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## NOTE

### PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF TEMMINCK'S TRAGOPAN *TRAGOPAN TEMMINCKII* (GRAY, 1831) (AVES: GALLIFORMES: PHASIANIDAE) FROM EASTERN BHUTAN: AN EVIDENCE OF ITS WESTWARD RANGE EXPANSION

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## Photographic record of Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii* (Gray, 1831) (Aves: Galliformes: Phasianidae) from eastern Bhutan: an evidence of its westward range expansion

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Inhabiting temperate forest and shrublands, Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii* is distributed across the eastern Himalaya in China, India, Myanmar, and Vietnam above 2,500m (Grewal et al. 2011; BirdLife International 2016). In India, the bird has been observed along Mishmi Hills, Dibang and Tsangpo valleys in Arunachal Pradesh (Ali et al. 1995; Ali 1999), a state neighboring eastern Bhutan. With estimated global population of over 100,000 individuals, Temminck's Tragopan is listed as Least Concern species in its assessment by the IUCN Red List (BirdLife International 2016). The species is declining over much of its distribution range owing to habitat degradation caused by under storey cutting, over grazing, over hunting, and collection of eggs (Del Hoyo et al. 1994). Further, BirdLife International (2016) claimed that the most emerging threats identified in its range were habitat deterioration, hunting, and trapping.

Temminck's Tragopan is one of the three tragopan

species found in Bhutan, the other two being Blyth's Tragopan *Tragopan blythii* and Satyr Tragopan *Tragopan satyra* (Grimmett et al. 2019).

The presence of Temminck's Tragopan in Bhutan was first reported in 2016 based on a camera trap image captured in 2014 from Samdrup Jongkhar District, near the Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary in eastern Bhutan (Kuensel Corporation Ltd 2016). After six years of its first discovery, we have captured an image of a male Temminck's Tragopan on 20 April 2020, which makes it the second photographic record of species from Bhutan. The current observation was made at an elevation of 2,952m at a place called Kharungla (27.180°N & 91.533°E) under Lumang block of Trashigang District. It was captured in one of the camera traps kept for monitoring mammals under Trashigang Forest Division.

The present observation site for the species is about 50km westward as compared to the first record of 2014, and approximately 170km away from the occurrence

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Figure 1. Global distribution of Temminck's Tragopan



Image 1. Camera trap of a male Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*.





range updated by IUCN indicating a westward range expansion of its habitat from the earlier known distribution (Figure 1). The vegetation type at the observation area is evergreen broadleaf forest mixed with bamboo species. The dominant species found at the location were *Rhododendron* sp., *Borinda grossa*, and other smaller bamboo species (*Arundinaria racemosa* & *Drepanostachyum* spp.) with dense undergrowth. The geographical aspect where the bird was photographed is south-east facing slope. The habitat inhabited is very similar to those reported earlier by Shi et al. (1996) in China and Ali (1999) in neighboring India. The image has been confirmed as that of a male Temminck's Tragopan consulting references, e.g., Grewal et al. (2011) and Ali & Ripley (1995) for plumage description. According to them the male Temminck's Tragopan is characterized by the presence of bright flame-orange overall with bright blue face surrounded by black and red under parts. It also has black and white-spotted brown wings with upper tail and darker tail coverts as we can see in the image (Image 1). Both records from Bhutan were made through motion sensed, remotely triggered camera traps in the primary forests, indicating that the species prefers forested habitat, away from human disturbances. The fact that the species was recorded only in one camera trap station in the recent

monitoring program indicates it is rare as well as elusive. Therefore, further detailed study is recommended in the region to document the extent of distribution and associated threats in Bhutan, which are lacking for now. Information from such studies will help Department of Forest and Park Services for conservation planning and IUCN in updating the species factsheet.

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