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NOTE

KERALA STATE BIRD CHECKLIST: ADDITIONS DURING 2015 – MAY 2019

Abhinand Chandran & J. Praveen

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KERALA STATE BIRD CHECKLIST: ADDITIONS DURING 2015 – MAY 2019

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Praveen (2015) compiled a list of 500 species of birds occurring in the state of Kerala. Since then birdwatchers of the state have been actively documenting more bird species in the region. Here is an update on the additions and corrections to this list based on records made during the years 2015–2019 with some older records that were confirmed retrospectively. All publicly available record till 15 May 2019 have been considered for this note.

1. Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*:

a. A single bird was photographed along with Lesser Whistling Ducks *D. javanica* by Sumesh P.B. on 04 January 2017 from Changaram wetlands, Alappuzha District (Sumesh 2017).

b. A single bird was photographed along with Lesser Whistling Ducks *D. javanica* by Raphy Kallettumkara on 23 March 2019 from Pathikade Chira, Thrissur District (Kallettumkara 2019). An unconfirmed sight record by K.K. Neelakantan was also from a flooded field in Thrissur district on 02 August 1984 (Sashikumar et al. 2011).

2. Common Pochard *Aythya*

ferina: A pair was observed and male bird was photographed by P.C. Rajeevan on 05 November 2016 from Chemballikundu wetlands, Kannur District (Rajeevan 2017).

3. Spotted Crake *Porzana*

porzana:

a. A juvenile that flew into the house of Prashobh Kumar Vijayan at Thottappally beach, Alappuzha on 03 October 2015 was recovered and identified as this species from photographs (Narayanan et al. 2016).

b. A single bird was photographed by K.E. Bijumon on 06 January 2019 from Ezhome wetlands, Kannur district (Rajeevan & Bijumon 2019).

4. Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus*

scolopaceus: A single bird was photographed by P.P. Sreenivasan on 02 January 2016 and seen again on the next day from Vadakkekad paddyfields, Thrissur District (Sreenivasan 2016).

5. Mew Gull *Larus canus*:

a. A single bird photographed by Arun Bhaskaran on 02 February 2017 from Ponnani beach, Malappuram District (Bhaskaran 2018).

b. Another bird was photographed at the same locality a year later on 01 May 2018 by Nesrudheen P.P. and Arun Bhaskaran (Nesrudheen & Bhaskaran 2018).

c. A single bird was photographed at the same locality on 02 January 2019 by Abdulla Paleri (Paleri 2019) and subsequently seen by Arun Bhaskaran on 08



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February 2019 (Bhaskaran 2019).

6. Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*: A single bird in wintering plumage was photographed by Govind Girija, Jayadev Menon, Jude Kurishinkal, Navin Antony, and Premchand Reghuvaran on 19 November 2017 from Aniyil beach, Ernakulam District (Reghuvaran 2018).

7. Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*: A single bird was photographed by Krishnakumar K. Iyer on 28 April 2018 from Ponnani beach, Malappuram District (Iyer 2018).

8. Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*:

a. An adult female bird was photographed by Raphy Kallettumkara on 02 April 2017 from a wetland in Irinjalakuda, Thrissur District (Kallettumkara 2017a).

b. Another adult female bird photographed by Kamal Hari Menon & Raphy Kallettumkara on 08 February 2014 from Thommana Kole wetlands was retrospectively identified as this species (Menon & Kallettumkara 2014).

9. Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis*: A single bird was photographed by Sasidharan Manekkara on 26 May 2013 from the breeding colony of Blue-tailed Bee-eaters *M. philippinus* at Kankole, Kannur District was initially suspected to be of captive origin and was hence kept out of Praveen (2015). This, however, was subsequently argued to be a wild vagrant (Manekkara 2017) and hence an addition.

10. European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*: One bird photographed by Rison Thumboor on 28 November 2016 from Thommana Kole wetlands, Thrissur District (Thumboor & Varghese 2017).

11. Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*:

a. One individual was photographed by Abhilash Arjunan on 14 December 2015 from Punchakkari wetlands, Thiruvananthapuram District (Abhilash 2016).

b. M.C. Prashantha Krishna photographed a bird from Gumppe Hills, Kasaragod District on 05 November 2016 (Krishna 2016).

c. Raphy Kallettumkara photographed a soaring bird on 07 November 2016 from Ayanikkad Kole wetlands, Thrissur District (Kallettumkara 2016b).

d. P.C. Rajeevan and K.E. Bijumon photographed a bird from Madayipara Hill, Kannur District on 04 November 2018 (Bijumon 2018).

e. Mujeeb P.M. photographed a bird from Ponkunnu hill, Kozhikode District on 19 December 2018

(Mujeeb 2018).

