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Sighting of Red-Breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* (Linnaeus, 1758) at Hyderabad, Telangana, Southern India

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ABSTRACT

A single individual species of Red-Breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* was sighted, later on continuously seen in between the 16th to 25th February 2013 at sorghum research farm, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad. We report the first sighting of this species from state of Telangana.

Key Words: *Psittacula alexandri*, Sorghum, Hyderabad and first report.

INTRODUCTION

Documentation of the avifauna in United-Andhra Pradesh (Telangana was part of Andhra Pradesh) has a long history beginning from 1839-1840 (Jerdon, 1839-40). After that several ornithological surveys was carried out (Ball, 1877, Whistler & Kinnear, 1930-37, Ali, 1933-34, Abdulali, 1945, Trevor Price, 1978, 1979, 1990, Krishna Raju & Justus, 1971, Krishna Raju & Trevor Price, 1973, Grubb, 1976, Krishna Raju, 1985, Hussian, 1989, 1991, Ripley, *et al.*, 1987-88, Majumdar, 1984, Srinivasulu, 2004, 2006 and Laxmi Narayana *et al.*, 2011, Laxmi Narayana *et al.*, 2013, Prasad *et al.*, 2014, Jalander *et al.*, 2015).

Red-Breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* is listed as near threatened (NT) species by IUCN (BirdLife International, 2013).

Distributed North India to Southeast Asia, partly extending to North Eastern India, along the foothills of Himalaya (Grimmett *et al.*, 1999b), and most commonly occur in Singapore (Neo, 2012). In general feral population known to occurred cities like Mumbai, Chennai, and Bangalore. Reports from Pauri district, Uttarakhand (Naithani & Bhatt, 2010), Tripura, north-eastern India (Choudhury, 2010), Raj Bhavan Kolkatta (Gosh, 2009), Andaman and Nicobar Island (Pande *et al.*, 2007), Khaziranga National Park, Assam (Barua & Sharma, 1999). On recently only two individuals reported from Vellayani, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala (John *et al.*, 2016). Apart from that there is no much scientific information available on this species. A checklist of Birds of United-Andhra Pradesh includes nearly 500 species Taher and Pittie (1989, 1996). Among which there was no

report of this species. Hence, we report the sighting of Red-Breasted Parakeet for the first time at Hyderabad, Telangana.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To estimate the bird population in the sorghum crop, we have applied point count method (Javed & Kaul, 2002) at every 200 m distance one point was taken and the bird species were recorded in the 20

m radius (Hostetler & Main, 2001 and Laxmi Narayana *et al.*, 2011) in a duration of 20 minutes. Fortunately we spotted Red-Breasted Parakeet on sorghum crop, bird species were identified using binoculars (7×50) and standard field guides (Ali, 2002, Ali & Ripley, 1987, Grimmett *et al.*, 1999). The bird surveys were carried after two hours of sunrise and before two hours of sunset.

