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# Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* in Anini, Arunachal Pradesh

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The bird in the photographs was positively identified as a Black-naped Tern, based on the following features: an overall pale appearance, black eye stripes that join at the nape, and a deeply forked tail. This is the first confirmed record of this species for the Indian mainland.

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## Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* in Anini, Arunachal Pradesh

On 04 December 2017, we visited Anini (28.78°N, 95.90°E; 1662 m asl), the remote headquarters of the Upper Dibang Valley District (Arunachal Pradesh, India). Situated in the Mishmi Hills, Anini is the last major town in the district, and is about 100 km from the Sino–Indian border. The town mainly has a temperate habitat, interspersed with bamboo thickets.

While on a walk around the town, at about 0800 hrs, we went down a mud path when we heard a lot of bird activity, and subsequently observed several birds. As we stood there, watching and identifying the various birds, a lone Common

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* was spotted perched atop an almost leafless branch [76]. It was in eclipse plumage—where the head was much whiter and the wings lacked the iridescent green of a breeding adult; however, there was a hint of green on the breast. The eclipse form also differed from the non-breeding plumage where the head is brown in colour.

The only previous record of the Common Starling from Arunachal Pradesh is from 1999 (Kumar 2004; Choudhury 2006), of a hunted specimen in ‘winter plumage’, which was obtained from Sarali, in the Lower Subansiri District. Anini is over 600 km north-eastwards from Sarali. Apart from the Sarali record, the only other records for this species were from the Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve, Assam in March 1998 (Allen 2002), a 19th century record from near Dibrugarh (Hume 1888), and a few records along the Brahmaputra in Assam (eBird 2018). Although, Common Starlings are frequent winter visitors to western India (Grimmett *et al.* 2011; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012; eBird 2018), there are only a few records from north-eastern India, where the species is treated as a vagrant.

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76. Common Starling in eclipse plumage, in Anini, Arunachal Pradesh.

## Sighting of Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps* in Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra

On 21 February 2018, we were birding at Dongargan forest (19.25°N, 74.76°E) near Ahmednagar city, in Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra. The landscape comprised hilly terrain, dry deciduous forest with trees like *Bauhinia racemosa*, *Gliciridia sepium*, *Ficus* species, and *Acacia* species. While walking along a seasonal stream, at 1200 hrs, we saw two small birds clinging upside-down to some extremely thin branches in the upper canopy of a tree. We observed them for ten minutes through 8x40 binoculars. BK managed to take some hazy record shots