12. White-spotted Fantail *Rhipidura albogularis*:

a. A single bird was photographed by Raphy Kallettumkara and K.C. Raveendran on 10 December 2016 from Malampuzha, Palakkad District (Kallettumkara 2017b).

b. Subsequently photographed from the same site by Rajesh Radhakrishnan on 18 February 2018 (Radhakrishnan 2018).

13. Crested Bunting *Emberiza lathami*:

a. A first winter male was photographed on 16 December 2018 from Kanjikode, Palakkad District by Vivek Sudhakaran, Praveen Velayudhan and Deepak Muralleedharan (Sudhakaran et al. 2019).

b. An adult female was photographed on 23 March 2019 from Cheerakavu, Thrissur District by Anisha Tomy (Tomy 2019).

14. Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata*:

A first winter male was photographed on 30 March 2015 from Ezhumanthuruthu, Kottayam District by P.J. George (George 2015). It was initially suspected to be of unknown origin and hence, was kept out of Praveen (2015). This was subsequently reported from Kodagu, Karnataka in the same period of the year during spring migration (Monnappa & Kumar 2018) and hence supporting the theory of a 'wild vagrant'. Hence, we add this species to the state checklist.

15. Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*:

A single bird was photographed on 11 November 2018 from Eriam, Kannur District by P.C. Rajeevan and Bijumon K.E. (Rajeevan & Bijumon 2019).

16. Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*: A single bird was photographed on 26 February 2016 from Munnar-Thekkady road, Idukki District by James A. Eaton and Jijo Mathew (Eaton & Mathew 2016).

17. Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*: Though there were records of this species or Pale Sand Martin *Riparia diluta* from Kerala, Praveen (2015) kept both species out of the state checklist due to challenges in identification. Since then more definite reports have occurred from Kerala as listed in Chandran (2018).

a. Two birds were photographed along with a group of Barn Swallows *Hirundo rustica* on 13 November 2014 by Abhinand Chandran from Kadamakudy, Ernakulam District.

Table 1. Additions to the birds of Kerala checklist.

