



Sighting of Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) (Linnaeus, 1758) in Bikaner, Rajasthan, India

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Introduction:

On date 14 January 2020, during Bikaner birds census 2020 at RD 507 (28.46°N, 73.25°E) near Chhatargarh, Bikaner district. While monitoring and counting of birds at small wetland, some of us saw a bird at 10.50 am, while it was feeding on the ground near the water body. The bird was extremely confiding and we observed it from distances of 10-20 m for more than 45 mins and took a number of photographs before we decided to leave the area. After



that we matched the photographs with the field guide book and confirmed identification as Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*). We identified it as black crest, white and black face pattern, black breast-band and dark green upper part (Grimmett et al. 2011). It's also known as the peewit, pewit, tuit or tew-it (imitative of its cry) green plover. Over

Figure 1: Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

most of its extensive range, it is highly migratory, wintering as far south as North Africa, northern India, Pakistan, and parts of China. This lapwing measures 28-31 cm in length and has a wingspan of 67-72 cm. It has rounded wings and a crest. It is the lapwing with the short-legs. It's mostly black and white, but the back is green. Female and immature birds have narrower wings and less visibly marked heads, however their plumage is very similar. Northern lapwings feed primarily on small invertebrates. Their primary food sources are earthworms, moths, beetles, ants, flies, crickets, grasshoppers, dragonflies, cicadas, spiders, snails, frogs, small fish, and seeds. The breeding season of these northern lapwing species lasts from April to July in the majority of their range. These birds are mostly monogamous during the breeding season and breed in solitary pairs (Lok and Subaraj 2009).



The family Charadriidae (plovers) comes to the order Charadriiformes and suborder Charadrii (Piersma & Wiersma 1996). This family is further divided into three subfamilies the Vanellinae (lapwings), Pluvianellinae (magellanic plovers) and Charadriinae (plovers). Lapwings, like all other plovers, are obligate visual forager, which means they catch their prey at the substrate boundary layers by picking small invertebrates from the surface or from low vegetation cover (Piersma & Wiersma 1996). The worldwide population size of the northern lapwing (*vanellus*) is observed to number 5,600,000 to 10,500,000 individual birds. The general population pattern of these lapwing species is reported for to be diminishing. All through its reach the lapwing species is observed for to be locally common. The Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) is a species of bird which is listed by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Near Threatened (Ver. 2019-3).

There are some previous records of Northern Lapwing from India (Sanjit 2005). As per the data available on Ebird India portal, Northern Lapwing has been reported further inland in Gajodoba (West Bengal), Kaziranga NP (Assam).

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