

RECORD OF *PACHYLOCERUS CRASSICORNIS* (OLIVIER) (COLEOPTERA: CERAMBYCIDAE) FROM MAHARASHTRA

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web supplement

Sen *et al.* (2005) recently reported presence of an interesting longicorn beetle, namely *Pachylocerus corallinus* Hope, belonging to the tribe Pyrestini (Cerambycidae: Cerambycinae) from Goa. Members of this longicorn beetle tribe are exclusively oriental and are characterized by red colouration.

While studying the beetle collection at Shri Chhatrapati College, Junnar, we identified another congeneric species, *Pachylocerus crassicornis* (Olivier), collected in Phaltan (near Nimbkar Agricultural Research Institute's farm, Satara district, Maharashtra; coll. U. Hiremath, date of collection August 1998, host plant unknown). Both these species are illustrated here (Image 1^w) and brief comments on differences between the two species are presented. The present species was identified on the basis of keys given by Gahan (1906). This may form the first record of this species from Maharashtra. Distribution records of Cerambycidae are poor largely due to problems in identifying these beetles.

P. crassicornis, female: length - 24mm; prothorax length - 5mm; prothorax breadth - 6mm; breadth at humerus - 7mm; elytra length - 16.5mm.

The present species resembles *P. corallinus* in most characters but the latter is somewhat smaller. The overall body colour is bright red with a pattern of black blotches, both on prothorax as well as elytra. Ventrally it is entirely black. All the body is covered with fine gray pubescence. Another difference from *P. corallinus* is that the setae on the distal part of 2nd, 3rd and 4th antennomeres are relatively longer and stronger. Further, the legs in *P. crassicornis* are much darker and ventrally the femora are more blackish in the distal half.

The species *P. crassicornis* is known from southern India and Chota Nagpur as per Gahan (1906), but we have not come across any subsequent reports in literature. We hope that after publication of photographs (Image 1^w) of these two species of *Pachylocerus*, other naturalists may be able to identify this beetle and report its presence elsewhere.

Cerambycidae exhibit considerable size variation. Gahan (1906) gave size variation for *P. crassicornis* to be 17 to 25mm. Our

^w see Image 1 in the web supplement at www.zoosprint.org

specimen is 24mm.

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NOTE

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BIRDS OF THE GORGES OF VINDHYAS IN RAJASTHAN STATE

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Two main mountain ranges namely, the Aravallis and the Vindhya are confined to the state of Rajasthan. The Vindhya range is situated towards the south-eastern part of the state. It is mainly confined to Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Kota, Bundi, Sawai Madhopur, Karauli, Bharatpur and Dholpur districts of Rajasthan. The Vindhyan scrapland having an average elevation of 350-580m covers the area between Banas and Chambal rivers (Shetty & Singh, 1987). Presence of gorges is a phenomenon of the Vindhya range. These gorges having rocky vertical banks are popularly known as *Nal* in local dialect. Generally they have waterfalls at places, which are picturesque during the monsoon period, but during summers most of them are dry. These gorges are part of characteristic drainage system of the Vindhya. In the Aravallis, such gorges are absent and streams have flatish banks. The Chambal, Kali Sindh and Parwan are main perennial gorge rivers of the Vindhyan zone, while Menali, Mej, Berach, and Bharak are main seasonal gorge rivers of this zone.

The Vindhya consist of flat-topped hills. It presents uniform view of ridge line when seen from a distance. Like Aravallis, it does not show peaks and saddles towards the ridgeline. Unlike Aravallis, it consists of reddish sheet rocks. Due to poor fragmentation in sheet rocks, percolation of rainwater is poor in the Vindhya and the terrain is prone to heavy run-off. The soil layer is thin or absent on slopes and top of the Vindhyan

