

White-rumped munia

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The **white-rumped munia** or **white-rumped mannikin** (*Lonchura striata*), sometimes called **striated finch** in aviculture, is a small passerine bird from the family of waxbill "finches" (Estrildidae). These are close relatives of the true finches (Fringillidae) and true sparrows (Passeridae).

It is native to tropical continental Asia and some adjacent islands, and has been naturalized in some parts of Japan. Its domesticated hybrid descendant, the **society finch** or **Bengalese finch**, is found worldwide as a pet and a biological model organism.

Description



Adult *L. s. acuticauda* preening after bathing, Narendrapur near Kolkata, West Bengal, India

The white-rumped munia is approximately 10 to 11 cm in length, with a stubby grey bill and a long black pointed tail. The adults are brown above and on the breast, and lighter below; the rump is white. There is some variation between the subspecies, but the sexes are almost impossible to distinguish in all subspecies; males have a more bulky head and bill.^[2]

Subspecies include:^{[2][3][4][5][6]}

- *Lonchura striata acuticauda* – **northwestern white-rumped munia**. Northern Indian mainland below c. 1,500 metres ASL, north through the Himalayas foothills of Bhutan and Nepal to the Dehradun region of Uttarakhand, India.

Medium brown above, except on the face and remiges, buffy below.

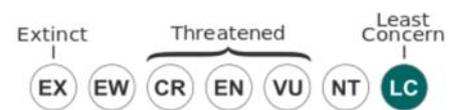
- *Lonchura (striata) domestica* – **society finch**. Domesticated; naturalized in Japan.

A number of breeds have been developed, ranging from white through yellowish, grey, rufous and brown to almost black, with more or less lighter belly; piebald birds are

White-rumped munia



Conservation status



Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)^[1]

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Aves
Order:	Passeriformes
Family:	Estrildidae
Genus:	<i>Lonchura</i>
Species:	<i>L. striata</i>

Binomial name

Lonchura striata

(Linnaeus, 1766)

common, and more fanciful breeds with crests or curled feathers are also available.

- *Lonchura striata semistriata* (Hume 1874) – **Nicobar white-rumped munia**. Car Nicobar and Central (Nancowry) group, Nicobar Islands
- *Lonchura striata squamicollis* – **Chinese white-rumped munia**. Southwestern China and adjacent regions.
- *Lonchura striata striata* (Linnaeus, 1766) – **southwestern white-rumped munia**. Southern Indian mainland

Dark chocolate-brown above, white below.

Ecology



Adult of unidentified subspecies taking a bath

The white-rumped munia is a common resident breeder ranging from South Asia to southern China east to Taiwan, and through Southeast Asia south to Sumatra; it frequents open woodland, grassland and scrub, and is well able to adapt to agricultural land use. It is a gregarious bird which feeds mainly on seeds, moving through the undergrowth in groups and sometimes accompanying other birds such as puff-throated babblers (*Pellorneum ruficeps*). The nest is a large domed grass structure in a tree, bush or grass into which three to eight white eggs are laid.^{[2][5][6]} They are often found near water and have been observed feeding on algae. It has been suggested that they obtain protein from their diet of algae often in the species *Spirogyra*, which grows in paddy fields.^{[7][8][9]}

It is a common and widespread bird across its large range, and is thus not considered a threatened species by the IUCN. In fact, it may locally become a nuisance pest of millets and similar grains. Even the Nicobar Islands subspecies with its limited range seems to be able to cope well with human settlement. As it is a drab-coloured and rather reclusive bird inhabiting dense undergrowth, the white-rumped munia is not necessarily conspicuous even where it occurs in considerable numbers.^{[1][3][4]}

Origin

Origin and phylogeny has been obtained. Estrildinae may have originated in India and dispersed thereafter (towards Africa and Pacific Ocean habitats).^[10]

References

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Core native range in green
Northern populations (see text) not shown

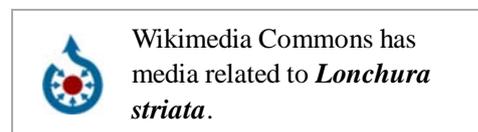
Synonyms

Uroloncha striata

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External links

- Species factsheet (<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/species/index.html?action=SpcHTMDetails.asp&sid=8704&m=0>) - BirdLife International



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Categories: IUCN Red List least concern species | Lonchura | Waxbills | Birds of Asia

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