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Cover: Dorsal view of Mantis Shrimp *Cloridina ichneumon* (Fabricius, 1798) & *Gonodactylus demanii* (Henderson, 1893). © Fisheries Research Station, Junagadh Agricultural University, Sikka.



First definite record of Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* Linnaeus, 1766 (Aves: Charadriiformes: Glareolidae) from Goa, India

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Abstract: Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* has been recorded from various regions in southern India and is known to be a two way passage migrant to Western Ghats. However, this species had not been included in Goa's avifaunal checklist since the old records for the bird could not be confirmed. Hence, the present sighting of this bird at Maina-Curtorim fields, Goa qualifies as the first definite record for Goa. During the period 2013–2021, three birds namely the Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*, Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* and Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* were spotted within one-kilometer radius of the Maina-Curtorim wetlands and added to the avifaunal checklist of Goa. This offers an opportunity for additional surveys to establish the migratory route and also highlights the conservational value of the region.

Keywords: Avifaunal diversity, Collared Pratincole, conservation, Goa, Maina-Curtorim, new record, wetland.

This note describes the first definite sighting of Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* at Maina-Curtorim fields situated in Curtorim, Salcete taluka of South Goa district, Goa (Dharwadkar 2021).

The Maina-Curtorim fields admeasuring approximately 40 ha are located opposite the Sonbem Lake in Curtorim (15.300°N 74.007°E) (Image 1). These fields locally known as 'Adis', are cultivated twice a year where high yielding varieties of paddy crops are grown using stored water from the adjoining Sonbem lake. The water in the lake gets collected during the monsoons showcasing age old water

management system. The said area serves as a habitat for more than 250 species of birds, both residents and migratory such as Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*, Jack Snipe *Limnophanes minimus*, Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*, and White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*.

On 13 December 2021 at approximately 0830 h, a single bird was spotted resting motionless on a mud bund. The overall pale brown upper parts of the bird makes it all the more difficult to spot when the bird is resting as the bird gets completely camouflaged with the color of the mud (Image 2). The bird was not too shy and was later seen preening. It was also seen feeding on insects by taking short flights. A few good photographs and a video was taken immediately. Initially, it was presumed to be an Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*. However, with the help of good photographs and identification guides (Ali & Ripley 1981; Driessens & Svensson 2005; Grimmett et al. 2011), several ID features (as listed below) matched with the Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* and not with Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*.

1. Tern-shaped, short-legged plover like bird (Image 3).
2. Olive-brown head and back (Image 3).
3. Slit-shaped nostril, as compared to the egg-shaped nostril in Oriental (Image 3).
4. Black lores continued under eye forming a narrow

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Image 1A–B. A—Location of Maina-Curtorim fields | B—Satellite view of Maina-Curtorim fields (marked in green) and Sonbem Lake (marked in blue) with observation point of Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* (marked in red).

black band/gorget around the pale rufous-buff chin and throat (Image 3).

5. Brown upper-breast, passing downwards into rufous (Image 3).

6. White abdomen and under-tail coverts (Image 3).

7. The tail-to-wing length ratio is considered as one of the best features to identify the species on field (Rajeevan & Thomas 2013). When the bird is in resting position, the tip of the outermost tail feathers (tail-tip) reaches the tip of closed wings unlike in the case of Oriental wherein the tail-tip falls well short of wing-tip at rest (Image 3).

8. Broad white trailing-edge to the secondaries which the Oriental lacks (Image 4).

9. White upper tail-coverts; black tail (Image 4).

10. Deep and pronounced fork tail in flight unlike the Oriental which has a shallow fork-tail (Image 5).

Apparently, since there is a significant overlap of features between Oriental and Collared pratincoles and to avoid further confusions, Dr. Tim Inskipp, author of 'The Birds of the Indian Subcontinent' (Dr. Tim Inskipp in litt. 13.xii.2021) and Gerald Driessens, the Belgian authority on pratincoles (Driessens & Svensson 2005) (Gerald

Driessens in litt. 21.xii.2021), were contacted wherein both confirmed the ID of the bird as Collared Pratincole.

Although known to breed in the Mediterranean region, Middle East, southwestern Asia, Afghanistan, southern Europe, Pakistan, and northwestern India (Peters & Vinay 2020) various records from southern India also exist. Besides being a migratory bird (Peters & Vinay 2020), this species is a winter visitor not only in Africa and India but also to Sri Lanka in southern Asia (Rajeevan & Thomas 2013) and is considered to be a two-way passage migrant to Western Ghats (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). As per e-bird, one individual photographed from Kelgeri Lake, Dharwad, Karnataka on 06 January 2021, happens to be the closest record to Goa (Sahana 2021).

Although four records exist in Goa between 1998 and 2009 (Lainer & Alvares 2013), this species has not been included in Goa's avifaunal checklist since the old records could be confused with the Oriental Pratincole which is a commoner (Baidya & Bhagat 2018, 2021). Hence, the present sighting qualifies as the first definite record for Goa. The place was revisited on 21 December 2021 at 1020 h where the bird was spotted and photographed once again at the same location.

Although this species has an extremely large range



Image 2–5. 2—Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* camouflaged in its habitat | 3—ID features mentioned at pt.1–pt.7 | 4—ID features mentioned at pt.8 & pt. 9 | 5—ID feature mentioned at pt. 10. © 2&3—Mangirish Dharwadkar | © 4&5—Justino Rebello.

and has been listed in the Least Concern category of the IUCN Red List, the population trend is decreasing as the species is threatened not only by the use of herbicides and insecticides but also due to changes to its preferred habitats (Birdlife International 2022). Surveys and monitoring projects, therefore, need to be conducted to ascertain the status of this rare bird in Goa and to further establish its migratory route.

Additionally, stringent steps are required to be taken to protect these wetlands considering the fact that during the period 2013–2021, three new records for the state of Goa, namely, Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* (Dumadag 2020) was spotted from Maina-Curtorim wetlands; whereas, the Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis* (Dharwadkar 2013) and Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (Rebello & Dharwadkar 2021) were added from within one-kilometer radius of the Maina-Curtorim wetlands, highlighting the conservational aspect of the region.

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