

Sighting records of the Malabar Pied Hornbill In Chandgad taluk, Kolhapur, Southern Maharashtra, India

N. C. Hiragond^{1*} A. S. Lokhande² and K. N. Nikkam³

¹⁻², Department of Zoology, Yashwantrao Chavan College Halkarni – 416 552. Tq. Chandgad, Dt. Kolhapur, Maharashtra state India

³R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya Chandgad, Tq. Chandgad, Dt. Kolhapur, Maharashtra state, India

*Email: hiragond@gmail.com

Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus* is distributed across the Eastern Himalayas, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Melghat Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra, West Bengal, Northern Eastern Ghats, Western Ghats and Sri Lanka (Kazmierczak 2000, Ali 2002, Jaypal *et al.* 2005, Grimmitt and Inskipp 2007, Grimmitt *et al.* 2011). Malabar Pied Hornbill is well documented in Western Ghats and reported that, Amboli- Goa-Dandeli and Ganeshgudi are strong hold places and key areas for its conservation (Mudappa and Raman 2009, Sneha and Davidar 2011). In my previous work (Pratibha Riswadkar and N. C. Hiragond, 2015; Hiragond, NC 2014) described different birds findings and In this paper we report the sighting records of Near Threatened bird Malabar Pied Hornbill (IUCN Red List, 2012) in Chandgad taluk of Kolhapur in Sahyadris of southern Western Ghats of Maharashtra. Chandgad is located between 694-1000m asl and witness rainfall between 3000 to 5000 mm/year. Survey was conducted in Tillari, Parle, Tudiye, Mhalunge and Malatwadi area of Chandgad (latitude 15° 45' to 16° 3' North & longitude 74° 1' to 74° 27' East) between 06h30 to 11h00 hrs and 14h00 to 18h30 hrs during December 2010 to April 2012 for the period of 17 months. Survey was not conducted during the rainy season from June to August and in

October month. The birds were directly observed by using 10 x 50 Olympus binoculars and identified using field guides by Kazmierczak (2000) and Grimmitt *et al.* (2011). Survey was made along the edge of Tillari dam and its back water, along the water streams in forest, along the irrigation canal, roadside, inside the forest and in open lands of the study area. We applied opportunistic sighting, point count and line transect methods for bird watching.

Malabar Pied Hornbill (Figure 1, 2) was sighted singly, in pair and in 3-8 individual flocks in different parts of the study area. Most of the birds recorded were on the tree nearby irrigation canal and water stream. The detailed sighting record is listed in table 1. We also observed the bird in association with Great Hornbill and Malabar Grey Hornbill. Present sighting records on the Malabar Pied Hornbill as a resident in Chandgad taluk corroborates the findings of Mudappa and Raman (2009) in Western Ghats, Sneha and Davidar (2011) in Dandeli and Wagh *et al.* (2011) in Melghat Tiger Reserve.

Sneha and Davidar (2011) documented 61 birds in 3 months and Reddy (1988) recorded 44 birds during 24 months observation in Dandeli (References in Sneha and Davidar 2011). Wagh *et al.* (2011) recorded 22 birds in 10 sighting from 40 visits to Melghat Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra in Satpuda Range of Central India during 66 months observation. Mudappa and Raman (2009) documented 131 individuals in 10 localities at different parts of the Western Ghats from Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is also important to note that, out of 131 individuals 5 birds were recorded in 4 sightings in Amboli and Phansad of Maharashtra. Further, they report Malabar Pied Hornbill population is very scattered and sporadic in Amboli and Phansad of

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Table 1. Showing sighting records of Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus* in Chandgad taluk of Kolhapur

