

First sighting of Blossom-headed Parakeet from southern West Bengal

We have been documenting the changes of nature in the forest ecosystems to forest edge villages of West Medinipur District of southern West Bengal. During our continuous morning survey on 14 June 2020, we spotted a parakeet near Mugbasan Village with a rosy head. At a glance we thought it to be the Plum-headed Parakeet but soon realized it was different. We took many photographs but were unable to take the tail portion because of positional disadvantages. When the bird flew away we found there was another one with it hidden among the tree foliage (*Arjan *Holoptelia integrifolia**). We used a binocular (Olympus 10×50) along with Canon DSLR and Nikon P900 for photography. We consulted the literature for the proper identification of the birds (Grimmett et al. 2016; Praveen et al. 2018).

Male Blossom-headed Parakeets *Psittacula roseata* are distinguished from male Plum-headed Parakeets *Psittacula cyanocephala* by paler pink and lilac blue on head (Grimmett et al. 2016), rosy pink ear coverts, pale



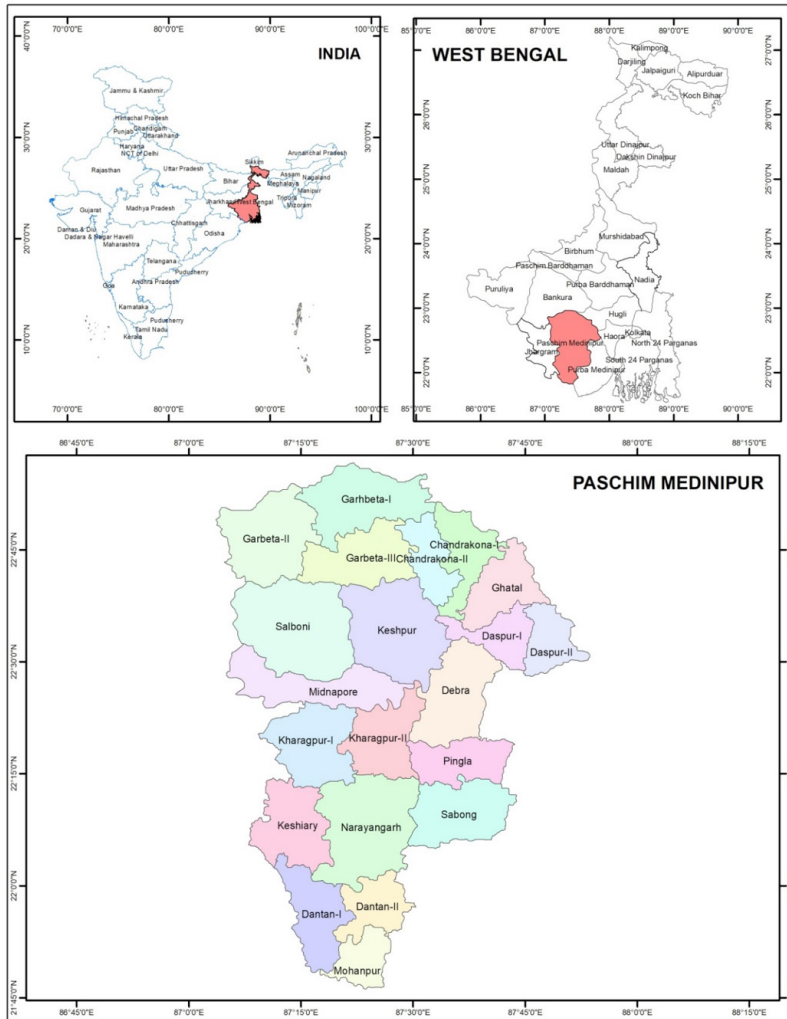
A sub adult male Blossom-headed Parakeet

purplish-blue nape and crown with black chin strap graduating to fine stripe around the hind neck (Grewal 2016). Orangish-yellow upper mandible is seen in Blossom-headed Parakeets only (Grewal 2016).

Flight is quick and agile, particularly when treading trees (Arlott 2014). They prefer open light forest, secondary growth, and plantations. Blossom-headed Parakeets are less noisy than Plum-headed

Table 1. Birds found during the survey.

	Common name	Scientific name	IUCN (3.1)
1	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	LC
2	Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	LC
3	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	LC
4	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	LC
5	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	LC
6	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus sp.</i>	LC
7	Bronzed-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>	LC
8	Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	LC
9	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	LC
10	Asian Openbill Stork	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	LC
11	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	LC
12	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	LC
13	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	LC
14	Stork-bill Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	LC
15	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	LC
16	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	LC
17	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	LC
18	Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lacteal</i>	LC
19	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	LC
20	Common Green Shank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	LC
21	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	LC
22	Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	LC
23	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	LC
24	Little-ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	LC
25	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	LC
26	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	LC
27	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	LC
28	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	LC
29	Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	LC
30	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	LC
31	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	LC
32	Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	LC
33	Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>	LC
34	Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	LC
35	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	LC
36	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	LC
37	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	LC
38	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>	LC
39	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	LC
40	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>	LC
41	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	LC
42	Grey-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus cinereus</i>	LC
43	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>	LC
44	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	LC
45	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	LC
46	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	LC
47	Pale Sand Martin	<i>Riparia diluta</i>	LC
48	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	LC
49	Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>	LC
50	Bengal Bush Lark	<i>Mirafra assamica</i>	LC
51	Short-toed Lark	<i>Alauda cheleensis</i>	LC
52	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	LC
53	Jerdon's Bush Lark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>	LC
54	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	LC
55	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura sp.</i>	LC
56	Tricolour Munia	<i>Lonchura mallacca</i>	LC
57	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava sp.</i>	LC
58	Grey Frankolin	<i>Francolinus sp.</i>	LC



Study area and location map of the present study. From top left: State west Bengal in the country map, District West Midnapore in State map, and Center one is Block map of Midnapore.

Parakeets. Blossom-headed Parakeets are resident of northeastern India, northern West Bengal and Bangladesh. E-Bird shows its distribution in northeastern India, Bangladesh (with one record from Bangladesh Sunderbans), Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Blossom-headed Parakeets are frequently spotted in Assam, India. There was no previous record of

Blossom-headed Parakeets from southern West Bengal. We took help from two ornithologists of Zoological Society of India to confirm our identification.

As Blossom-headed Parakeets look little identical with related Plum-headed Parakeets, these two birds are frequently misidentified. Moreover, our photo is of a sub adult male Blossom-

headed Parakeet. We started our survey in November 2019 and continued through the winter.

References

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