

## NOTES ON A SHORT TRIP TO MALDIVES MARCH 29TH TO APRIL 1ST 2018.

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Based at the southern most point of the Maldives and indeed Asia - Addu Atol on Gan Island

Flew direct to Gan from Colombo early morning on March 29th and departed on April 1st. A very convenient and relatively new service meaning keen Indian listers can make a short trip to see several otherwise difficult species, and a chance to add interesting records to the very under-recorded Maldives avifauna. Whilst also being able to enjoy some brilliant snorkelling or diving if that's your thing. The special attraction here for competent or leaner scuba divers is that within the hotel complex is a Diverland base, with in-house very experienced dive masters, including the legendary Axel, who helped pioneer recreational diving on the Maldives from the 1960's. The Coral here is still exceptional and 100's of amazing fish, several species of ray, with Mantas being a particular speciality, some giants with recorded wing-spans over 5 meters! Turtles are easy to see + chance of reef sharks, whilst Hammer-heads and whale sharks are rare and best looked for further north in the Maldives.

Main reason for trip was to finish our open water diving training whilst knowing that a few really nice sub-continental ticks could be easily seen. Trip reports to the Maldives though are almost non-existent so hopefully this one will add some value to out-going Indian birders wanting to add an extension to a Sri Lankan bird trip.

Accommodation - Equator Resort. <http://www.equatorvillage.com.mv> A post second world war RAF base here has been converted into a hotel complex which on first inspection seems a little quirky, but you soon fall in love with the wonderfully adapted staff mess and living quarters which are very comfortable. The people here are very hospitable, the beach is 25metres from your door, there is a swimming pool, all inclusive package (recommended) including excellent food, daily snorkelling trips, cycle and access to the other parts of Addu City which makes for interesting cultural access that's not available in most parts of the Maldives.

The birds - all seabirds seen within the interior sea of the atoll, the waders from the small bay area next to the airport runway and the Saunders Terns on the mixed rocky/sandy southern shoreline about 1km west of the Airport.

FAIRY TERN - resident on this island, and the first bird to be seen when walking off the plane. 20-30 birds breeding around the Equator resort gardens

BLACK-NAPED TERN - 2-3 seen whilst out on boat dive trips, one seen from land

SAUNDERS TERN - 70 in mixed plumage, from non breeding through to full breeding plumage.

LESSER NODDY - up to 300 daily within the interior of Addu Atoll

ROSEATE TERN - 2 from boat

SANDWICH TERN - 1

GREAT CRESTED TERN - 1

WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD 1 on three occasions over the hotel complex.

MALDAVIAN GREEN HERON - up to six

INDIAN POND HERON

GREY HERON - 3

WHITE BREASTED WATERHEN 4

GREATER SANDPLOVER - 1

LESSER SANDPLOVER - 6

PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER - 4

GREY PLOVER - 3

WHIMBREL -1

RUFF - 1

WOOD SANDPIPER - 15

CURLEW SANDPIPER - 40

GREENSHANK - 1

COMMON SANDPIPER - 10

ORIENTAL HONEY BUZZARD -1

BLACK SHOULDERED KITE - 1

ROCK DOVE

YELLOW WAGTAIL - 1 Probably race thungbergi.

COMMON MYNA - 1









