

First confirmed record of Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus* from Iran with previous reports from the Tehran urban environment

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The Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus* resembles the Common Myna *A. tristis*, but differs in having an orange-red orbital patch, a slate-grey body, rusty-buff at the base of the primaries and at the tip of the tail, and a rusty-buff vent. It occurs in the Indian subcontinent from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal through India west to Sind in Pakistan and is known to undertake some local migrations (Ali 2002). There is an old record of the species in southeastern Afghanistan (ORL 2017). It is not a native species in the Middle East, and the breeding populations in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are believed to have originated from escaped cage-birds (Porter & Aspinall 2010). This species has also been reported from Kuwait, Qatar and Oman (ORL 2017)

In April 2017, AS conducted a field trip to southern Iran with a group of German bird-watchers. On 11 April 2017, 10 Bank Mynas (Plate 1) were observed in Nobandian, c55 km northeast of Chabahar (Sistan & Baluchestan province) by A Shokouhi, M and M Seiring, H Utschick, M Piazzzi, R Pfeifer, J Fuenfstueck and R Hartwich. The birds were in a single flock and were observed feeding and preening. The local people are poor and do not keep this bird species in captivity. The birds did not show any signs (plumage or behaviour) of having been kept in captivity. The birds may have originated from the nearest natural population of Bank Mynas in Sind, Pakistan, or they may have come from naturalized populations in the United Arab Emirates or Saudi Arabia.

This observation has been accepted by the Iran Bird Records Committee as the first confirmed record of Bank Myna in the wild in Iran (www.iranbirdrecords.ir).

Prior to the Nobandian record, there had been several reports of Bank Myna from the Tehran urban environment (Table 1, Plate 2). In all cases, only a single individual was observed. These previous reports were all considered to relate to birds that had escaped from captivity. However, it is likely that more than one individual was involved, as the four localities where the birds were observed are not close together.



Plate 1. Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus*, Nobandian, northeast of Chabahar (Sistan & Baluchestan province), 11 April 2017. © A Shokouhi

Table 1. Records of Bank Myna from the Tehran urban environment, autumn 2013–spring 2015.

Qeytarieh park	October 2013	P Bakhtiari
Laleh park	November 2013, April 2014	P Bakhtiari
Jamshidieh park	April 2014	P Bakhtiari
Mellat park	May 2014, 26 December 2014, 30 March 2015	P Bakhtiari
Mellat park	12 September 2014 (Plate 2)	P Bakhtiari & H Amini



Plate 2. Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus* on a cervid in Mellat park, Tehran, 12 September 2014. © P Bakhtiari

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