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Journal of Threatened Taxa

Building evidence for conservation globally

www.threatenedtaxa.org

ISSN 0974-7907 (Online) | ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)

NOTE

SIGHTING OF THE COMMON SHELDUCK *TADORNA TADORNA* (LINNAEUS, 1758) (AVES: ANSERIFORMES: ANATIDAE) IN SHETTAKERI TANK, KARNATAKA, INDIA

Darwin Dasan Tamiliniyan, Santhanakrishnan Babu & Honnavalli Nagaraj Kumara

26 January 2018 | Vol. 10 | No. 1 | Pages: 11234–11236

10.11609/jott.3855.10.1.11234-11236



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ISSN 0974-7907 (Online)
ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)

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The Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* is one of the 42 species of ducks, geese and swans found in India belonging to the family Anatidae (Rahmani & Islam 2008; Praveen et al. 2016). It breeds in parts of Europe, Mediterranean, central Asia through eastern Siberia, Mongolia and Tibet (Ali & Ripley 1987). During winter, it is

widespread, including northern Africa, Iran, the Indian subcontinent, coastal China, southwestern Korea, Japan and Taiwan (Ali & Ripley 1987). In India, it is an uncommon visitor to northern parts of peninsular India, however, it is rarely recorded from southern peninsula (Rahmani & Islam 2008). This note reports the first sighting of the Common Shelduck from Karnataka.

On 24 November 2016, the first author had noticed a white and a black duck in a flock of seven Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* on the banks of the Shettikeri tank in Gadag District, Karnataka. While observing through binoculars, it was found that the duck had a greenish-black head and neck, white body with a chestnut band on the breast, and a black scapular stripe. The above said morphological characteristics of the duck corresponded with the Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (Grimmett et al. 2011). A few photographs (Images 1 & 2) were also taken to endorse the identification of the species because of potential misidentification of the Shelduck with domesticated ducks.

Shettikeri tank (15.18138889°N & 75.55805556°E) is located in the Shirahatti Taluk of Gadag District, Karnataka with a size of 94.95ha. Shettikeri tank and

SIGHTING OF THE COMMON SHELDUCK *TADORNA TADORNA* (LINNAEUS, 1758) (AVES: ANSERIFORMES: ANATIDAE) IN SHETTIKERI TANK, KARNATAKA, INDIA

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nearby Magadi tank harbours a large congregation of winter visitors including thousands of Bar-headed Geese visiting these tanks every year. Considering its significance in the conservation of migratory wetland birds, the Magadi-Shettikeri tanks were recognised as Important Bird Areas (Birdlife International 2018). Again on 02 December 2016, a male Common Shelduck was observed swimming amid a flock of 36 Ruddy Shelducks. A successive visit to the tank on 10 December 2016 failed to detect the Common Shelduck, however, Ruddy Shelducks were roosting on the banks of the tank.

Other records of the species from the southern peninsula (Fig. 1) are Carambolin-Dhado Wetland complex and Narve-Tikhazan Marsh in Goa (eBird), Chilika Lake in Odisha (Balachandran et al. 2005), Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh (Taher 2016), and eight locations in Maharashtra viz.: Malkhed Reservoir, Amravati (Wadatkar & Wagh 2014), Sonvad Dam (eBird), Chandika Devi Mandir, Jalgaon (eBird), Kavdi-Pune (eBird), Kumbhargaoon Bird Sanctuary (eBird), Bhandup

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.11609/jott.3855.10.1.11234-11236> | ZooBank: urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:8D3C1E33-B73C-45E8-8078-08125552D433

Editor: P.O. Nameer, Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur, India.

Date of publication: 26 January 2018 (online & print)

Manuscript details: Ms # 3855 | Received 24 October 2017 | Final received 20 January 2018 | Finally accepted 21 January 2018

Citation: Tamiliniyan, D.D., S. Babu & H.N. Kumara (2018). Sighting of the Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Aves: Anseriformes: Anatidae) in Shettikeri Tank, Karnataka, India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 10(1): 11234–11236; <http://doi.org/10.11609/jott.3855.10.1.11234-11236>

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Funding: Karnataka Forest Department, Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd. and National Institute of Wind Energy.

Competing interests: The authors declare no competing interests.

Acknowledgements: We thank Karnataka Forest Department, Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd. and National Institute of Wind Energy for funding this project. We thank the Director, SACON for his help in executing the project.



