

Observations of the nest of Yellow-wattled Lapwing from the Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka

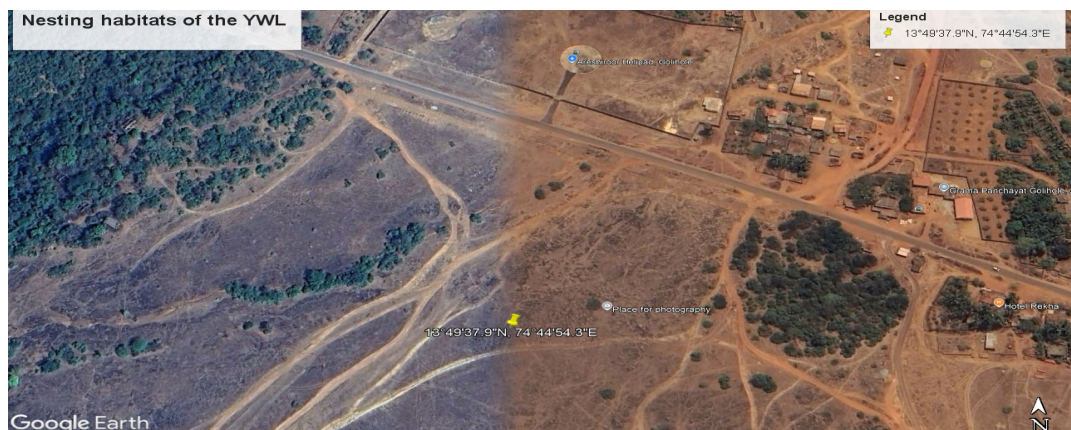
The Yellow-wattled Lapwing (YWL) *Vanellus malabaricus* (Boddaert, 1783) is a medium-sized bird that belongs to the Charadriidae family within the Charadriiformes order and is native to the Indian Subcontinent, where it is commonly found throughout the area. This bird is distinguished by its black crown, bordered by a narrow white band separating it from the brown of the neck, and notable large yellow wattles on its face (Grimmett et al. 2011). YWL typically inhabits arid environments within open lowland areas. In this study, we observed the nests with YWL eggs from the Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka.

A faunal survey was carried out by the Western Ghat Regional Centre of the Zoological Survey of India in Kozhikode at the Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka, India. On 17 June 2022, at 1310 h, during the survey we observed nests with eggs of the YWL in an open lowland area of Areshiroor, located near the Areshiroor Helipad (13.8272°N, 74.7484°E). We recorded three nests containing 4, 4, and 3 eggs. The lengths

and breadths of the eggs ranged 35.1–37.9 mm and 26.07–28.7 mm ($n = 11$); the sizes of the three nests were recorded as 156 mm, 135 mm, and 142 mm (Table 1). The materials used in the construction of the nests included dry cow dung, pellets from the Indian Hare *Lepus nigricollis*, small stones, and dry grass/sticks. House Crows *Corvus splendens* were observed being chased away by the YWL parents close to their nesting areas. All eggs were handled carefully with gloved hands, and the dimensions were measured using Mitutoyo digital calipers accurate to 0.01 mm. To minimize disturbance to the nests and their parents, a maximum of 30 seconds was spent at each nest for the measurement process.

The nesting habits of the YWL have been studied in detail throughout India in states such as Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal (Sethi et al. 2010; Jaykar & Spurway 1965; Dhindsa 1983; Gupta & Kaushik 2010; Islam & Rahmani 2004; Mukherjee et

Google Earth map showing the nesting habitat of (open lowland area) of the Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* in Areshiroor, Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka.



Measurements of nest and eggs of the Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* from Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka.

Nest 1 (156 mm) Eggs (n = 4)		Nest 2 (135 mm) Eggs (n = 4)		Nest 3 (142 mm) Eggs (n = 3)	
Length	Breadth	Length	Breadth	Length	Breadth
35.8	27	35.48	27.2	36.5	26.7
35.27	26.782	37.9	26.07	35.8	26.3
35.16	28.7	36.3	26.4	35.9	26.8
35.1	27.7	36.9	27.1		



The nest, eggs and habitat of Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* in Areshiroor, Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka: a—Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* | b—the nesting habitat in an open lowland area | c—nest #1 | d—nest #2 | e—nest #3 | f—the incubation of the eggs by a parent | g—discarded alcohol bottles | h—cattle grazing near the nesting sites. © M. Kamalakannan.

al. 2014). These lapwings reproduce during the dry season, with peak breeding occurring from March to June, before the onset of the monsoon season (Jaykar & Spurway 1965). The parent was also observed incubating the eggs in the nest.

The current study aligns with these previous findings. It's interesting to note that every nest was built close to dry cow dung, possibly to keep cattle from disturbing the nest while they were grazing nearby and to keep other predators away. Discarded alcohol bottles, plastic debris, grazing cattle, and stray dogs were seen in proximity to the YWL nesting area, all of which may disrupt the nests and eggs. This species is listed under Schedule II of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 2022. Consequently, it is suggested that forest officials carry out regular patrols within the habitat to protect their nests from the aforementioned dangers, especially during breeding seasons of YWL.

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