

First Glimpse of a Leucistic Jungle Myna from Odisha, India

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DESCRIPTION

First catch sight of leucistic *Aeridotheres fuscus* was made at the (19.9810244, 86.0186101) within farmland near to village area of Astarang, Puri, Odisha, India.

The jungle myna (*Acridotheres fuscus*) is a common member of the starling family [1]. It is found patchily distributed across much of the mainland of the Indian Subcontinent [2]. It is easily recognized by the tuft of feathers on its forehead that forms a frontal with pale brown body with black patches over the head and end portion of the tail and wings. The eyes are pale, yellow or blue and the base of the orange-yellow bill is dark with orange coloured legs [3].

Basically, depigmentation in birds are rare, it has been estimated that only 0.5% to 1.05% of all birds display any sign of albinism-partial/complete [4]. Factors affecting such aberrant coloration in birds include effect of habitat, age, sex but primarily it is genetic mutation [5]. The most significant pigments in the bird coloration are carotenoids (red and yellow) and melanin's (brown and black) [6]. Disturbances in the deposition of pigments produce chromatic aberrations [7] Leucism is a rare condition that results in the partial loss of pigmentation in an animal causing white, pale or patchy coloration of the feathers, while other body parts like legs, eyes and beak remain unchanged, or very little effected [8]. It is due to expression of mutant alleles [9] of loci that controls melanocytic life functions particularly the migration of melanoblasts from the neural crest in the embryo.

Observations

On 19th September 2020 morning, while birding randomly in Astarang (19.9810244, 86.0186101) Puri district, Odisha, we spotted a white bird among the flock of jungle myna perching there. Instantly photographs of the bird were taken with the help of Nikon d5300 (70-300mm lens) and activity was observed till its disappearance [10]. On the better surveillance it's identified as jungle myna having normal coloured legs, eye and yellow-

orange beak with dull white colour base. Unlike normal individual it has white plumage with some patchy beige coloured mark on side of wings and distal part of tail [11]. Absent of tufted crest above base of bill and small body, hence female one. From the above observations it has been cleared that the bird was a Leucistic female jungle myna [12,13].

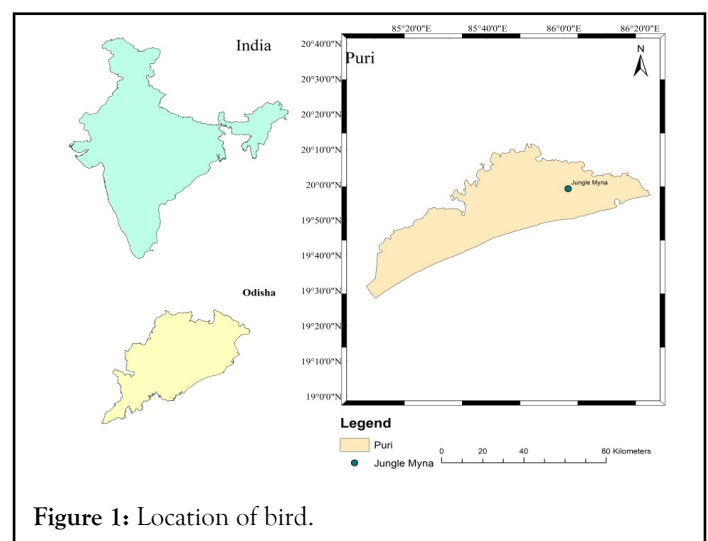


Figure 1: Location of bird.



Figure 2: Difference in individuals.

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Received: October 06, 2021; **Accepted:** October 20, 2021; **Published:** October 27, 2021

Citation: Samal A, Mishra P, Fullonton S (2021) First Glimpse of a Leucistic Jungle Myna from Odisha, India. Entomol Ornithol Herpetol. 10: 239.

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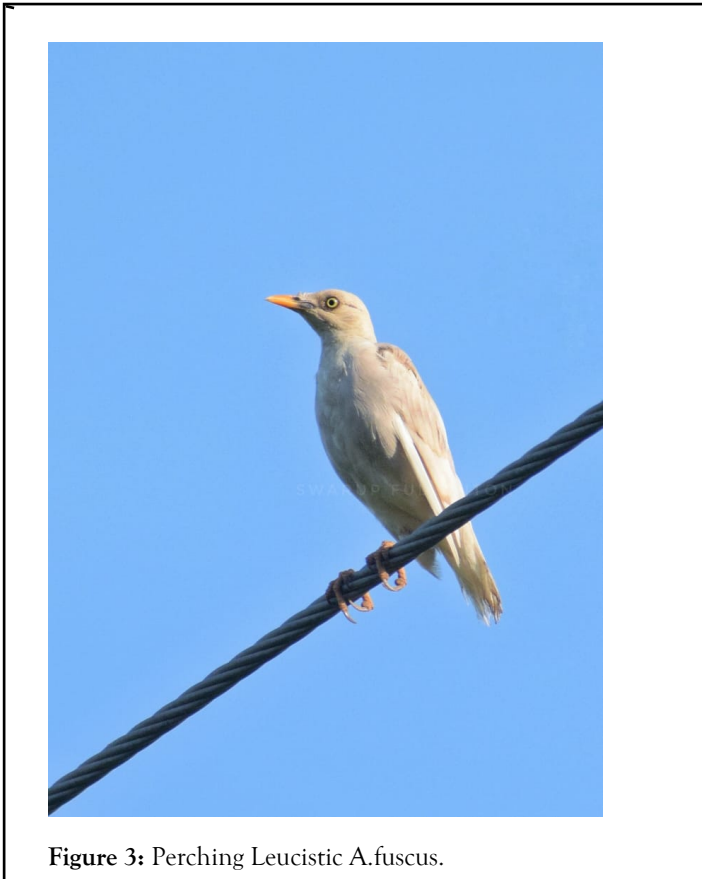


Figure 3: Perching Leucistic *A.fuscus*.

CONCLUSION

Detection of such organisms is difficult having short self-life as compared to other, more visible to predators and consequently more easily preyed upon and abstained by other of their kind. Moreover this is the first report from Odisha of Leucistic Jungle Myna (*Acridotheres fuscus*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank to Earth Crusaders Organization team for the support at field. We also thank Swarna Samal and Barnava Pattnaik for literature review and moral support.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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