

## Short Communication

### Occurrence of the Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* in Iran, with a New Record in Meyghan Wetland, Arak, Markazi Province

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#### حضور خروس کولی شکم‌سیاه (*Vanellus gregarius*) در ایران

#### و گزارش جدید آن در تالاب میقان، اراک، استان مرکزی

**چکیده:** خروس کولی شکم‌سیاه در طبقه‌بندی IUCN در زمره پرندگان به شدت در معرض خطر انقراض (CR) قرار دارد و جزو پرندگان کمیاب و مهاجر عبوری نامنظم (اتفاقی) ایران می‌باشد. مشاهدات موثق از این گونه به ترتیب زمانی در جدول شماره ۱ آمده است که بر این اساس تاکنون در هشت زیستگاه مهم ایران به نام‌های خلیج گرگان و میانکاله، بندر انزلی، هامون، بندر عباس، گمیشان، بوجاق، بامدژ و منطقه حفاظت شده موند به ثبت رسیده است. در ساعت ۱۱ صبح روز ۱۰ آذر ۱۳۸۵ هنگام بررسی پرندگان تالاب میقان توانستیم دست کم ۴ قطعه خروس کولی شکم‌سیاه را در تالاب میقان مشاهده و از آن عکس و فیلم تهیه نماییم. پرندگان دیده شده جثه‌ای به اندازه خروس کولی دم‌سفید داشته و دارای روتنه قهوه‌ای-خاکستری با شکم روشن و همچنین نوار ابرویی سفید و تارک تیره بودند. پاها و نوک نیز به رنگ سیاه دیده می‌شدند. منطقه مورد نظر، بخشی از یک دشت رسی با پوشش گیاهی پراکنده از گونه شور (*Salsola* sp.) بوده و فاصله آن نسبت به آب، کمتر از ۱۰ متر بود. وضعیت هوای منطقه، ابری همراه با بارش پراکنده برف بود. این گونه برای اولین بار در تالاب میقان واقع در ناحیه مرکزی ایران مشاهده می‌شود.

The Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* is a globally endangered species which is listed as Critically Endangered (CR) in the IUCN Red List. The decline in its population is mainly attributed to degradation and loss of its habitat, especially on the breeding grounds (IUCN 2006).

Scott & Adhami (2006) list it as a scarce and irregular passage migrant in Iran. There have been 18 documented records of the species in Iran since 1950, from eight important sites, namely Miankaleh Peninsula and Gorgan Bay, Gomishan, Boujagh National Park and Bandar-e Anzali in the south Caspian region, Bamdej wetland in Khuzestan, Mond Protected Area and Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf coast,

and Hamoun wetlands in the Seistan basin (Table 1). There have also been reports of the species from Khur Musa, southwestern Iran, in 2001 (B. Behrouzi-Rad, pers. comm.), Lake Uromiyeh and Akh Gol, northwestern Iran, in summer (J. Mansoori, pers. comm.), and Kaffe Ganj in northern Homozgan (three individuals; H. Farhadpour *in litt.* to the editor). A. Ashoori (*in litt.* to the editor) reports three individuals at Boujagh National Park, Gilan, on many occasions in the autumn of 2004 and 2005, and two individuals in this area in autumn 2006. In addition, there is one specimen of a Sociable Lapwing in the bird collection at the North Tehran Branch of Islamic Azad University (Khaleghizadeh 2004).