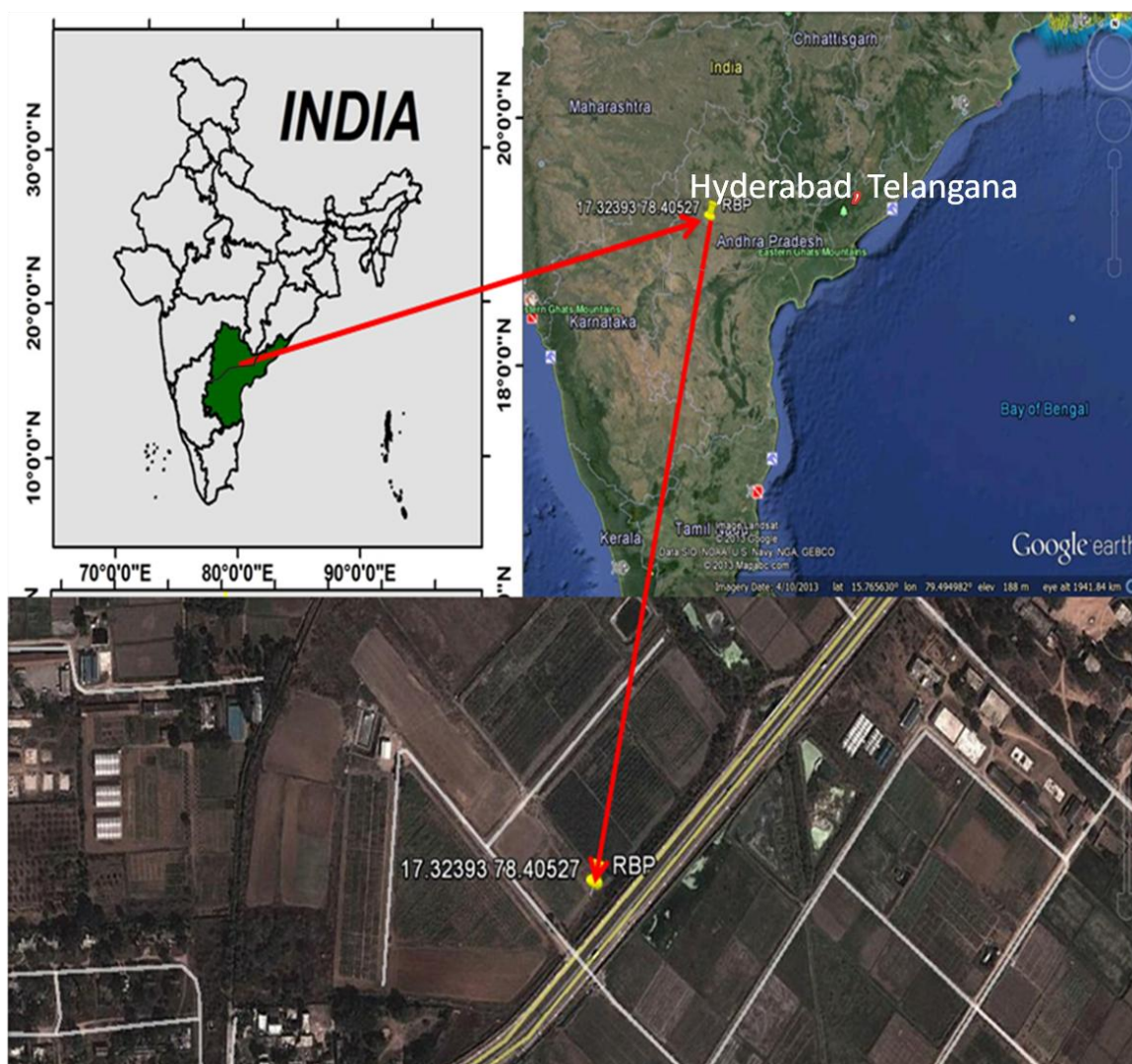


Fig1. Map showing record site of *Psittacula alexandri*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sighting of Red-Breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* in Directorate of Sorghum Research Field (N 17.32393 E 78.40527), Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Telangana (Figure 1). First sighting made on 16th February 2013 during the 06:59 hrs, and 17:25 hrs, the species activity observed was feeding on Sorghum crop along with Rose ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*). Observations made

continuously from 16th to 25th February 2013. The flock size of Rose ringed parakeet was more than fifteen individuals among which only one individual of Red-Breasted Parakeet was spotted, photographs (Fig. 2) and video was taken to document key observations for further reference. The species was identified as male; purplish-grey head with narrow black forehead running back to eyes, and broad black stripes from lower mandible to sides of head, bill largely red. Iris of male is straw-yellow to bright pale yellow, female whitish



Fig. 2. Record of *Psittacula alexandri* in different days at Hyderabad, Telangana (From 16th to 25th February 2013).

yellow. Upper mandible of male is coral-red; female is black and the lower mandible of both is brownish black. Throat and breast red; belly bluish green; vent and under tail-coverts yellowish green. Female head is tinged blue-green and less plum coloured bloom; breast redder and darker, bill largely black (Ghosh, 2009).

This species is known to found in Northern and North-eastern parts, little known feral populations from central and southern India. Recent report from Kerala by John *et al.*, 2016 supports the there is a possible to sight this species in southern India In United-Andhra Pradesh so far three species of parakeets have been reported namely Rose ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*), Plum headed parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*) and Alexandrine Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*). As per literature evidences there was no record of the Red-Breasted parakeet in Telangana. Finally we conclude that it is new record of the species from the State.

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