

First records of Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* and breeding of Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* in Nagpur district, Maharashtra.

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Sighting of Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*:

On 7th May 2006 the authors, alongwith Ms. Swati Sani and Master Asim visited Vena reservoir, which is located 19.5kms towards Amravati on Mumbai-Kolkata highway. The geographical location of the Vena reservoir is 21^o16'N 78^o86'E.

At around 1030hrs Raju saw two unidentified waders in the backwaters of the reservoir. Surprisingly one of the waders was swimming in shallow waters. Dr. Sani took photographs of the bird. Raju identified the bird with the help of the referred bird-books as a probable Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, which eventually proved to be true. One of the birds was an adult acquiring breeding plumage and the other one was a bird in non-breeding plumage.

This is probably the first record of this species from Vidarbha. In the distribution maps in Grimmett' et. al.'s Pocket Guide very few sighting records are shown from India. The species thus is a rare passage migrant and hence the sighting assumes importance. The Ripley Guide mentions about the occurrence of this species as "rarely recorded inland, but passage migrant particularly throughout Afghanistan, Pakistan and NW India, a few records in West Nepal, Bihar and inland South India. Probably regular in passage in Rajasthan."

Breeding record of Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*:

On the same day we found a big nesting colony of Little Ringed Plovers *Charadrius dubius*, Little Terns *Sterna albifrons*, Small Pratincoles *Glareola lactea*, Blackwinged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus*, Red-wattled Lapwings *Vanellus indicus* and Yellow-wattled Lapwings *Vanellus malabaricus*.

Two nests of Little Tern with two eggs each and two nests of River Terns with one egg each were located. Chicks of Red-wattled Lapwings were seen running with the adult birds. At least 25 nests of Small Pratincoles were located in a small patch of land. They had 2 eggs each except one nest, which had only one egg. Three chicks of Blackwinged Stilts were located running with the adult birds. Many Stilts gave frantic distraction display also indicating many nests. The number of birds counted here on the day were as: Little Ringed Plovers (50), Little Terns (8), Small Pratincoles (150), Blackwinged Stilts (35), Red-wattled Lapwings (25), River Terns (4) and Yellow-wattled Lapwings (20).

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There is only one published record of the nesting of Little Tern from Vidarbha (Kasambe & Wadtkar, 2002). The map in Grimmet et. al.'s book shows only three sightings of Little Terns from Central India. Hence the record assumes importance.

Sightings of Pacific Golden Plovers *Pluvialis fulva*:

On 20th February 2005 Raju and Mr. Shailendra Chaudhary located two Pacific Golden Plovers at the backwaters of Vena reservoir. On 22nd January 2005 Raju and Tarique located a flock of 9 birds at Vena reservoir again. Tarique photographed the birds and then identified them. Notably all the birds were in non-breeding plumage. The map in Grimmet et. al.'s book shows very few sightings of Pacific Golden Plovers in the peninsular India. The Ripley Guide (2005) mentions about its occurrence as "a few winter inland mainly along major eastern rivers. Widespread passage migrant inland...less often in the Peninsula." Hence the sighting is important.

Raju (pending paper) had sighted a single bird at Malkhed reservoir in Amravati district of Maharashtra each on 4th May 2003 and on 22nd May 2003. The latter bird was having only one leg and both birds were in full breeding plumage.

Note: Please visit <http://www.nagpurbirds.org> for the photos of Red-necked Phalarope, Little Tern and Pacific Golden Plovers taken at Nagpur.

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