**Table 1.** Records of the Sociable Lapwing in Iran since 1950.

SITE	DATE	NO. BIRDS	OBSERVER	SOURCE
Bay of Gorgan, Bandar Gaz, Mazandaran	30 Nov. 1952	1 male		Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, museum specimen
Bay of Gorgan, Mazandaran	end Nov. 1952	small flock		Schütz 1959
Bay of Gorgan, Bandar Gaz, Mazandaran	end Nov. 1953	small flock		Schütz 1959
Miankaleh peninsula, Mazandaran	16 Feb. 1963	12		Nielsen & Speyer 1967
Miankaleh peninsula, Mazandaran	13 Apr. 1963	1		Nielsen & Speyer 1967
Near Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan	2 Apr. 1967	1		Nielsen 1969
Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan	25 Mar. 1968	1	D.A. Ferguson	Iran Department of the Environment files; D.A Scott <i>in litt.</i>
Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan	25 Apr. 1969	8	D.A. Ferguson	Iran Department of the Environment files; D.A Scott <i>in litt.</i>
Hamoun Lake, Seistan & Baluchistan	2 Oct. 1970	1 Juv.		Khrokov 2004, Argyle 1975. ringed (metal) as 1 of 4 chicks on 17.06.1970 at Nygyman, Korgalzhynskii raion, Akmolinskaya oblast', Central Kazakhstan. Ring Nr. P223690 Moscow. Shot in Iran
Miankaleh peninsula, Mazandaran	29 Oct. 1971	1	D.A. Scott	Iran Department of the Environment files; D.A Scott <i>in litt.</i>
Miankaleh peninsula, Mazandaran	19 Nov. 1971	2	D.A. Scott	Iran Department of the Environment files; D.A Scott <i>in litt.</i>
Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan	8 Sep. 1998	1 ad.		Sachanowicz <i>et al.</i> 2002, found dead, bill lacking
Kolvir, Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan	12 Sep. 1998	2		Sachanowicz <i>et al.</i> 2002
Gomishan, Southern Caspian, Mazandaran	2 March 2001	1		Roth <i>et al.</i> 2004
Boujagh N.P., Kiashahr, Gilan	15 Aug. 2001	9	M.E. Sehhatiasabet	Sehhatiasabet <i>et al.</i> 2006
Bamdej wetland, Khuzestan	Oct. 2004	3		Khalilipour & Nabavi 2006
Mond Protected Area, Bushehr	13 Feb. 2006	3	M. Jamadi	H. van Diek <i>in litt.</i> 2007
Mond Protected Area, Bushehr	20 Jan. 2007	1		H. van Diek <i>in litt.</i> 2007 (Fig. 2)

On 1 December 2006, while carrying out a bird survey, we observed at least four Sociable Lapwings (Fig. 1) in Meyghan wetland (10,640 ha), 17 km northeast of Arak in Markazi Province (Sadough & Jalalvand 1999).

The area was part of a saline plain with clay soils and scattered plants of *Salsola* sp. (UTM39s 0390614, 3779161). The birds were less than 10m from the water's edge. When first seen, they were running across the plain, but they soon stopped and began to feed. They were similar in size to White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*, and had grey-brown upperparts and a pale belly. The white supercilium and dark crown were very conspicuous. The tarsi and bill were black. There were no noticeable differences between the birds.

Meyghan wetland is an unprotected area that is visited by at least 5,000 Common Cranes

*Grus grus* every year during October–December (Behrouzi-Rad *et al.* 1997). The regular occurrence of these cranes and the presence of endangered species such as Sociable Lapwing would justify the designation of this wetland as an Important Bird Area (IBA). However, every year in autumn and winter, large numbers of hunters and poachers come to the area to hunt wild ducks, geese, coots and other birds (H. Ziaie, pers. comm.), and this can pose a great threat to the biodiversity of the region.

Although this observation of Sociable Lapwings at Meyghan constitutes the first record of the species in central Iran, it is possible that there are other places similar to Meyghan that are used as staging areas during the long migration between the breeding areas in Central Asia and the wintering areas in northeast Africa (Snow & Perrins 1998).



**Figure 1.** Sociable Lapwing, Meyghan wetland, Arak, 1 December 2006, © A. Zarei.



**Figure 2.** Sociable Lapwing, Mond Protected Area, Bushehr. 20 Januarv 2006. © H. van Diek.

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