

RESEARCH ARTICLE



First record of Pin-tailed Parrotfinch *Erythrura prasina* (Sparrman, 1788) from India

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We report the first confirmed sightings of Pin-tailed Parrotfinch *Erythrura prasina* from Mizoram and India. Pin-tailed Parrotfinch belongs to the family Estrildidae. In India, this is the only sighting record and photographic record of this species. The sighting details and habitat are discussed in detail.

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Introduction

The Pin-tailed Parrotfinch *Erythrura prasina* (Sparrman, 1788) belongs to the family Estrildidae and is a common cage bird with male having grassy green back and wings; bright blue mask on face; black lore and black bill; orange flanks and under-tail coverts. Belly and rump are bright crimson red; pale reddish legs. Females have buff underparts; lack red color underside and pale red rump with short tail. Sub-adults are similar to female except dull greenish under-parts, dull orange-red tail and olive rump with yellow mandible.¹ Recently reported from China² and Bhutan³; BirdLife International⁴ describe the range of Pin-tailed Parrotfinch to be Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand. The range map of the same species provided by eBird⁵ also supported the range description of BirdLife International⁴

Pin-tailed Parrotfinch male and female were first observed at Tuichhuahen area (male location: 24°13'28"N, 92°38'19"E, altitude 81.44 m and female location: 24°13'10"N 92°38'13"E, altitude: 85.69m) of Kolasib district on the 17th November 2020 from the illegal mist-net hunter who accidentally traps parrotfinch as a by-catch during the paddy harvest season while casting their mist-net to catch the so called rice field pest, White-rumped Munia, *Lonchura striata*, and Scaly-breasted Munia, *Lonchura punctatus*. One male

(Total body length: 13.8cms, Beak length: 1.4cms and Tail length: 5.6cms) and female (Total body length: 11.2cms, Beak length: 1.4cms and Tail length: 3.4cms) were caught in a separate paddy field by different hunters. At first, they were thought to be an escaped cage bird. But, on collection of secondary information from the local people, farmer, local trappers and hunters, we hoped to get a live flock in the area as most of the local hunters, farmers and trappers are aware of the present of a green colored finch – like bird in the area, who comes with the onset of the bamboo flower and then disappearing after the paddy harvest. Many birding expeditions were organized to locate the Pin-tailed Parrotfinch in the vicinity, but in vain.

On 27th January 2025, one male Pin-tailed Parrotfinch (Total body length: 13.6cms, Beak length: 1.4cms and Tail length: 5.1cms) was found dead at Vaivakawn locality (23°44'18"N, 92°42'42"E, altitude: 983.59 m) of Aizawl city - probably a window collision case. Birding expeditions were again organized to locate the remaining flock, but with no confirmed sightings. Aizawl is roughly 90km from Tuichhuahen - the first encounter site for parrotfinch.

During an early morning birding expedition on the 4th of April 2025 at Tuisen-Tlabung forest with



Figure 1. Pin-tailed Parrotfinch, *Erythrura prasina*

an altitude of 950.4m and geo co-ordinate 23° 42'03"N 92°37'04"E, Reiek village, Mamit district (roughly 30km from Aizawl) we located and documented a live male Pin-tailed Parrotfinch at 0854hrs. The area is dominated by evergreen trees interspersed by bamboo, with good water source.

The authors conducted thorough interview of numerous farmers, trappers and local hunters at possible sites for the Pin-tailed Parrotfinch. The information gathered from the interview revealed that this species is not new to many local hunters, trappers and farmers. Many of the interviewed people can identify the birds using colour plates provided by the authors. Therefore, the present sightings and information gathered from 3 districts of Mizoram clearly point that Pin-tailed Parrotfinch *Erythrura prasina* is a resident of Mizoram, India and a new addition to the bird checklist of Mizoram and India.

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