

Colour aberrant Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* in Kachchh

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[We sent the photo of the aberrant plumaged Indian Cormorant to Hein van Grouw, who stated that 'This aberration results in a plumage without melanin to start with but gradually, over the years, the melanin comes back! It often returns first in the skin (bill and feet) whilst the plumage is still mainly without. The Cormorant appears to be that mutation as its bill and feet are almost fully melanised whilst in the plumage, only a few minor spots are present (because of the coloured skin, it cannot be Leucism, and is not likely to be Progressive Greying either). The 'pinkish' colour is, in my opinion, not pigment but external staining. There is not yet a proper name for mutations in which melanin returns (it is, in fact, the opposite of Progressive Greying). I am still doing research on this type of colour aberration. It would be good if the Cormorant, if still present (and stays present) in the same place, could be observed for a longer period (including several moult cycles) to see whether it will gain more melanin pigment'.

Hence, the author is requested to follow up with the sighting and keep visiting the area to check if this colour aberrant cormorant is still present. If present, then it should be regularly photographed to see if there is any change in its plumage over a several moult cycles and to report back the details to us.

We are very grateful to Hein van Grouw for helping us identify the correct colour mutation in this cormorant – Eds]

References

Joshi, K., & Trivedi, D., 2018. Colour aberrant Great Cormorants in Bhavnagar. *Flamingo* 16 (2): 22

Vaghshiya, P., 2016. Sighting of aberrant coloured Little Cormorant near Junagadh. *Flamingo* 14 (2): 17 □

On 12 August 2020, I was birding near Nilpar Village, near Rapar, in Kachchh. It was evening and I saw a white bird from a distance. I approached near to it and saw that it was a 'white' cormorant, perched besides a normal plumaged bird. I identified it as an Indian Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*) based on the size, bill shape, and other features. Since it was perched besides a normal plumaged bird, the identification was easy. The cormorant was entirely white, except for a few blackish feathers on the mantle and a blackish spot on the ear-coverts. I could not identify the correct mutation in this aberrant plumaged cormorant. There have been recent reports of colour aberrant cormorants from Gujarat (Vaghshiya 2016, Joshi & Trivedi 2018) but this is the first time I had seen such a bird here.

Bill grappling, clashing and courtship behaviour of Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* at Manipur Lake, Ahmedabad

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A habitat without biodiversity sounds impossible. Human habitats or urbanization is a major alter in biodiversity due to strong, permanent, and self-centred human efforts (McKinney 2006, Fontana *et al.* 2011). Urban ecosystems can be of high value for a wide variety of organisms, especially avifauna, and the example Indian Grey Hornbill (*Ocyrceros birostris*) can be given. It is the only hornbill species that can be seen and successfully breeds in an urban area also (Kasambe *et al.* 2011).

The Indian Grey Hornbill is widely distributed across India (Grimmett *et al.* 2011) but being sensitive to habitat alteration, it is heading towards local extinction in some areas (Trivedi & Soni 2016). It is a silvery-grey and white bird with a long-graduated tail; its bill is a blackish or greyish with a casque, which is seen in the *Bucerotidae* family, extending up to the point of the inflexion in the bill. They are mostly found in open forest and wooded areas with fruiting trees. Some species of