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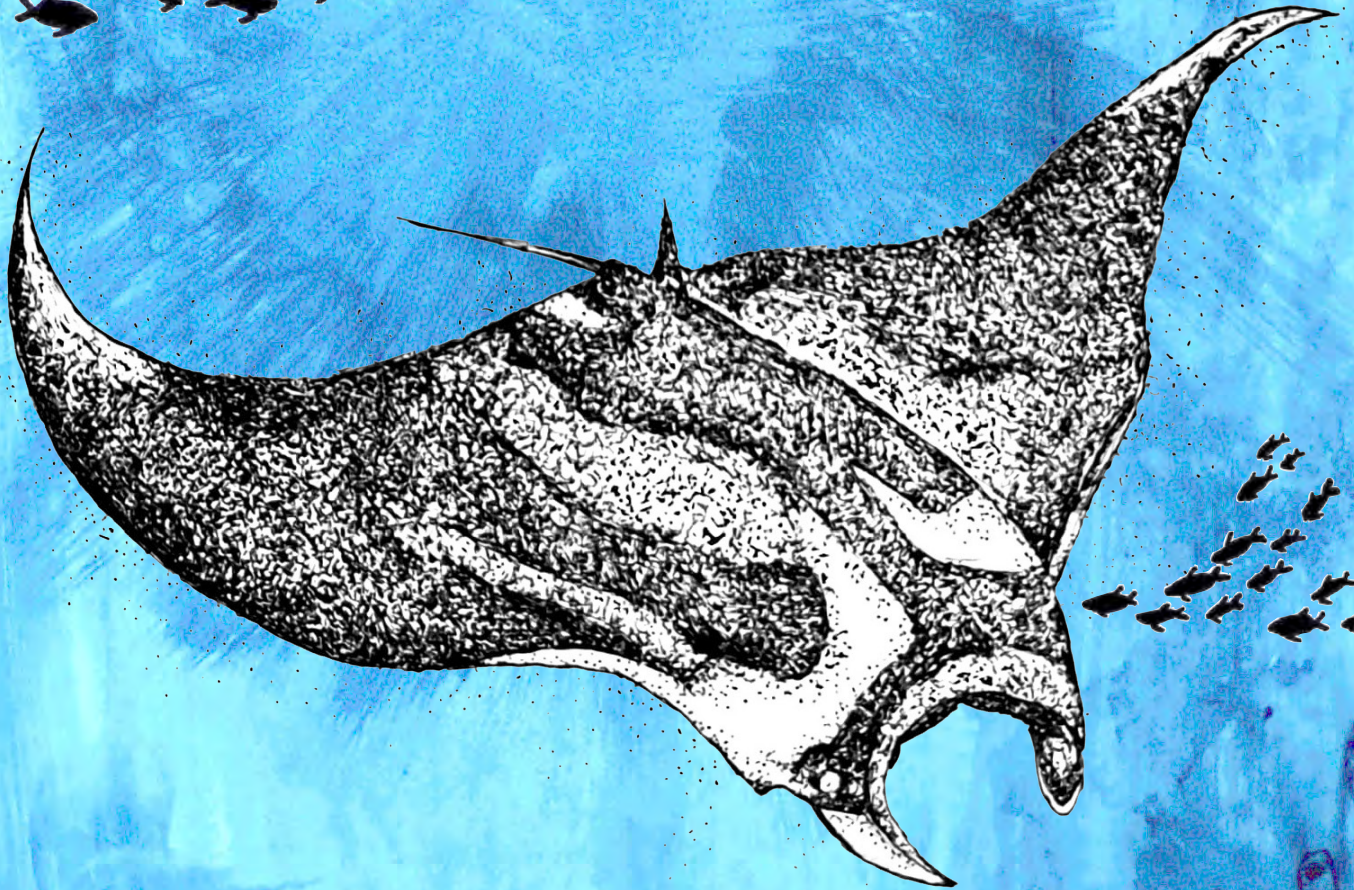
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Cover: Giant Oceanic Manta Ray *Mobula birostris* in ink on acrylic wash by Elakshi Mahika Molur adapted from scientific illustration by Roger Hall.



Sighting of Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Aves: Anseriformes: Anatidae) in Hadinaru Kere, Mysuru, India

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The Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* is classified as 'Vulnerable' by the IUCN Red List due to a decline in the key breeding population in its breeding grounds in Russia, and a further decline in global population (BirdLife International 2023). They are long-distance Palearctic migrants that breed intermittently in the subarctic zone from northern Fennoscandia to eastern Siberia; wintering and staging regions, as well as their migratory routes, are only partially understood (Jones et al. 2008). In India, the bird winters in several areas like Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra (Rahmani 2012). However, most sight records from India are still refuted and best regarded as tentative (Praveen et al. 2014), yet from 2013 onwards the bird has been sighted in the Kutch region of Gujarat (Khan 2013; Shreeram & Deomurari 2014).

On 10 February 2023, the first author on his birding to Hadinaru Lake recorded a smaller bird with a chocolate brown head, a prominent white patch above its pink beak, and a golden yellow eye ring among a huge flock of Bar-Headed Geese *Anser indicus*. Slow approach was made to the bird and was photographed for identification (Image 1,2) and later the bird was identified using field guide (Grimmett et al. 2016) as Lesser White-fronted

Goose *Anser erythropus* from its characteristics.

