

Solitary vagrants of this migrant are recorded from West Pakistan, Makran Coast, Khalat, Sind, Madhya Pradesh, and Bombay. In the Society's collections there are in all 15 specimens (10 ♂♂ and 5 ♀♀) of which only one has been taken in India. This is the one collected by Dr. Sálím Ali at Kihim, Kolaba District, Bombay on November 14, 1930, and reported in Vol. 34: 1061 of the *Journal*. The rest come from the Middle East. The above two skins, now preserved in the bird collections of the Society, bring the total of specimens of this rare migrant collected on Indian soil to three.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,

91, WALKESHWAR ROAD,

BOMBAY 6,

April 12, 1960.

P. B. SHEKAR,

Field Collector.

[Another species added by the migration study field work to the Kutch list is the Whitefronted Finch-Lark, *Eremopterix nigriceps affinis* (Blyth). Two examples of this were taken in the nets, a third collected and preserved, and several others observed. On Kuar Bet this lark seemed to replace the commoner blackbellied species (e.g. *grisea*) of the less desert portions of Kutch.—EDS.]

12 CAN SNAKES PRODUCE VOCAL SOUNDS?

In the *Journal* (55: 578) I referred to vocal noises made by the Dhaman (*Ptyas mucosus*). Yesterday morning while shooting grey quail not far from Bombay we put up a large Dhaman in a dry paddy field.

As it rapidly glided away I had to tread on its tail and touch it with my gun barrels several times before it stopped and turned to attack. Till then we were mostly on and along a 3-foot high bund which perhaps prevented the snake from raising itself high enough to strike. When at bay several inches of neck and body behind the head were noticeably dilated and the snake uttered a very audible *aonh* which at a few feet sounded like a low growl. Others in the party who were 12 to 15 yards away also heard the noise, but Mr. Krishna Talcherkar told me afterwards that it sounded mournful to him.

The snake was captured without any physical injury having been inflicted upon it and there can now be little doubt that this species when angry (?) can emit a noise.

Clifford H. Pope in THE REPTILE WORLD (1957): 138 writes: 'Many snakes produce an alarming effect as in the cobra by inflating as well

as flattening the body. Hissing is usually combined with these processes. The bull snakes (*Pituophis*) of North America blow air against a fleshy flap that rises just in front of the windpipe and thus make a surprisingly loud sound.'

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
91, WALKESHWAR ROAD,
BOMBAY 6,
December 7, 1959.

HUMAYUN ABDULALI

13. DISTRIBUTION OF THE SKINK, *RIOPA LINEATA* (GRAY)

I recently received from Prof. R. V. Seshaiya, Director, Marine Biological Station, Porto Novo, south India, three specimens of the Fourtoed Skink, *Riopa lineata* (Gray), obtained at Annamalai Nagar, Chidambaram District, Madras State, during 1955 when phenomenal rains inundated the University buildings.

This species appears to have been recorded only from the Bombay State between Poona and North Kanara (Smith, FAUNA, 1935), but in the Society's collection there are also some specimens obtained on Salsette Island, Bombay. The Zoological Survey of India inform me that they have specimen (?) from Madhya Pradesh.

Anyhow the above specimens appear to extend the known range of this species very considerably.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION,
PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM,
BOMBAY 1,
November 1, 1959.

V. K. CHARI,
Curator.

14. A NOTE ON THE AMPHIBIANS OF KUTCH

All that is known of the meagre amphibian fauna of Kutch is from specimens in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society and from the records given in FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA, by Boulenger (1890), VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY OF SIND, by J. A. Murray (1884), and C. McCann's list of amphibians of Kutch (1939, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 40:425-427).



Abdulali, Humayun. 1960. "Can Snakes Produce Vocal Sounds?" *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 57, 225–226.

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