

Short Communication

Pin Tail Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*) : A Rare Winter visitor In Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India

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The pin-tailed snipe (*Gallinago stenura*) also known as the pintail snipe, is a small stocky wader. It breeds in northern Russia and migrates to spend the non-breeding season in southern Asia from Pakistan to Indonesia. It is the most common migrant snipe in southern India, Sri Lanka and much of Southeast Asia. It is a vagrant to north-western and northern Australia, and to East Africa Kenya. These birds forage in mud or soft soil, probing or picking up food by sight. They mainly feeds on of molluscs, adult and larval insects, earthworms and occasionally crustaceans, seeds and other plant matter (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). In this note we portray the first record of Pin Tail Snipe in Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, Southern India.

On 12 January 2022 10:30 AM we observed a Pin Tail Snipe in the swamp of Thalakundha area (N 11.442433, E 76.667853), The Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. Initially we suspected that it's a Common Snipe but after the keen identification features of the bird the wings are less pointed than common snipe, and lack the white trailing edge of that species. The short greenish-grey legs and a long straight dark bill. The body is mottled brown on top, with cream lines down their back and pale underneath with a streaked buff breast and white belly. They have a dark stripe through the eye, with light stripes above and below it confirmed that it's a Pin tail Snipe. Based on the published literatures there only two available record which confirm that Pain tail snipe occurrences in Nilgiris. Davison (1883) was first recorded the Pin tail Snipe in Nilgiris. Zarri *et al.* (2005) recorded only one bird at Avalanche, near the Guest House on 20 February 2004 and he mention that

it was once common and a favourite game bird in the Nilgiris. After the two official records there are no observation was done in Nilgiris on Pin tail Snipe even though eBirds (2022) database doesn't have records of Pin tail Snipe in Nilgiris till now. Hence our observation showed the occurrences of rare winter migrant of Pin tail Snipe after 18 years reported in Nilgiris region. In recent year's lots of new records as well as well reoccurrences of water birds have been continuously reported in Nilgiris region (Samson and Ramakrishnan, 2018 a,b; Moinudeen and Samson, 2021). Hence this present observation shed a light on migratory water birds in Nilgiris for further observations.

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