

Review of: "High-Quality Genome Assembly of the Endemic, Threatened White-Bellied Sholakili *Sholicola albiventris* (Muscicapidae: Blanford, 1868) From the Shola Sky Islands, India"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article significantly advances our understanding of the White-bellied Sholakili (*Sholicola albiventris*), an endemic bird species in the Shola Sky Islands of the Western Ghats. The authors provide the first inclusive genome assembly, utilizing both Nanopore and Illumina sequencing technologies, resulting in a robust assembly of 1.083 Gbp. Particularly, the high completeness of the assembly, evidenced by a 99.9% BUSCO score, adds credibility to the findings.

The inclusion of a complete mitochondrial genome is a valuable addition, offering insights into the species' evolutionary biology. The identification of a substantial number of putative genes, along with detailed functional annotations, lays a solid foundation for future research into the genetic characteristics of this forest floor bird.

The results and discussion on gene flow and the impacts of habitat destruction are particularly relevant, highlighting the importance of this work in conservation genetics and habitat connectivity studies. This research article is very important for researchers in avian genomics and conservation, and it sets the stage for further investigations into the ecology and evolutionary dynamics of the White-bellied Sholakili. I appreciate the work of the authors and their great contribution to exploring the further study of the White-bellied Sholakili (*Sholicola albiventris*).