

Documentation of a European White Stork with Flock of Egyptian Vultures in Kota District, Rajasthan

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Abstract: The European White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) belongs to the family Ciconiidae. It is a rare migratory bird in India. European White Stork is distributed in Europe, Africa and the Indian subcontinent. It is long a distance winter migrant. European White Stork is listed as least concern. The white stork is gregarious bird. It has been seen after a long time in Kota district.

Keywords: European White Stork, Egyptian vulture, Dumping yard, Kota

I. INTRODUCTION

White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*)(Linnaeus, 1758) usual winter migrants to India, are widespread in the country, generally occurring in low densities in their winter habitat (Ali & Ripley 1968). The White Stork is a large bird in the stork family Ciconiidae. Its plumage is mainly white, with black on its wings. Adults have long red legs and long pointed red beaks. It has a string body which measures 80 to 115 cm. It breeds from Europe to northwest Africa and westernmost Asia, and in southern Africa, and winters mainly in Africa south of the Sahara Desert (del Hoyo et al. 1992), though some birds winter in India (Ali et al. 2001). The White Stork has been rated as Least Concern by the IUCN (BirdLife International 2016). White storks feed on insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals and small bird. This bird is also a scavenger and consume a wide range of animal prey.



Fig.1 European White Stork *C. ciconia* in Kota

II. STUDY AREA

The observations were done at dumping yard near NH-27 in Kota city. It is located between 25° 06'59.58" N and 75° 53'33.17" E. This area is 16 km. away from Kota city. There are many scavenger bird species like Egyptian vulture, Black kite, Steppe eagle, Black headed ibis, Red naped ibis, Egret etc.



Fig.2 : Location map of Dumping yard, Kota, Source- Google Earth

III. METHODOLOGY

The observations were carried out thrice in a week early in morning (7:00 am – 10.00 am) and late evening (3:00 pm – 6.00 pm). Photographs were taken using a Nikon camera D7500 with 500 mm lens. Observations also made through 12x50 binoculars.



Fig.3 Photo of Dumping ground in Kota

IV. OBSERVATION

On 16 January 2023, during field work carried out by the research scholars and research supervisors, Govt. College Kota, Kota, Rajasthan, the team observed single white stork sitting on ground of dumping yard (25° 06'59.58" N, 75° 53'33.17" E). First impression about the bird was a large egret. After 10 minutes of close observation, we slowly approached the bird without disturbing it for a better observation. Fortunately we could manage to take some photographs. After comparing photographs with the field guides it was identified as European White Stork. In flight It is a glider flying slow with regular wing strokes.



Fig.4 Flying shot of European White Stork

V. RESULT

The observations were done near Kota city. White stork has been seen in Kota after 4 years. It was seen alone in a group of Egyptian vultures. Observations show that white stork has not migrated to Kota in recent years due to anthropogenic disturbances and hunting. It was very difficult to recognize the White stork sitting among the flock of Egyptian vultures. The morph of White stork and Egyptian vulture are almost the same. Generally this stork occurs in low densities on particular water bodies and hence their surveillance is important.



Fig.5Flock of Egyptian vultures with solitary White Stork

VI. CONCLUSION

These birds face many natural as well as anthropogenic threats. Habitat destruction, urbanization, collisions with overhead powerlines, illegal hunting, mining and increasing human activities were identified as major problems faced by these species in Rajasthan.

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