| | English name | Species name | Authority | Malayalam name | Vernacular name | IUCN | EN | WPA | CITES |
|----|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------|----|--------|--------|
| | Order Anseriformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans) | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Fulvous Whistling-Duck | <i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i> | (Vieillot, 1816) | വലിയ ചുള്ളൻ എരണ്ട | Valiya chūlan eraṇṭa | LC | | Sch.I | |
| 2 | Common Pochard | <i>Aythya ferina</i> | (Linnaeus, 1758) | ചെന്തലയൻ എരണ്ട | Chentalayan eraṇṭa | VU | | Sch.IV | |
| | Order Gruiformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Rallidae (rails and coots) | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Spotted Crane | <i>Porzana porzana</i> | (Linnaeus, 1766) | പുള്ളി നെല്ലിക്കോഴി | Puḷḷi nellikkozi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Order Charadriiformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Scolopacidae (sandpipers) | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Long-billed Dowitcher | <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i> | (Say, 1822) | കരിപ്പാക്കോട | Karipprākkāṭa | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Laridae (gulls and terns) | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Mew Gull | <i>Larus canus</i> | Linnaeus, 1758 | മ്യൂ കടൽക്കാക്ക | Myū kaṭalkkāka | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 6 | Black Tern | <i>Chlidonias niger</i> | (Linnaeus, 1758) | ആളക്കുറുപ്പൻ | Āḷakkaruppan | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 7 | Black-naped Tern | <i>Sterna sumatrana</i> | Raffles, 1822 | പിടലികുറുപ്പൻ ആള | Piṭalikaṛuppan āḷa | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Order Accipitriformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Accipitridae (kite, hawks and eagles) | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Eastern Marsh Harrier | <i>Circus spilonotus</i> | Kaup, 1847 | കിഴക്കൻ കരിതപ്പി | Kizhaakkan karitappi | LC | | Sch.I | App.II |
| | Order Coraciiformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Meropidae (bee-eaters) | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Blue-throated Bee-eater | <i>Merops viridis</i> | Linnaeus, 1758 | നീലകണ്ഠൻ വേലിത്തത്ത | Nilakanṭhan vēlittatta | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 10 | European Bee-eater | <i>Merops apiaster</i> | Linnaeus, 1758 | യൂറോപ്യൻ വേലിത്തത്ത | Yūropan vēlittatta | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Order Falconiformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Falconidae (falcons and caracaras) | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | Eurasian Hobby | <i>Falco subbuteo</i> | Linnaeus, 1758 | വരയൻ പൂളുള | Varayan puḷḷ | LC | | Sch.IV | App.II |
| | Order Passeriformes | | | | | | | | |
| | Family Rhipiduridae (fantails) | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | White-spotted Fantail | <i>Rhipidura albogularis</i> | (Lesson, 1832) | ശ്വേതകണ്ഠൻ ആട്ടക്കാറൻ | Śvētakanṭhan āṭṭakkāran | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Emberizidae (old world buntings) | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | Crested Bunting | <i>Emberiza lathami</i> | J.E. Gray, 1831 | കൊമ്പൻ തിനക്കുരുവി | Komban tinakkuruvi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 14 | Chestnut-eared Bunting | <i>Emberiza fucata</i> | Pallas, 1776 | ചെഞ്ചെവിയൻ തിനക്കുരുവി | Chenjeviyan tinakkuruvi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 15 | Yellow-breasted Bunting | <i>Emberiza aureola</i> | Pallas, 1773 | മഞ്ഞമാറൻ തിനക്കുരുവി | Manjamaran tinakkuruvi | CR | | Sch.IV | |
| 16 | Little Bunting | <i>Emberiza pusilla</i> | Pallas, 1776 | ചിന്ന തിനക്കുരുവി | Chinna tinakkuruvi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Hirundinidae (swallows) | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | Sand Martin | <i>Riparia riparia</i> | (Linnaeus, 1758) | മണൽ കുതിക | Maṇal katrika | LC | | Sch.IV | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----|--|--------|--|
| | Family Phylloscopidae (old world leaf warblers) | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | Yellow-browed Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i> | (Blyth, 1842) | മഞ്ഞപ്പുരികൻ ഇലക്കുരുവി | Manjappurikan Ilakkuruvi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Leiothrichidae (babblers, laughing-thrushes and allies) | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | Banasura Laughingthrush | <i>Montecincla jerdoni</i> | (Blyth, 1851) | ബാണാസൂര ചിലപ്പൻ | Banasura Chilappan | EN | | Sch.IV | |
| 20 | Ashambu Laughingthrush | <i>Montecincla meridionalis</i> | (Blanford, 1880) | തെക്കൻ ചിലുചിലുപ്പൻ | Thekkan Chiluchilappan | VU | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Sturnidae (starlings) | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Purple-backed Starling | <i>Agropsar sturninus</i> | (Pallas, 1776) | ചെമ്പീലിക്കാളി | Chennīlīkkāḷi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Muscicapidae (chats and flycatchers) | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | White-bellied Sholakili | <i>Sholicola albiventris</i> | (Blanford, 1868) | വെള്ളവയറൻ ചോലക്കിളി | Vellavayaran Cholakkili | VU | | Sch.IV | |
| 23 | Blue-and-white Flycatcher | <i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i> | (Temminck, 1829) | ഇന്ദ്രനീലി പാറ്റപിടിയൻ | Indranīli pāṭṭapiṭiyan | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 24 | Ultramarine Flycatcher | <i>Ficedula superciliaris</i> | (Jerdon, 1840) | കടുന്നീലി പാറ്റപിടിയൻ | Kaṭunnīli pāṭṭapiṭiyan | | | Sch.IV | |
| 25 | Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush | <i>Monticola saxatilis</i> | (Linnaeus, 1766) | ചെമ്പുവാലൻ പാറക്കിളി | Chempuvālan pāṛakkili | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| 26 | Pied Wheatear | <i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i> | (Lepechin, 1770) | വെള്ളക്കുപ്പൻ നെയ്മണിക്കുരുവി | Vellakkaruppan nenmanikkuruvi | LC | | Sch.IV | |
| | Family Turdidae (thrushes) | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | Eye-browed Thrush | <i>Turdus obscurus</i> | J.F. Gmelin, 1789 | പുരികപ്പുള്ളി | Purikappuḷḷu | LC | | Sch.IV | |

IUCN: Red List categories. CR: Critically Endangered, EN: Endangered, VU: Vulnerable, NT: Near Threatened, LC: Least Concern

EN: Endemic status (No new endemic species has been added and retained for completeness)

WPA: Schedules (I, II, III, IV) as per Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

CITES: Appendices (I, II, III) as per <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

b. A single bird was photographed by Abhijith Surendran on 01 January 2017 from Changaram wetlands, Alappuzha District.

c. A single bird photographed on 10 January 2017 by Harikumar Mannar from Kuttanad wetlands, Alappuzha District.

d. Two birds photographed on 02 October 2017 from Kadamakudy, Ernakulam District by Premchand Reghuvaran.

e. A single bird photographed on 15 December 2017 by Manoj Karingamadathil & Jameela P. from Manakodi Kole wetlands, Thrissur District.

18. Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*:

A single bird was photographed on 17 February 2019 from Pothamedu, Munnar, Idukki district by Julien Mazenauer (Mazenauer 2019; Mazenauer in press). Prior to this Paul Holt reported this species on 14 February 1995 incidentally also from Munnar (Sashikumar et al. 2011), but was not considered for the state checklist due to the failure to satisfy the inclusion criteria documented therein.

19. Purple-backed Starling *Agropsar sturninus*:

a. An adult male was photographed along with Rosy Starlings *Pastor roseus* and Common Mynas *Acridotheres tristis* on 14 November 2015 from Vellayani-Punchakkari paddyfields, Thiruvananthapuram District by K.G. Dilip and C.G. Arun (Dilip & Arun 2016).

b. An adult male was photographed along with Common Mynas *Acridotheres tristis* on 14 October 2016 from Thommana Kole wetlands, Thrissur district by Raphy Kallettumkara (Kallettumkara 2016a) and retrospectively identified as this species.

c. Two adult male birds were photographed along with Chestnut-tailed Starlings *Sturnia malabarica* on 21 October 2018 from Uppungal Kole, Malappuram District by P.P. Nesrudheen (Nesrudheen 2018).

d. An adult male was photographed along with Chestnut-tailed Starlings *Sturnia malabarica* on 12 December 2018 from Kozhukkully, Thrissur District by K.B. Nidheesh, Bavish Usha Balan and Sreekumar Govindankutty (Nidheesh 2018).

20. Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*:

a. A first winter male transitioning to breeding plumage was photographed on 05 February 2017 by Mathew Thekkethala from Nelliampathy Hills, Palakkad District (Thekkethala 2018).

b. A male bird was photographed on 02 February 2018 by James A. Eaton from Neriampalam-Painavu Road, Ernakulam District (Roddis & Loseby 2018).

c. A male bird was photographed on 23 November 2018 by Manoj Kanakambaran from Kanthalloor, Idukki District (Kanakambaran 2018) and the species continue to be wintering in the same site at least till 28 February 2019.

21. Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*: A first winter male was photographed on 14 November 2015 from Santhigiri, Idukki District by P.J. George (George 2016).

22. Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*: A first winter male was photographed on 18 November 2015 from Nangiarkulangara, Alappuzha District by S.R. Prasanth Kumar (Balar et al. 2016).

23. Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*:
a. A first winter bird was photographed on 20 December 2015 by Premchand Reghuvaran from Bekal Fort, Kasaragod District (Reghuvaran 2016).
b. A sub-adult was photographed on 25 September 2016 by Jayan Thomas from Madayipara, Kannur District (Thomas 2017).

24. Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*: A single bird was photographed by P.B. Samkumar on 10 December 2017 from Iringole Kaavu, Ernakulam District (Samkumar 2017).

With this update, 24 species have been added to the state checklist. The taxonomic update of 2018 (Praveen et al. 2018) elevated a number of subspecies found in the country to the species level, this does impact the number of species found in Kerala: adding Banasura Laughingthrush *Montecincla jerdoni* (split from Nilgiri Laughingthrush *M. cachinnans*), Ashambu Laughingthrush *M. meridionalis* (split from Palani Laughingthrush *M. fairbanki*) and White-bellied Sholakili *Sholicola albiventris* (split from Nilgiri Sholakili *S. major*). The new taxon, Ashambu Sholakili *S. ashambuensis*, described by Robin et al. (2017) is treated as a subspecies of *S. albiventris* by global

taxonomies (Clements et al. 2018, Gill & Donsker 2019), as well as the national checklist (Praveen et al. 2019), and we too follow the same treatment here. This takes the total number of species in the Kerala checklist to 527 (Table 1). Malabar Starling *Sturna malabarica blythi* is accepted as a full species by some taxonomies (Gill & Donsker 2019, Clements et al. 2018) but is not accepted in Praveen et al. (2019) or HBW Alive (Craig & Feare 2018) and hence not counted here. Of this, 515 species are supported either by a validated specimen or a clear photograph. The following 12 birds find a place in the state checklist purely based on sight records: Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*, White-cheeked Tern *Sterna repressa*, Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, Eurasian Crag-Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*, Grey-throated Martin *Riparia chinensis*, Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus tristis*, Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*, and Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* (Sashikumar et al. 2011).

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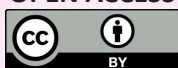
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