 1–18 m). After 20 min, the shrike reappeared; this time, the shrike used the surprise attack strategy. It attacked the other adult courser, which was perched on the ground covering the second chick, and swiftly picked up the vulnerable chick [127], and then flew to a nearby *Acacia* spp. tree, c.50 m away. Shrikes are known to frequently carry their prey to a nearby perch offering a commanding view of the surroundings (Probst et al. 2003). In this species, larders can be found across the area at any time of year, sometimes up to 1,500 m from an occupied nest, there is typically at least one nearby, preferably within 15–20 m, especially if there are nestlings older than a week (Antczak et al. 2005).

Contrary to the usual distracting display of the Indian Courser, in this case, the courser was sitting in a protective manner, covering the chick, and was likely unaware of the shrike's presence, leading to an ambush. Following this predation event, we observed the Great Grey Shrike's characteristic behaviour of butchering and impaling its prey [128]. This intentional and systematic impaling is recorded exclusively in the true shrikes and has not been documented in non-Laniidae bird species (Yosef & Pinshow 2005). The shrike was later observed decapitating the chick [129] and then impaling that decapitated head on