Table 1. List of common birds seen in the gorges of Vindhya range

S.No.	Species observed	Name of gorge where observed						
		Menal	Sitamata	Kekadiya	Chenpuriyaa	Tehla	Chambal	Kalikhole
1.	Painted Spurfowl (<i>Galloperdix lunulata</i>)						+	
2.	Indian Peafowl (<i>Pavo cristatus</i>)			+				
3.	Black-rumped flameback (<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>)	+					+	
4.	Coppersmith Barbet (<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>)	+					+	
5.	Indian Grey Hornbill (<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>)	+					+	
6.	Indian Roller (<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>)			+	+			
7.	White-throated Kingfisher (<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>)	+	+	+	+		+	
8.	Green Bee-eater (<i>Merops orientalis</i>)	+		+			+	
9.	Rose-ringed Parakeet (<i>Psittacula krameri</i>)	+	+	+	+		+	+
10.	Plum-headed Parakeet (<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>)	+	+	+	+		+	
11.	Eurasian Eagle Owl (<i>Bubo bubo</i>)	+	+	+	+		+	
12.	Rock Pigeon (<i>Columba livia</i>)	+	+	+	+		+	+
13.	Laughing Dove (<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>)			+	+	+	+	
14.	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon (<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>)	+	+				+	
15.	Green Sandpiper (<i>Tringa ochropus</i>)	+	+				+	
16.	Red-wattled Lapwing (<i>Vanellus indicus</i>)	+		+	+		+	
17.	River Tern (<i>Sterna aurantia</i>)						+	
18.	Egyptian Vulture (<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>)			+			+	
19.	White-rumped Vulture (<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>)	+					+	
20.	Long-billed Vulture (<i>Gyps indicus</i>)		+	+			+	
21.	Crested Serpent Eagle (<i>Spilornis cheela</i>)	+		+			+	
22.	Shikra (<i>Accipiter badius</i>)	+		+			+	
23.	Oriental Honey-buzzard (<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>)	+					+	
24.	Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>)	+					+	
25.	Little Egret (<i>Egretta garzetta</i>)	+		+	+		+	
26.	Intermediat Egret (<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>)	+					+	
27.	Cattle Egret (<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>)	+		+			+	
28.	Indian Pond Heron (<i>Ardeola grayii</i>)	+		+	+		+	
29.	Little Heron (<i>Butorides striatus</i>)	+	+	+			+	
29.	Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>)						+	
30.	Darter (<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>)						+	
31.	Little Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>)						+	
32.	Woolly-necked Stork (<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>)						+	
33.	Black Stork (<i>Ciconia nigra</i>)*						+	
34.	Indian Pitta (<i>Pitta brachyura</i>)	+						
35.	Rufous Treepie (<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>)	+	+	+	+			
36.	House Crow (<i>Corvus splendens</i>)			+	+			
37.	Small Minivet (<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>)	+						
38.	White-browed Fantail (<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>)	+		+				
39.	Black Drongo (<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>)	+	+	+	+	+	+	
40.	White-bellied Drongo (<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>)	+	+	+			+	
41.	Common Iora (<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>)	+	+				+	
42.	Red-throated Flycatcher (<i>Ficedula parva</i>)	+	+	+	+	+	+	
43.	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>)	+					+	
44.	Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher (<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>)	+					+	
45.	Blue Rock Thrush (<i>Monticola solitarius</i>)	+						
46.	Brown Rock-chat (<i>Cercomela fusca</i>)	+		+	+	+	+	
47.	Common Myna (<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>)	+		+				
48.	Great Tit (<i>Parus major</i>)	+	+				+	
49.	Dusky Crag Martin (<i>Hirundo concolor</i>)	+		+	+	+	+	
50.	Red-rumped Swallow (<i>Hirundo daurica</i>)	+		+	+	+	+	
51.	Wire-tailed Swallow (<i>Hirundo smithii</i>)				+		+	
52.	Barn Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)						+	
53.	Streak-throated Swallow (<i>Hirundo flavicola</i>)						+	
54.	Red-vented Bulbul (<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>)	+		+	+	+	+	+
55.	Oriental White-eye (<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>)	+	+				+	
56.	Large Grey Babbler (<i>Turdoides malcomi</i>)			+	+			
57.	Jungle Babbler (<i>Turdoides striatus</i>)	+						
58.	Purple Sunbird (<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>)	+					+	
59.	Yellow Wagtail (<i>Motacilla flava</i>)	+					+	
60.	Citrine Wagtail (<i>Motacilla citreola</i>)	+	+	+			+	
Total species present		44	17	30	20	7	43	3

+ - Non-breeding; + - Breeding

* Two birds were seen on upper most edge of one of the banks of Chambal river near Gardiya Mahadeo on Jan. 22, 2000.

