

LONG-BILLED VULTURES

Additional new breeding site of Long-billed vultures (*Gyps indicus*) in Moyar Valley, Tamil Nadu, Southern India



IUCN Red List:
Critically
Endangered
A2bce+4bce
ver 3.1 (Birdlife
International,
2017)

Long-billed vulture

Aves
[Class of Birds]

Accipitriformes
[Order of the diurnal
birds of prey]

Accipitridae
[Family of birds of prey]

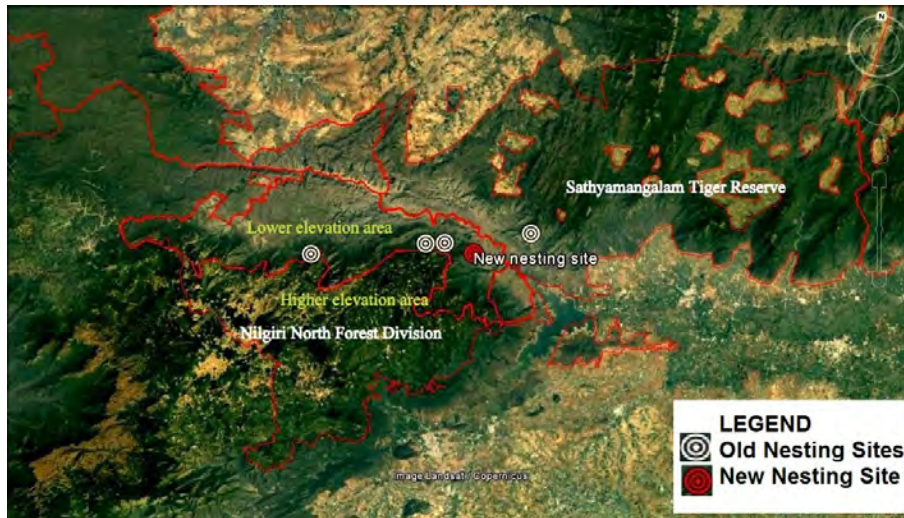
Gyps indicus
[Long-billed vulture]

Species described by
Scopoli in 1786

The Long-billed vulture *Gyps indicus* is one of the three native, resident *Gyps* species in India. Long-billed vulture breeds in south-east Pakistan and Peninsular India south of the Gangetic plain, north to Delhi, east through Madhya Pradesh, south to Nilgiris (Collar et al., 2001; Risebrough 2004; Rasmussen & Anderton 2005; Venkitachalam & Senthilnathan 2015). The species is classified as Critically Endangered (BirdLife International, 2017) because of catastrophic decline of 90-98% in the population of *Gyps* species due to diclofenac poisoning (Gilbert et al., 2006; Green et al., 2004). Long-billed vultures nest almost exclusively in colonies on cliffs and ruins, although in areas, where cliffs are absent, they have been recorded nesting in trees in Kolayat Tehsil of Bikaner, Rajasthan. (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005; Khatri, 2015). Here we present

an additional new breeding site record for Long-billed vultures in Moyar valley, Tamil Nadu, Southern India.

The Moyar Valley is located between 11.70° N, 76.59°E and 11.47°N, 77.14°E . The



Showing old and new Long-billed vulture nesting locations in the Moyar Valley, Tamil Nadu

Nilgiri plateau is to its southeast, Thalamalai plateau to the northeast, and Mudumalai Tiger Reserve to the west. The approximate length of the valley is 50 km falling within the TN and Karnataka states. The distinctiveness of the landscape is the

connection with the Western and Eastern Ghats, considered as the Global Biosphere Hotspot of the world. Elevation of the area ranges from 209 to 1950 m.

Long-billed vulture nests were searched at dusk and dawn. Once the occurrences were confirmed and the surrounding nearest rocky cliffs was examined in the Nilgiri Eastern Slopes Range of

Nilgiri North Forest Division in Moyar Valley. The moment was observed using a telescope (29 X) and a binocular (52 X 10). Nest search was carried out during the drier months of October to May, wherever the movement was frequently observed on the rocky cliffs. On 12th October 2016



New nesting site of Long-billed vulture in Moyar Valley, Tamil Nadu

Global Distribution:

South-east Pakistan and peninsular India south of the Gangetic plain, north to Delhi, east through Madhya Pradesh, south to the Nilgiris and occasionally further south (Collar et al., 2001)

we are recorded a pair of Long-billed vulture soaring on the hill slopes in Kallampalayam areas of Nilgiri North Forest Division in Moyar Valley (11.53149° N & 76.96922° E, elevation 746m). We targeted that pair and keenly monitored the pair activities. On observation a vulture landed the rocky cavity that we are intensively monitoring. Further monitoring was carried out to confirm the breeding activities of Long-billed vulture in the rocky cliff. On 23 April 2017, Long-billed vulture juvenile flying activities were observed on the rocky cliff to confirm the successful breeding of the pair in that rocky cliff. Stotrabhashyam et al (2015) recorded six nesting sites of Long-billed vulture in India including two nesting sites in Tamil Nadu and Venkitachalam & Senthilnathan (2015) recorded that a total of four breeding sites of Long-billed vulture in Nilgiri North Forest Division and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in Moyar Valley. The present nesting site is an additional new breeding site of Long-billed vulture in Moyar valley.

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