



Colour aberrant Black-breasted Weaver *Ploceus benghalensis* near Kheda

On 15 August 2020, we were birding in the outskirts of Kheda, which is very rich in avifauna. It is around 40 km from Ahmedabad. Early in the morning, we were looking for Red Munia (*Amandava amandava*) in the reeds, and so we were checking the whole patch of reeds. The second author saw a white bird perched in the lush green background and we identified it as a weaver species (*Ploceus* sp.). It was difficult but we managed to take a good photo of this colour aberrant weaver. This individual had normal coloured wings and some feathers on the mantle were blackish. The crown showed a few yellow feathers. But other than this, the entire plumage was white. The bill and legs were normal coloured. We identified it as a Black-breasted Weaver (*Ploceus benghalensis*) based on the large greyish bill and referring to van Grouw (2013), we thought that the mutation was likely to be 'progressive greying' but we were not sure. This was an unusual sighting of a colour aberrant Black-breasted Weaver from Gujarat. [The photo was referred to Hein van Grouw, who confirmed the colour mutation in this Black-breasted Weaver as 'progressive greying'. We are thankful to Hein Van Grouw for his help in the identification of the exact colour mutation –Eds]

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Colour aberrant Brahminy Starling *Sturnia pagodarum* near Mandvi, Surat

On 14 January 2020, I was bird watching with my friends Jayant Bhojwala (from Mandvi) and Rajesh Jadav (from Surat). Since it was a holiday, we had planned on birding for the whole day. Early in the morning, after picking up Jayant, we proceeded towards the forest area. As we were approaching a water body after taking a detour from a small village, I spotted three birds flying into a tree. From the flight, I could immediately guess that they were starlings but was confused as one of the birds was creamier white. I stopped my car and we took some photos and saw the birds with binoculars. We could confirm that the three birds were Brahminy Starlings (*Sturnia pagodarum*). Cautiously, we approached nearer and were able to take good photos of the colour aberrant Brahminy Starling. It was interesting to note that the colour aberrant bird was enticing its partner for mating. They kept flying from the tree to the electric wires and back. This bird had whitish head and wings but the underparts were pale rufous.

[The mutation in this individual was identified as 'progressive greying' by Hein van Grouw. We are thankful to Hein van Grouw for helping with the identification of the colour mutation – Eds]

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