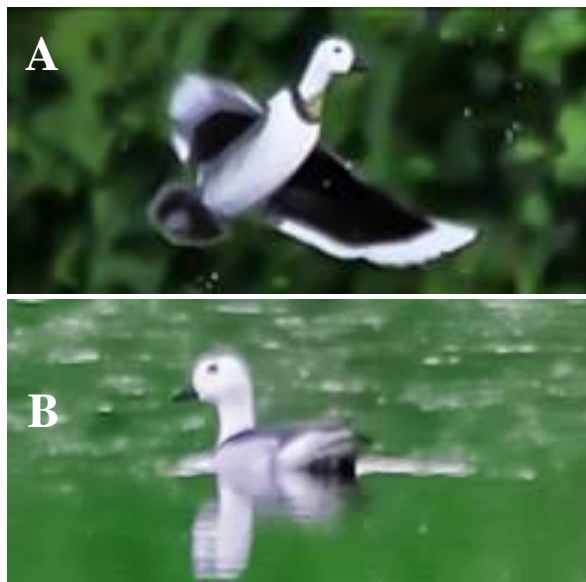




## A new record of cotton pygmy goose (*Nettapus coromandelianus*) in Bhutan

The cotton pygmy goose (*Nettapus coromandelianus* Gmelin, 1789) is a dabbling duck species found in the wetlands of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and SE Asia (Virk *et al.* 2020). The species is listed as a Least Concern (IUCN 2020) due to its wide distribution and stable population estimated to be 130,000 to 1.1 million individuals (Wetlands International 2006). A cotton pygmy goose (Fig. 1) was sighted on 17 May 2023 at a sewage pond in Gelephu (26.858°N, 90.493°E) in the Sarpang District, which is located at an altitude of 200 m a.s.l in the southern central part of Bhutan. This is the first reported occurrence of pygmy goose in Bhutan.



**Figure 1:** Cotton Pigmy Goose (A) in flight and (B) feeding at the sewage pond in Gelephu.

The Sarpang area has broadleaved forests connecting it to the landscape of Northern Forest Complex-Namdapha-Royal Manas in the eastern Himalayas (Tenzin *et al.* 2023). Due to this intact landscape connectivity, the area serves as one of the subtropical birding hotspots in the southern central part of Bhutan. According to

Nidup *et al.* (2020), a total of 71 waterbird species and 169 terrestrial bird species have been recorded from this sewage pond habitat, which makes it one of the ideal destinations for birdwatchers in the district. With this new addition, there are now 769 confirmed bird species out of 770 species predicted to occur in the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan.

### Acknowledgements

We thank P. Dhendup (CFO, Sarpang), Bhutan for granting permission and the caretaker of the sewage pond for support during the survey.

### Literature cited

- IUCN (2020). *Nettapus coromandelianus*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2016: e.T22680090A92842427.
- Nidup, S., Gyeltshen & T. Tobgay (2020). An account of a first record of the Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* Linnaeus, 1758 (Aves: Anseriformes: Anatidae) in Bhutan, *Journal of Threatened Taxa*, 12(3): 15382–15384.
- Tenzin, J., P. Dhendup, P. Thinley, K. Vernes and R. Rajaratnam (2023). Tiger conservation: initiatives inside Sarpang District, Bhutan, *Catnews*, 77: 4–6.
- Virk, M.S, A. van Der Heiden, A. Grewal & R. Foppen (2020). The sale of recreational products offered by Indian wildlife suppliers is a threat to the acrobatic cotton pigmy goose and its wetland Habitats. *Sustainability*, 12(3): 1208.
- Wetlands International (2006). Waterbird Population Estimates <Link>.

Submitted: 26 Jul 2023, Accepted: 30 Apr 2024  
Section Editor: Johan Mooij

S. Nidup<sup>1</sup>, J. Tenzin<sup>1\*</sup> & P. Wangmo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Divisional Forest Office Sarpang, Department of Forests & Park Services, Ministry of Energy & Natural Resources, Bhutan

<sup>2</sup> Gelephu Higher Secondary School, Gelephu Thromde, Ministry of Education and Skill Development, Bhutan

\*E-mail: jigmatenzin16@gmail.com