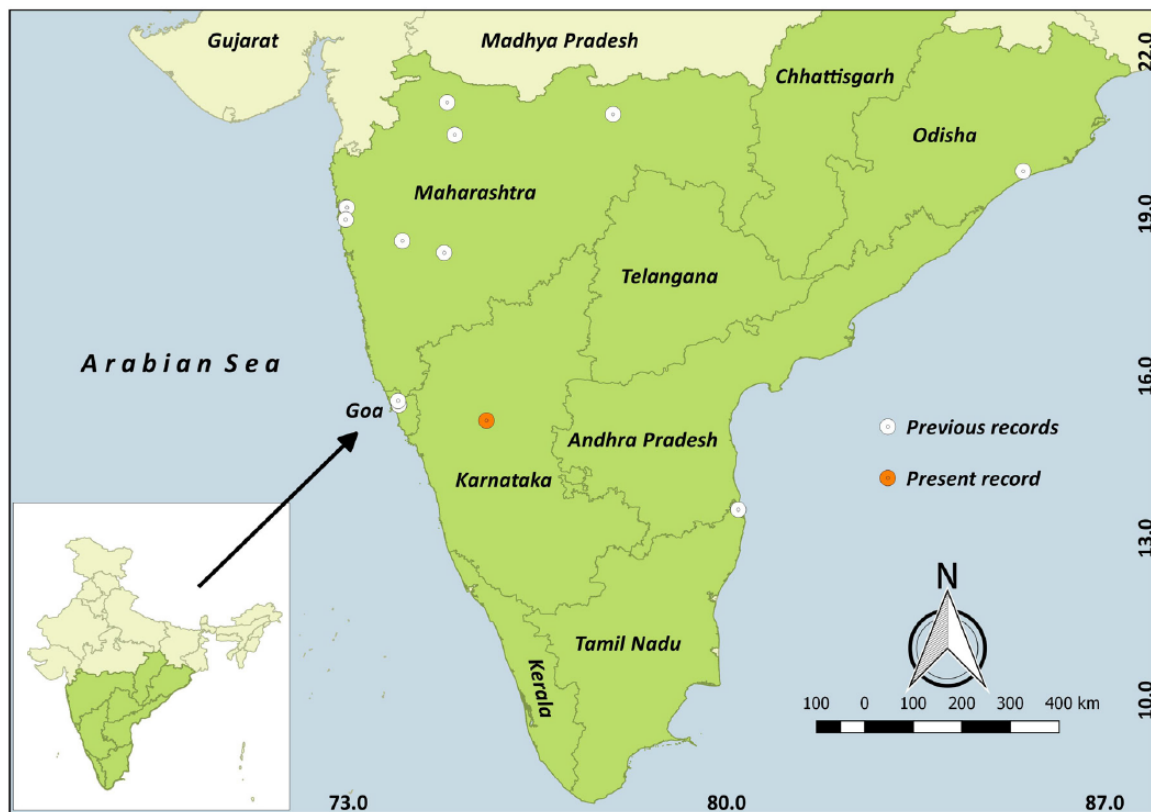


Figure 1. Distribution of the Common Shelduck in southern Peninsular India



Image 1. A male Common Shelduck in Shettikeri Tank, Gadag District, Karnataka



Image 2. Single Common Shelduck with Ruddy Shelducks on the banks of Shettikeri Tank

Pumping Station, Mumbai (eBird), Panje, Raigarh (eBird) and Airoli Creek, Mumbai (eBird).

Rahmani & Islam (2008) have mentioned that the species is very rare in the south except one unconfirmed sighting of the species from Bengaluru Airport. In a recent review of Asian Waterfowl Census data of Andhra Pradesh, it was found that the only authentic record of the species from southern India is from the Pulicat Lake and it turned out to be the known southern distribution

limit of the species (Taher 2016). While reviewing a recent compilation of birds of Karnataka (Praveen et al. 2016), it was found that the Common Shelduck was not reported from the state earlier. Hence, it is a first report for the state and the Common Shelduck appears like a vagrant to some parts of Karnataka and southern peninsular India.

