

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Unusual sighting of Yellow- wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus malabaricus*) in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

The present study concerns the survey of Yellow-wattled Lapwing in Lucknow district. It is a wader and its habitats preferences includes any sort of open ground, dry fields and the largest concentrations are found in and near wetlands. It is medium-sized pale brown waders with a black crown which is separated from the brown on the neck by a narrow white band and large yellow facial wattles. It is obligate visual forager, meaning catch its prey at the substrate boundary layers, by picking small invertebrates from the surface or from low vegetation cover. Yellow-wattled Lapwing plays a prominent role in ecosystems. The Yellow-wattled Lapwing contributes to maintaining ecosystem food chain because they regulate and maintain the populations of many invertebrates (Pests) which are harmful for agricultural crops. Yellow-wattled Lapwing is a good example of territorial and social behaviour. The present survey was carried out at winter and summer season during February 2014- March 2015.

Keywords: Ecosystem, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Social behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Yellow- wattled Lapwing is prominent and unique wader with a black crown, white supercilium, large yellow facial wattles and tail is white, tipped black belong to family Charadriidae and order Charadriiformes. The long legs are yellow in colour. The breeding season is March-May to the lead of the monsoon. Its habitats preferences include any sort of open ground, dry fields and the largest concentrations are found in and near wetlands fringes (Kumar, 2015). They make short distance movement in

response to rain. It is obligate visual forager, meaning catch its prey at the substrate boundary layers, by picking small invertebrates from the surface or from low vegetation cover. Yellow-wattled Lapwing plays a prominent role in ecosystems. The Yellow-wattled Lapwing contributes to maintaining ecosystem food chain because they regulate and maintain the populations of many invertebrates (Pests) which are harmful for agricultural crops. Yellow-wattled Lapwing is a good example of territorial and social behaviour. There appears to be slightly decreases in its status over the past few decades and is considered as least concerned bird. Only few works have done by several workers on Yellow-wattled lapwing (Jayakar and Spurway, 1965; 1968; Dhindsa, 1983; Gupta and Kaushik, 2010; Santharam, 1980; Sethi et al., 2010). Though, no one has studied Yellow-wattled Lapwing so far in Lucknow in context of status, ecology and threats, hence the present study was primarily effort.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Geographic coordinates of Lucknow is 26.8470° N and 80.9470° E. The study area involves Lucknow and its associated areas (up to 100 km). The capital of Uttar Pradesh is situated 123 meter above sea level. In summer

temperature ranges from 25-45°C while in winter from 2-20 °C, the average annual rainfall is about 896.2 mm (35.28 inch). Lucknow covers an area of 2528 sq.km.

Ecological survey of Yellow-wattled Lapwing was carried out at a fixed time- interval from February 2014- March 2015. Species was observed and monitored twice in a day in the morning and evening hours. Observations and monitoring were done with the aid of an Olympus 10x50 binocular and photography was done with 60 D SLR Cannon camera.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The yellow-wattled lapwing (*Vanellus malabaricus*) is a lapwing and a group of largish waders in the family Charadriidae that is endemic to the Indian Subcontinent. Dr. Amita Kanaujia along with research scholar Mr. Adesh Kumar had gone to wetlands survey and bird watching on 2nd February 2014 at Magaiyapurva Jheel, Gosaiganj (N 26°38.707' and E 081°03.237') in district Lucknow of Uttar Pradesh. They saw a flock of medium size birds looking rather common Myna or others waders but with long yellow legs and brown colour (Fig. 1 & 2). For few moments they show like little ringed plover but size was larger than plover. On comparison



Fig 1: Yellow- wattled Lapwing in resting and in flight



Fig 2: A flock of Yellow- wattled Lapwing

with colour plates in the Pictorial Guide of Ali & Ripley (1995), Grimmett *et al.*, (2011), Ali (2002) identified the waders as Yellow- wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus malabaricus*). Total 31 lapwings were sighted here. However Yellow- wattled Lapwing was not sighted before at this site. Thereafter a follow up was kept every year at the Magaiyapurva Jheel, Gosaiganj in winter and sighted 46 lapwings. Kumar (2015) observed nesting biology of Yellow- wattled Lapwing in agricultural environment of Punjab.

On 17th January 2015, the authors visited a wetland near Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science (SGPGI, N 26°44'24.6" and E 080°57'16.2") and Behda pond in Nagar Chaungwa, Mahona (N 27°05.700' and E 080°53.980') in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. Again authors visited Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI) and Behda pond on 2nd February 2015 and 17th March 2105. Then we visited the backside of the Deen Dayal Upadhayaya Park (SGPGI) and we were delighted to see a flock of around 25-35 Yellow- wattled Lapwing and 22-40 from Behda pond. Although Yellow- wattled Lapwing seen in past but very little in number but these study sites number were quite much. A study on threats to nests of Yellow- wattled Lapwing in Kurukshetra has performed by Gupta and Kaushik (2012). A.S.F.L Lok and Subaraj

(2009) studied the status of Lapwings in Singapore.

CONCLUSION

The gathering of large number of Yellow-wattled Lapwings at above study sites in Lucknow for feeding, resting and roosting is due to the abundance of food such as macrophytes, macrobenthic organisms and insects. Accessibility to food resources and availability of exposed mudflats and shorelines of wetlands provides an ideal location feeding and roosting. Still, no one has studied Yellow-wattled Lapwing so far in Lucknow in context of status, ecology and threats; hence the present study was primarily effort. Preliminary study performed in the discussed area would reveal a baseline data which is important for further research and conservation.

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