Sl. No.	Date	Time	Number of birds sighted			Place	Habitat	Observer
			Male	Female	Total			
I. STUDY AREA TILLARI								
1.	25 December 2010	09h04	3	4	7	Near aqua bridge along the irrigation canal	Dense forest, Ficus species tree	ASL
2.		16h39	1	1	2	Nearby irrigation canal	Dense forest	ASL
3.		17h15	1	1	2	Nearby Tillari village	Acacia plantation	ASL
4.	26 December 2010	07h30	4	3	7	Water stream near Hanuman Temple (Power Project)	Dense forest, Ficus species tree & Bamboo forest	ASL
5.		09h28	-	-	2	Water stream near Hanuman Temple (Power Project)	Dense forest, Ficus species tree & Bamboo forest	ASL
6.	09 January 2011	08h30	-	-	3	Near aqua bridge	Dense forest	ASL
7.	23 January 2011	17h45	1	1	2	Parle (15 Km north to Tillari)	Eucalyptus tree species	ASL
8.	19 February 2011	17h00	2	2	4	Near aqua bridge	Dense forest	ASL
9.	20 February 2011	07h00	1	0	1	Near aqua bridge	Dense forest	ASL
10.		09h30	3	2	5	Roadside nearby Swapnawell point	Dense forest	ASL
11.		14h14	2	2	4	Along the irrigation canal	Acacia plantation	
12.	21 February 2011	07h00	2	4	6	Water stream near Hanuman Temple (Power Project)	Dense forest Ficus species tree	ASL
13.	16 April 2011	17h15	1	1	2	Parle	Bamboo forest	ASL
14.	01 May 2011	07h19	2	3	5	Aqua bridge along the irrigation canal	Dense forest	ASL
15.	02 May 2011	08h00	-	-	6	Water stream near Hanuman Temple (Power Project)	Dense forest, Ficus species tree	ASL
16.		09h30	2	1	3	Water stream near Hanuman Temple (Power Project)	Dense forest, Ficus species tree	ASL
17.	03 May 2011	16h24	1	0	1	Parle	Eucalyptus plantation	ASL
18.	03 November 2011	16h00	-	-	1	Adjacent to the irrigation canal	Small tree branch	NCH
19.	03 February 2012	09h45	-	-	8	Roadside trees	Dense forest	NCH
20.	04 February 2012	08h00	-	-	7	Nearby irrigation canal	Tree top branches	NCH & ASL
21.		17h15	-	-	2	Flying across the water stream	Open forest	NCH & ASL
22.	05 February 2012	10h30	-	-	8	Small trees in open land	Dry deciduous forest	NCH & ASL
23.		17h05	3	2	5	Nearby aqua bridge	Acacia plantation	ASL
24.		18h00	-	-	6	Roadside trees along the forest edge	Dense forest	NCH & ASL
			Male	Female	Total			
25.	15 March 2012	09h30	-	-	6	Large trees along the water stream	Dense forest	ASL
26.		18h15	-	-	2	Large trees along the water stream	Dense forest	NCH
27.	16 March 2012	07h00	-	-	4	Tree top along the roadside	Dense forest	ASL & NCH
28.		17h30	-	-	2	Open land along the roadside	Dry deciduous forest	ASL & NCH
29.	17 March 2012	08h30	-	-	3	Open ground nearby tree	Dry deciduous forest	NCH & ASL
II. STUDY AREA TUDIYE								
30.	28 April 2012	16h50	-	-	1	Flying from a tree to another, forest edge	Dry deciduous forest	NCH
III. STUDY AREA MHALUNGE								
31.	29 April 2012	08h00	-	-	2	Fruiting tree along the roadside	Dry deciduous forest	NCH
IV. STUDY AREA MALATWADI								
32.	12 September 2011	17h30	-	-	2	Fruiting tree branch nearby village	Rice paddy field	NCH
33.	13 September 2011	17h00	-	-	2	Fruiting tree branch nearby village	Rice paddy field	NCH
Total number of birds encountered: 116 (Tillari) + 1 (Tudiye) + 2 (Mhalunge) + 4 (Malatwadi) = 123 in 33 sightings								

Maharashtra. In present study we sighted 123 Malabar Pied Hornbills in 33 sighting during 17 months. These figures reveal that, more number of Malabar Pied Hornbills recorded in Chandgad than in Dandeli, Melghat Tiger Reserve, and Amboli and Phansad. The encounter rate of the said bird per sighting is also more in Chandgad forested area. Four birds sighted per sighting in Chandgad whereas, 2 birds and 1 bird sighted per sighting in Melghat Tiger Reserve, and Amboli and Phansad area respectively. It seems that the rapid urban and industrial developmental activities in Dandeli might have forced the Malabar Pied Hornbill to shift

towards northern Western Ghats to Chandgad forested area.

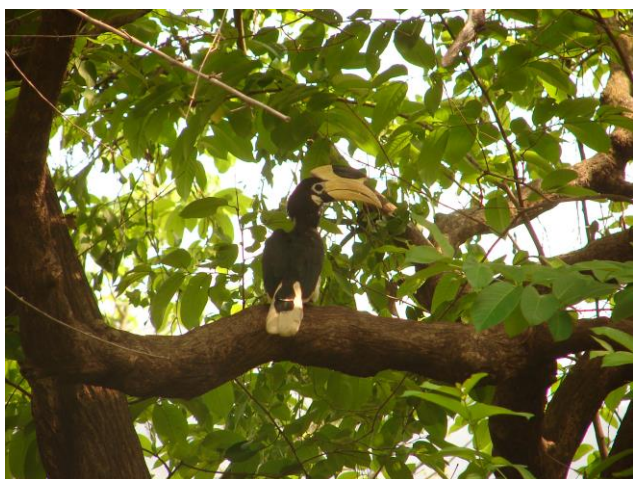
Our findings shed light on local status of Malabar Pied Hornbills in Chandgad taluk. Table 1 reveals that, we have sighted the bird almost throughout the year in study area. Interview with local people in Tillari gave evidence of its (Malabar Pied Hornbill) presence throughout the year. This indicates that, Tillari forest provides suitable habitat for Malabar Pied Hornbill and it is not a vagrant or migratory bird. Tillari is a home ground for Malabar Pied Hornbill. The bird might also breed in Chandgad area. But we have not sighted any juveniles or nests during our

routine field work. Sneha and Davidar (2011) reported that, the open riverine habitats on the banks of Kali River provide important roosting site for Malabar Pied Hornbill. This statement supports our sighting records of the bird along the irrigation canal and water stream. On our every field trip we recorded the bird except to Malatwadi.

Figure-1. Showing Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus* in Bamboo forest of Tillari



Figure-2. Showing Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus* in Dense forest of Tillari



The habitat of Malatwadi is completely different from those of Tillari, Tudiye and Mhalunge. It is not a forested area and consists of open dry land with some irrigated land and trees in scattered condition. Malatwadi is located in eastern part of the Western Ghats and it is around 50 Km away from the Sahyadris of southern Maharashtra. The habitat structure of Malatwadi may not be supporting the life of Malabar Pied Hornbill. Therefore we could not have sighted the bird regularly. A detailed systematic observation is needed in Chandgad forest and its vicinity to assess the population density, distribution pattern and conservation status of nearly threatened birds Malabar Pied Hornbill and Great Hornbill, least concern birds Malabar Grey Hornbill and Indian Grey hornbill.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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