

In correspondence with the Moscow Ringing Centre, we came to know that this bird was ringed as a pullet on 23.vii.1989 at Lake Barun-Torey of Russia, Chita O (50° 05' N, 115° 40' E. The bird had travelled 4,917 km and was found dead after 3,115 days (about eight and a half years) in Kutch.

Earlier, Dr. Taej Mundkur had collected a demoiselle crane with a ring at Nyrari Reservoir in Rajkot, Gujarat on February 10, 1992, which had been ringed on 11.vii.1990 near Barun-Torey Lake in Russia (Mundkur 1992).

We thank the Moscow Ringing Centre for providing us with the relevant details.

December 28, 2002

S.N. VARU
Junavas, Temple Street,
Madhapar, Tal. Bhuj,
Dist. Kutch 370 020, Gujarat, India.

M.H. TRIVEDI
Range Forest Officer, Anjar,
Tal. Anjar, Dist. Kutch,
Gujarat, India.

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5. FIRST RECORD OF LESSER FLORICAN *SYPHEOTIDES INDICA* (MILLER) FROM KEOLADEO NATIONAL PARK, BHARATPUR, RAJASTHAN

A male lesser florican, *Sypheotides indica* in breeding plumage was sighted in the grassland of Keoladeo National Park (27° 7.6' to 27° 12.2' N and 77° 29.5' to 77° 33.2' E), Rajasthan, India, at around 0830 hrs on June 19, 2000.

The bird was identified by its black and white plumage, with a tuft of narrow ribbon-like black feathers behind the head, three on either side. It was sighted in the grassland of Block-G (locally called Koladehar), dominated by two grass species, namely *Vetiveria zizanioides* and *Desmostachya bipinnata*. Koladehar is the major grassland habitat spread over c. 3 sq. km in the southeast part of the Park. The grass was green, with an average height of 50 cm. We saw the bird for about half an hour without binoculars, as it was just 15 m away. It could not be located again in the same area during the next two days of intensive search.

The lesser florican breeds during the southwest monsoon, which begins by the end of June or early July in western Gujarat, eastern Rajasthan, western Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh (Sankaran and Manakadan 1990, Sankaran *et al.* 1992). This is the time when the males return

to the breeding grounds. They are known to move from the breeding grounds immediately after nesting, into peninsular India (Ali and Ripley 1983). The dispersal areas are still not known. The bird sighted in the Park could be in transit to the breeding ground and was probably using Keoladeo National Park as a staging ground. The nearest known breeding grounds of the species are more than 300 km southwest of the Park (in Tonk, Ajmer, Bhilwara and Pali districts of Rajasthan). There have been sightings of breeding males in transit towards western India during June, July and August from Karera Bustard Sanctuary in northern Madhya Pradesh where they did not display, and breeding has not yet been recorded from the region (Sankaran *et al.* 1992).

The lesser florican is among the smallest bustards of the world and is endemic to India. Once ranging from Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in central India to Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu in the south (Ali and Ripley 1995), it is now restricted to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. In recent years, the bird has become very rare (Sankaran *et al.* 1992).

As the lesser florican is highly endangered, every sighting is important, and information on dispersal and distribution must be recorded to help in their conservation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the Rajasthan Forest Department for permission to work in the Park, especially Ms Shruti Sharma, Director, Keoladeo National Park, for facilities. We thank

Mr. J.C. Daniel, Honorary Secretary, Dr. A.R. Rahmani, Director, and Dr. Vibhu Prakash, Principal Scientist, BNHS for encouragement and critical assessment of the manuscript.

November 7, 2001

*ASHOK VERMA
BRIJENDRA SINGH

Bombay Natural History Society,
331, Rajendra Nagar,
Bharatpur 321 001, Rajasthan, India.
*Email: vermaasok@rediffmail.com

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6. ON THE LONGEVITY OF THE GREAT PIED HORNBILL *BUCEROS BICORNIS* IN CAPTIVITY

Two young female specimens of the great pied hornbill, *Buceros bicornis* Linn., were received at Nandankanan Zoological Park, Bhubaneswar, Orissa on June 26, 1967 through an animal dealer based in Calcutta (=Kolkata). They lived for 32 years, 4 months and 4 days in captivity, and died at an estimated age of 33 years. Both the birds were found dead during the super-cyclone that hit coastal Orissa on October 29-30, 1999.

These hornbills were always displayed in a spacious enclosure encompassing one or more trees, and with provision to protect them from extreme weather conditions. They were fed with goat's meat and liver, banana and boiled rice. Multivitamin supplements were added to the diet intermittently.

The great pied hornbill is uncommon in captivity. It rarely breeds under captive conditions. Sálím Ali (1996) in the BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS, BNHS/OUP, mentions that the age to which a bird is capable of living varies according to the species, its

environment and the particular conditions under which it lives. Perusal of the literature did not reveal any information on the longevity of this species in captivity. The longevity of 32 years, 4 months and 4 days recorded in this Park appears to be the longest so far reported for this species in captivity, though the death was due to unnatural causes.

November 12, 2001

L.N. ACHARJYO
House No. M-71,

Housing Board Colony, Baramunda,
Bhubaneswar 751 003, Orissa, India.

VINOD KUMAR

Nandankanan Zoological Park,
Mayur Bhawan, Janpath, Saheed Nagar,
Bhubaneswar 751 007, Orissa, India.

S.K. PATNAIK

7, Saheed Nagar,
Bhubaneswar 751 007, Orissa, India.



Verma, Ashok and Singh, Brijendra. 2003. "First Record of Lesser Florican *Sypheotides Indica* (Miller) from Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, Rajasthan." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 100, 625–626.

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