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ISSN 0974-7907 (Online); ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)

January 2018 | Vol. 10 | No. 1 | Pages: 11105–11244

Date of Publication: 26 January 2018 (Online & Print)

DOI: 10.11609/jott.2018.10.1.11105-11244

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Articles

On the reproductive ecology of *Premna latifolia* L. and *Premna tomentosa* Willd. (Lamiaceae)

-- B. Dileepu Kumar, D. Sandhya Deepika & A.J. Solomon Raju, Pp. 11105–11125

Stream macro-invertebrate diversity of the Phobjikha Valley, Bhutan

-- Jigme Wangchuk & Kuenzang Dorji, Pp. 11126–11146

Communications

Population characteristics of *Silaum silaus* (L.) Schinz & Thell. (Apiaceae) in Mordovia, a highly threatened plant species at the northern limit of its range

-- Anatoliy A. Khapugin, Pp. 11147–11155

Distribution of *Nanhaipotamon hongkongense* (Shen, 1940) (Crustacea: Brachyura: Potamidae), a freshwater crab endemic to Hong Kong

-- David John Stanton, Michael Robertson Leven & Tommy Chung Hong Hui, Pp. 11156–11165

Status of birds in Agasthyamalai Hills, Western Ghats, Kerala, India

-- Madhumita Panigrahi & V.J. Jins, Pp. 11166–11184

A short-term survey report on the post-winter avian diversity in Corbett National Park and associated areas, Uttarakhand, India

-- Srinjana Ghosh & Tanmay Bhattacharya, Pp. 11185–11191

Short Communications

Rhododendron diversity along the Kusong-Panch Pokhari transect in Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve, the eastern Himalaya: a conservation perspective

-- Prem K. Chhetri, Bijoy Chhetri & Hemant K. Badola, Pp. 11192–11200

Report of a longhorn beetle *Cyrtanops punctipennis* White, 1853 (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) from Maharashtra, India

-- Narendra M. Naidu & Hemant V. Ghatge, Pp. 11201–11204

Butterflies of Peringome Vayakkara Panchayath, Kerala, India

-- C. Sneha, Pp. 11205–11209

A new subspecies of the Malayan Bamboo Bat (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae: *Tylonycteris malayana eremtaga*) from the Andaman Islands, India

-- Chelmala Srinivasulu, Aditya Srinivasulu, Bhargavi Srinivasulu & Gareth Jones, Pp. 11210–11217

Small carnivores of Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, the southern Western Ghats, India

-- E.R. Sreekumar & P.O. Nameer, Pp. 11218–11225

Observations on the Nilgiri Marten *Martes gwatkinsii* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Mustelidae) from Pampadum Shola National Park, the southern Western Ghats, India

-- G. Anil, Navaneeth Kishor, Naseef Gafoor, Naseer Ommer & P.O. Nameer, Pp. 11226–11230

Notes

Record of the endemic orchid *Biermannia jainiana* (Asparagales: Orchidaceae: Epidendroideae) from its type locality, India

-- Krishna Chowlu & Jeewan Singh Jalal, Pp. 11231–11233

Sighting of the Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Aves: Anseriformes: Anatidae) in Shettikeri Tank, Karnataka, India

-- Darwin Dasan Tamiliniyan, Santhanakrishnan Babu & Honnavalli Nagaraj Kumara, Pp. 11234–11236

Ceylon Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus seebohmii* breeding in Vani Vilasa Sagara, Hiriya Taluka, Karnataka, India

-- Golusu Babu Rao, Santhanakrishnan Babu, Honnavalli Nagaraj Kumara & Mahesh Bilaskar, Pp. 11237–11239

A new sight record and range extension of the Grizzled Giant Squirrel *Ratufa macroura dandolena* (Mammalia: Rodentia: Sciuridae) in the Eastern Ghats of southern peninsular India

-- Sivangnanaboopathidoss Vimalraj, Kothandapani Raman, Damodar Atmavadan Reddy, Bakthavachalam Harikrishnan, Bawa Mothilal Krishnakumar & Kanagaraj Muthamizh Selvan, Pp. 11240–11242

First record of the Dhole *Cuon alpinus* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Canidae) in Barandabhar Corridor Forest, Chitwan, Nepal

-- Saneer Lamichhane, Aashish Gurung, Chiranjibi Prasad Pokheral, Trishna Rayamajhi, Pabitra Gotame, Pramod Rai Regmi & Babu Ram Lamichhane, Pp. 11243–11244

Miscellaneous

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