



### **A note on deformities in the rosy starling (*Pastor roseus*), Telangana, India**

On 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2012, we observed a flock of nine individuals of the rosy starling (*Pastor roseus*), while conducting faunal surveys at Azmapur village (16.704987°N, 79.039952°E), Nalgonda District, Telangana State, India. The flock was found perching on a *Prosopis juliflora* tree (Fabaceae). All except three individuals were found with different abnormalities: two individuals had partially bald heads, without feathers on the neck, nape, head and crown regions, three individuals were totally/partially without feathers from the neck up to the crown region. In general, albinism, bill deformity and blindness were found among the individuals.

Baldness in birds from India has reported in rose-ringed parakeets *Psittacula krameri*, common mynahs *Acridotheres tristis* (Kasambe *et al.*, 2010; Ali *et al.*, 2013; Reddy *et al.*, 2013), and pied starlings *Gracupica contra* (Surender *et al.*, 2015). Albinism has been reported in birds by various authors (Inglis, 1903; Dudgeon, 1904; Gurusami, 1992; Javed, 1992; Mahabal, 1991; Prasad, 2000; Sharma, 2003; Srinivasulu, 2004; Pande *et al.*, 2005; Mahabal & Pande, 2006; Pawashe *et al.*, 2006; Avizanda *et al.*, 2010; Adimallaih *et al.*, 2012 and Surender *et al.*, 2014, 2015). Bill deformities have been reported in house crows *Corvus splendens*, large-billed crows *C. macrorhynchos* and yellow-billed blue magpies *Urocissa flavirostris* in India (Kasambe *et al.*, 2010).

Baldness could be caused by a range of factors including moulting, fighting, genetic problems or hormonal imbalance as featherless undersides were present besides the bald head and neck (Kasambe *et al.*, 2010; Ali *et al.*, 2013; Reddy *et al.*, 2013). Albinism can be derived for a number of causes aside from inheritance including genetic mutations, diet, living conditions, age, disease, or injury. The character of albinism can

vary; individuals are usually classified as true albinos, partial albinos, or leucistic (McCardle, 2012). Possible reasons for bill deformities include genetic or developmental causes, injury or disease (Craves, 1994). According to Kasambe *et al.* (2010) bill deformities may be due to chemical pollutants such as pesticides. The observed deformities in the rosy starling could be due to any one of or combinations of the above mentioned factors. Specific studies are needed to understand the causes of baldness, albinism and bill deformities in birds on a genetic level.

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