Hadinaru Lake lies between 12.178–12.17 °N & 76.74–76.759 °E, in the Nanjangud Taluk, Mysuru District, Karnataka State. The catchment area of the lake is 8.57 km². The lake hosts several migratory birds such as Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*, Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*, Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*, Common Pochard *Aythya farina*, Striated Heron *Butorides striata*, Eurasian Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, and Greater Spotted Eagle *Clanga clanga* (Gopal Praphul 2005–2020 pers. obs.). During its peak winter season, the Bar Headed Goose population rises to 400–600. In a total of 15 visits from 10 February 2023 to 4 March 2023, a lone *Anser erythropus* was documented along with the gaggle of Bar-Headed Geese.

The available literature indicates that all the earlier sightings are confined to northern and northeastern India and a few sporadic sightings in the west (Praveen et al. 2014) (Figure 1). The present record of the bird this far in inland southern peninsula adds to its current distribution range. Thus, the current sighting stands to be the first record for the state of Karnataka and southern India.

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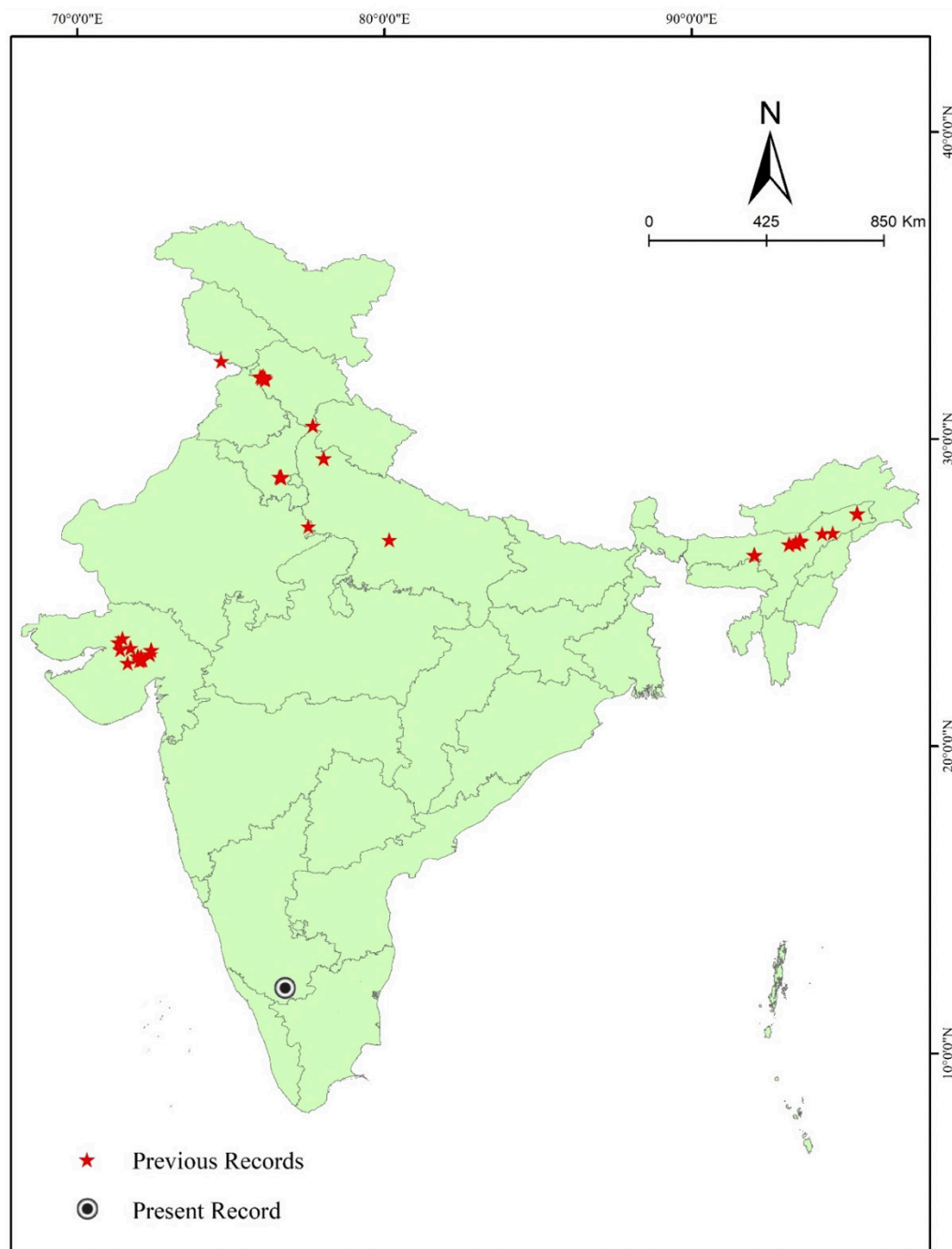


Figure 1. Distribution of the Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* in India.

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Image 1. A single Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* among Bar-headed Geese *Anser indicus* in Hadinaru Lake, Mysuru.



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Image 2. Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* in Hadinaru Lake, Mysuru.

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