

Indian House Crow, *Corvus splendens*

Alert Species

Please [report](#) any sightings as soon as possible.

Overview

Short description of *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

This is a small black crow, larger but slimmer than jackdaw *Corvus monedula*, with a distinctive grey shawl across the rear and sides of the neck and the upper mantle that contrasts sharply with the black crown, face and bib.

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Description of *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow status in GB

The Indian house crow is expected to arrive in GB but no occurrences have yet been confirmed. Birds have reached ports as close to GB as Ireland, the Netherlands and Denmark.

Habitat summary: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

Throughout its range, this species is very strongly commensal with people, occurring among even the highest densities of human habitation. No populations are known to live independently of humans.

Overview table

Environment:	Terrestrial
Species status:	Non-Native
Native range:	China, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand
Functional type:	Omnivore
Status in England:	Non-Native
Status in Scotland:	Non-Native
Status in Wales:	Non-Native
Location of first record:	(no records known)
Date of first record:	Unknown

Invasion history: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

Origin

The native range is centred on India but extends to Iran, Sri Lanka, Thailand and parts of southern China.

First Record

The species is still unrecorded in GB. One that was present at Dunmore Harbour,

County Waterford, for about 170 years from October 1674 was the first in Ireland.

Pathway and Method

Indian house crows travel widely on ships and ship assistance is the most likely pathway to bring birds to GB. Deliberate introductions have also been made in Africa and SE Asia, as attempted control for insect pests or to clean food waste from the streets. There have been isolated records in Europe well away from ports. There is also the possibility of natural spread from the Netherlands, where a small breeding population is established.

Species Status

The species is regarded as invasive species in much of its extensive non-native range, which includes much of the Indian Ocean coastline and recently Borneo and Florida. Following first records at Hoek van Holland in 1994, a small breeding population established in the Netherlands. Single birds and small parties have since been seen in all coastal provinces of the Netherlands.

Ecology & Habitat: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

Dispersal Mechanisms

The species is not migratory and rarely undertakes long flights. Dispersal around the world has been mainly on ships. Daily local movements of up to 20 km can occur, however, for example as feeding opportunities arise on farmland, and unassisted dispersal has been observed in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

Reproduction

The species builds stick nests in trees, usually singly, and lays one or two clutches of 3–5 eggs. Nesting season is mostly April to June, but is September to June in East Africa.

Known Predators/Herbivores

Where native, the Indian house crow suffers predation by other corvids, birds of prey, snakes and monkeys, but it has few predators in many parts of its introduced range.

Resistant Stages

None known.

Habitat Occupied in GB

None known.

Distribution: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

There are as yet no records of this species in GB.

Impacts: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

Environmental Impact

Indian house crow is perceived as having a serious impact on other bird species in eastern and southern Africa, where it is a nest predator of flycatchers and other species.

Health and Social Impact

The house crow's habit of feeding on carrion and rubbish close to human habitation makes it a potential danger to public health. It is known to carry at least eight human enteric diseases, including *Salmonella*, *Plesiomonas* and *Escherichia coli*. It is a nuisance to people, and is widely regarded as a pest.

Economic Impact

The house crow can cause damage to crops and to livestock farming. It can also have impacts on tourist amenities and industry in some regions.

References & Links: *Corvus splendens*, Indian House Crow

Identification

[BirdLife International fact sheet](#)

[BTO bird facts](#)

Biology, ecology, spread, vectors

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General

[GB risk assessment](#)