

Recent distribution of Indian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei* (Lesson, 1831)

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The *Coracina macei* is a cuckoo-shrike species (Figure 1) found in the Indian subcontinent. Male adults have a large and well-defined eye stripe, whilst females have a light stripe. Males have a grey neck and breast, as well as a neatly banded belly and flanks. Females have a neck and breast barring that goes lower down and lacks the male's noticeable white vent. They are largely insectivorous, although they sometimes eat figs and forest fruits. They normally fly in small groups, bounding just over the forest canopy. The Indian population has a distinctive cry, klu-eeep, and the birds tend to flick their closed wings one after the other after landing on a perch. During courting, the same wing motions are performed. During the dry winter months, the species breeds. The nest is a shallow saucer that is put in the fork of a horizontal branch at a certain height above the ground. The saucer is composed of twigs and grass, with cobwebs and a thin covering on the outside. In peninsular India, the clutch size is three eggs, but in Bengal, the clutch size is two (Ali and Ripley, 1983).

Although the species' worldwide population number has not been determined, it is reported as reasonably common to common in India and Sri Lanka. However, it is thought to be declining at a modest rate, and this rate has to be quantified further (Bird et al., 2020; del Hoyo, 2005). According to Tracewski et al. (2016), the species is in decline due to habitat degradation and heavy hunting pressure. Typically seen high in trees in a wide range of wooded settings, including deciduous and coniferous trees (International, 2020).

This species was previously reported from Murree Foot-hills between 2000 to 3500 feet elevation (Grimmett et al., 2016; Grimmett et al., 2008) and also reported from Kottli Sattian and Jhelum bridge from 3000 feet elevation (Mirza, 2012).

During the ornithological survey, I saw and photographed with the camera (i.e. Nikon, Coolpix p900) from Samahni Valley (36.111897°N and 74.019083°E), before sunset on March 9, 2021. It is the first record from the Pakistani state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. This is the first visual evidence of the presence of this species in Pakistan (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 1: Photograph of Indian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei* from Samahni Valey, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan.

Samahni is a tiny town and tehsil in the Bhimber District of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, 28.8 km northeast of Bhimber. It is located in the Samahni Valley, which is known for its medicinal plant cultivation (Saad and Said, 2011). In Bhimbar, summers is hot, the temperature ranges from 6°C to 38°C.



Figure 2: Photograph of Landscape of Samahni Valey, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan.

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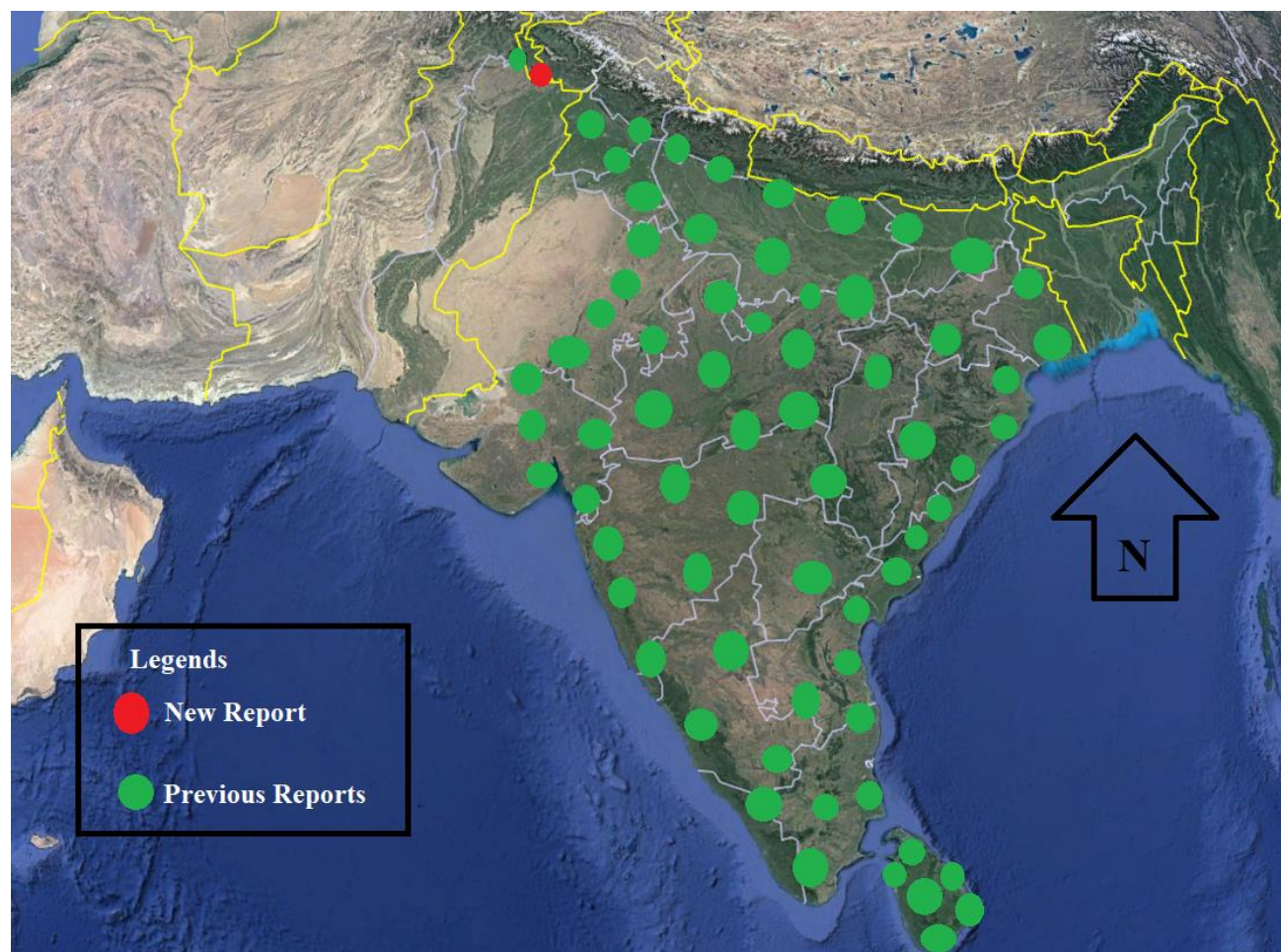


Figure 3: Map of the of recent distribution Indian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei* in the world (Google Earth).

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