



Sighting of the Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis* Linnaeus, 1766) at Paradip, Odisha, East India

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One of the major shorebird migrants in the East Asian Coast-Australasian Flyway is the Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis* Linnaeus, 1766), which flies over a wide area of Australia and southern to eastern Asia (Bamford *et al.*, 2008). Reports of eastern curlews put down inland are rare. It's a large brown shorebird with a long bill that distinguishes itself from other curlews with its plain, unpatterned brown underwing. This species overwinter periods mainly found in Australia and Southeast Asia, but it breeds in Northeast China, Mongolia, and Russia (Bryant, 2002). In subarctic central-eastern Asia, bog and wetlands are the breeding grounds for Far Eastern Curlew. By contrast, during its nonbreeding season spanning the austral summer, the species is virtually exclusively found near coasts and island coastlines. India is one of the world's mega diversities. It provides habitat to several national and international species of faunal diversity. Balachandar (2012) states that a large number of migrating birds use the East Coast of India as a major habitat. In Paradip, Odisha, East India, this study represents the first observation and documentation of *Numenius madagascariensis*.

The majority of the Far Eastern Curlew's feeding grounds are vast tidal swamps or sand flats, frequently found close to saltwater marshes and mangroves. Their primary food sources are apparition shrimp, crabs, and tiny molluscs. Because females' bills are notably longer than males', there are dietary and forage differences between the sexes (Marchant and Higgins, 1993).

Far Eastern Curlews fly on the sandbars, sandy spews, islets, and among vegetation along the coast during high tide. The species can be seen in tiny flocks or alone most of the time. Due to a severe population reduction, the Far Eastern Curlew is now considered endangered (Birdlife International, 2017; IUCN, 2017). The potential causes of the reduction include changes in agriculture, loss of habitat, environmental modification, and human-induced factors. The Far Eastern Curlew is expected to suffer long-term consequences from anthropogenic changes in the environment, mainly from the eradication of habitats between the waves brought on by sea level rise.

Numenius madagascariensis was sighted at the Paradip site along the Mahanadi Creek. These bird species were observed in the location indicated by GPS: 20° 19' 36" N and 86° 36' 15" E. The flash survey was conducted in February 2024. Paddy and maize are the predominant crops of the study sites. With an annual temperature of 28.75 °C, it is 2.78% warmer than the average for India. The average annual rainfall of the district is 141.26 mm. Regular surveys were conducted by foot along predetermined routes within a 5 km radius of the seaport between 8 to 13 February 2024. Observations were performed throughout the day between 06:00 hours and 18:00 hours. The birds were examined ocularly and photographs were taken with a Nikon camera (D850). Their movements are recorded with different-angle photographs for identification purposes. The identification was done based on the birds' colour, wing pattern and beaks. Additionally, available literature was used for identification. To determine the bird's threat category, Birdlife International (2017) / IUCN (2017) was checked.

Numenius madagascariensis very limited scientific studies have been previously published in India (Praveen *et al.*, 2016; Mundkur *et al.*, 2017; Balachandran *et al.*, 2020). According to Balachandran (1990), during the winter months, the Far Eastern Curlew bird is regularly observed in the region of coastline India, that time it falls under the near-threatened categories. However, the present study reported that *Numenius madagascariensis* falls under the endangered category. This is the first sight and record of *Numenius madagascariensis* (Figures 1 & 2), Paradip, Odisha, East India. The main goals of conservancy in Odisha are to preserve intact in-between mudflat habitats, enhance settling down sight security, control interference from humans at significant locations where Far Eastern Curlew is found, and integrate the needs of the particular species through the coastline development.



Figure 1: Far Eastern Curlew (Numenius madagascariensis Linnaeus, 1766) on shore site at Paradip, Odisha.



Figure 2: The unpattern brown underwing of the Far Eastern Curlew was clearly seen.

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