

First record of White-tailed lora in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu, India



White-tailed lora
or Marshall's
lora

The White-tailed lora *Aegithina nigrolutea* belongs to the family Aegithinidae and is a non-migratory resident bird in India and Sri Lanka (BirdLife International 2016); it is a monogamous passerine bird. It is also called Marshall's lora. The male bird has golden yellow on the chin, throat and underparts. The black colour appears on the upper parts and wings. The female bird has green upper parts and yellow

underparts. The tail is black and white in colour for both gender birds. The bill is straight, pointed pale grey (Grimmett et al. 2011). In India, White-tailed lora is distributed in the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu (Ganpule, 2020). These species normally occur in natural ecosystems of tropical and

Table 1. District wise White-tailed lora sightings in Tamil Nadu

	Districts	Year	Number of locations	Number of observations
1	Coimbatore	2018–2021	14	20
2	Dharmapuri	2019–2021	5	12
3	Erode	2015–2021	7	10
4	Krishnagiri	2019–2021	3	3
5	Ramanathapuram	2019–2020	3	9
6	Salem	2017–2021	22	271
7	Thoothukkudi	2017	1	1
8	Tirunelveli	2014–2020	3	3
9	Tiruppur	2018–2021	11	24
10	Tiruvannamalai	2018–2021	9	21
11	Vellore	2018	4	4
12	Tiruchirappalli	2021	2	2

subtropical moist lowland forests, moist montane forests, open wooded country, dry grasslands, deciduous forests, and dry savanna (Wells et al. 2003).

The diet of Marshall's lora consists mainly of insects, beetles, cicadas, crickets, grasshoppers, mantids, moths, termites, spiders and larvae as their primary food. The

breeding season of the Marshall's lora is during June and July in northwestern India.

Degradation of habitats is the main threat that may endanger the survival of these species. The IUCN has categorized and evaluated the species and has listed it as 'Least Concern' (BirdLife International, 2016).

The CITES status is "Not Evaluated" for



Habitat of White-tailed lora at Abinimangalam Village in Tiruchirappalli District

Marshall's lora (www.iucnredlist.org).

First sighting of White-tailed lora

On 7 November 2021, we went for a bird watching trail along the grasslands surrounded by scrub habitats at Abinimangalam Village in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu. The area has a wide range of dry grasses with scrub landscapes. Due to ample rains in recent times, the location looks like a grassy carpet and the conditions perfectly suit birds & other species. The location of the bird spotted was above the sea level.

We started observing birds from 0700 h and recorded 48 species. Around 0911 h, we observed some bird movements on the *Senna auriculata* plant (11.056 N, 78.669 E, 125 m). We first thought it to be a Common lora, however on further scrutiny and observation we realized that it was White-tailed lora. The bird was highly energetic and moved fast trying to disappear into the bushes. With some effort we managed to take some photographs of the bird. In the particular location, we observed two White-tailed loras. This is the first ever record in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu. The identification was confirmed through the photographs and compared with the field guide Grimmett et al. (2011) as White-tailed lora (Marshall's lora). Later, this first sighting was recorded and entered in the ebird checklist (<https://ebird.org/checklist/S97379147>). We interpreted that it is a suitable place for this species.

The details were searched from the published

articles. The breeding plumage and vocalizations were Marshall's lora observed from Gujarat (Ganpule 2014). Siriwardhane (2007) reported notes on the Marshall's lora in Sri Lanka. We have listed district wise detail of observations recorded from 2014 till 2021 (Table 1). Maximum observations were recorded in Salem District. The present note is the first documented record of White-tailed lora in Tiruchirappalli District.

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