

Short note on the mating behavior of Red-wattled Lapwing from the Bhal region of Gujarat

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus* is a prominent bird of Asian agricultural lands, and they are medium-sized birds having compact bodies, short and thick necks, and long pointed wings. Red-wattled Lapwing is a carnivorous bird as it sustains a range of insects, snails, and other invertebrates mostly picked from agricultural areas. Hence Red-wattled Lapwing is referred to as a biocontrol agent in controlling insects (Ali & Ripley 1998).

Various aspect of Red-wattled Lapwing has been studied in a different parts of India (Kumar et al. 2020), however breeding behaviour has been observed mostly in the agricultural areas and the breeding season of Lapwing has been considered from April to July (Kumar et al. 2020). Here we report mating activity of Red-wattled Lapwing from the Bhal region, which was observed on the evening of 8 February 2022, nearby Kotda Village (21.9700 N, 72.1419 E) Bhavnagar District of Gujarat, near the coast of the Gulf of Cambay. The surrounding area was open



Mating pair of Red-wattled Lapwing. © Shailesh Desai.

but had sparse to moderate *Prosopis juliflora* cover as well as few types of grass species. However, this pair was located nearby a small house.

While interviewing the local people about our ongoing survey of the Indian Grey Wolf *Canis lupus pallipes* conservation Program (IWCP), we suddenly heard the call from Lapwing (first mount), and we found a pair of lapwings in a nearby house in a small plot of *Prosopis juliflora*. After 1–2 minute, they mounted again (second mount) and made the same voice,

which was heard in the first attempt, then we paid much attention to third mounting and we also capture in Canon SX70 camera. In between the mounting, they were walking with each other in the same plot and remained indulged in playing with small sticks, and each mount occurred with a gap of 1–2 minutes and each mount continued for less than two to three-second. However, we are not certain if another mounting has occurred before or after our observation. To our knowledge this might be the first behavioural mating note on Red-wattled Lapwing,

hence we are not sure, how many times this mount occurred. However, the breeding period of Lapwing has been considered as April to July (Kumar et al. 2020), whereas we have observed the mating in early February, this could be the difference in habitat or latitudinal and longitudinal or whether or climate change-related variation (Hällfors et al. 2020).

Red-wattled Lapwing is an important bird to the agroecosystem and has been classified as 'Least Concern' by the IUCN Red List. It faces threats from a change in traditional farming, trampling by grazing animals, and dogs (Sethi et al. 2011). Our observation contradicts previous observations of the mating period, which might be due to variation in habitat and environment; however, we recommend further behavioural studies in different areas.

References

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