

GREY-HEADED LAPWING

Sighting of *Vanellus cinereus* in Koothappar Big Tank in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu



IUCN Red List:
Least Concern
(BirdLife
International,
2016)

Grey-headed Lapwing in Koothappar Big Tank

Aves

[Class of Birds]

Charadriiformes

[Order of small to medium-large birds]

Charadriidae

[Family of plovers and lapwings]

Vanellus cinereus

[Grey-headed Lapwing]

Species described by
Blyth in 1842

The Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* is a wetland bird distributed in East Asia to Southeast Asia, mainly found in riverbeds in the lowlands and marshes (Sonobe & Robinson 1985; Nakamura & Nakamura 1995). It breeds in north-eastern China and during winter in Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and other parts of Southeast Asian mainlands (Robson 2005; Bamford et al. 2008).

Until 2000, the Grey-headed Lapwing is a rare winter visitor in Peninsular India (Kumar et al. 2003) and only a few published records are available from India (Kasambe et al. 2012). According to Ali & Ripley (1983), this bird is a winter visitor, regularly seen in small flocks in West Bengal, Assam, Manipur and Bangladesh and stragglers recorded from Kashmir, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Andaman Islands. Besides,

Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) reported this bird from other parts of India in Bihar, southern Assam hills, southwestern Bengal, Odisha, and a few reaching Delhi and Bharatpur (Rajasthan) areas, northern and southern Gujarat and the southern peninsula. Grimmett et al. (2011) opined that in the Indian subcontinent, it is mainly distributed in the northeastern part of India. However, in peninsular India it has been reported from Maharashtra (Palkar 2010), Andhra Pradesh (Pittie 2001; Conroy 2003; Sreekar & Ram 2010), Goa (Lainer 1991) Karnataka (Subramanya 1987), Tamil Nadu (Sundar 2000; Santharam 2003; Santharam et al. 2006). The bird was reported for the first time in Kerala in 1999 by Ravindran & Nameer (2002). About a decade back, in Tamil Nadu, Santharam et al.

Global Distribution:

Native: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Russian Federation (Eastern Asian Russia), Taiwan, China, Thailand, Viet Nam.

Vagrant: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka

Present - origin uncertain: Bhutan (BirdLife International 2016)



Grey-headed Lapwing in Koothappar Big Tank

(2006) reported frequent sightings of Grey-headed Lapwing and the same is construed as the bird has extended its range in coastal Tamil Nadu.

A pair of Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* was observed in the Koothappar big tank (10.794°N & 78.781°E) in Tiruchirappalli in central Tamil Nadu on 17 January 2016 from 11-12 hr (Siva & Neelananarayanan 2017). The Koothappar big tank is one of the

important seasonal wetlands in Tiruchirappalli district which supplies water for irrigation. The wetland acts as both feeding and breeding ground for many wetland birds and other common birds. In 1998, Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), Coimbatore had prioritized this tank as one of the important wetlands in Tiruchirappalli District. This wetland receives water from the *Uyyakondan* channel, a tributary of the river Cauvery. The wetland spreads over 74 hectares. It is evident from the present observation that the bird has also extended its range to the central part of Tamil Nadu besides coastal regions.

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