Table 2. Some ecological characteristics of the gorges of Vindhya range

Name of gorge	District	Remark
1. Menal	Chittorgarh	A "closed area" of Department of Forest. Seasonal stream and waterfall is present there. It is a part of Menali river. Bank and bed have good vegetation cover.
2. Sitamata (Near Sitamata Temple in Sitamata WS)	Chittorgarh	Seasonal stream. High banks, covered with <i>Ficus spp.</i> Bed rocky and bouldery. Few spots have surface water round the year.
3. Kekadiya	Bhilwara	Seasonal stream with high banks. Few spots have seepage and surface water round the year. Bank and bed have poor vegetation cover. <i>Chrysopogon fulvus</i> commonly grows on banks during rainy season.
4. Chenpuriya	Bhilwara	Seasonal stream with low banks. Few pits have water impounded round the year. Bank and bed have poor vegetation cover.
5. Tehla	Bhilwara	Seasonal stream. Few spots have water round the year. Banks have moderately fair vegetation cover.
6. Chambal River	Kota	Perennial river. Lower portion of both the banks are clad with good plant cover while upper part of the banks are poor in vegetation. Three sites, namely Bhitariya Kund, Gardiya Mahadeo and Gappar Nath were surveyed for listing the gorge birds.
7. Kalikhole	Bhilwara	Seasonal stream. Few spots have water round the year.

hills. Due to so many reasons the Vindhya are prone to dryness. Edaphic climax of *Anogeissus pendula* is seen on large parts of the area.

Very little is known about birds of the gorges of Vindhya in Rajasthan. Some information about Chambal river gorges is available in literature (Rahmani & Singh, 1996; Vyas, 2000). No information is available about birds of gorges of other Vindhyan districts of Rajasthan. To get a birds-eye view of avian fauna of the gorges of Vindhya, the following sites were studied for five years from 1999 to 2004 (Table 1).

Vertical banks of gorges have rock crevices, cliffs, overhangs, holes, caves and concaves, which prove useful to many bird species. Sometimes riparian vegetation occur in wet and moist gorges and even arboreal species can be seen there. Seasonal gorges have some pits where water is available round the year. These pit are locally called *darrah* or *dah*, which are not only used as water holes by the wild animals, but also provide food to many bird species (Table 2).

It is evident that Menal and Chambal river gorges are richer in avian diversity than other gorges. These places are less disturbed than others. Chambal is a perennial river and availability of water is better in Menal than the rest of the gorges. These differences are probably responsible for the bird richness.

Rock Bee (*Apis dorsata*) hives are commonly seen in gorges. Many insectivorous birds, including Green Bee-eater are seen in the gorges. Mud nests of Dusky Crag Martin and Red-rumped Swallows are seen under sheltered overhangs of rocks. Nests of Red-rumped Swallows can be seen up to 1.5m deep on ceilings of the caves.

Presence of Long-billed Vultures was concluded by observing white marks of droppings near their roost and nest sites. Long-billed Vultures prefer wide gorges as well as abrupt vertical rise in hills for roosting and nesting. In narrow gorges, smooth flight movements are not possible. When a narrow gorge is

patronized, area near the upper edge of the bank is selected for nesting and roosting. While studying in Chambal area, it was noticed that chicks of Long-billed Vulture while present on cliff nest, generally keep their heads towards hill sides. Some birds like *Bubo bubo*, *Neophron percnopterus*, *Gyps indicus*, *Cercomela fusca*, *Hirundo spp.*, and *Monticola solitarius* can be termed as true gorge birds which are generally seen in most of the gorges. Many birds like Ashy Crown Sparrow Lark (*Eremopterix grisea*) and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus*) can be seen out of gorges in flattish-barren and bouldar zone in the Vindhya.

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