

Discover the Fauna of Our Campus

Desert hawkmoth (*Anthia mannerheimi*)

Family: Glareolidae

Genus: Cursorius

Species: *Cursorius cursor*

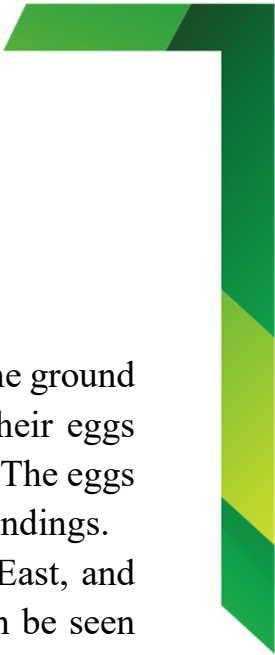

The desert swift (*Cursorius cursor*) is an interesting bird species belonging to the



order of the Chvdarchikidae and, as its name suggests, prefers to run on the ground, despite being able to fly. These birds are perfectly adapted to the desert and semi-desert environment. Their body is sandy-yellow or light brown. This color makes it difficult to see the bird in sandy and clayey areas. The most striking feature is the black and white stripes that run across their eyes and

merge into one on the back of their neck. There is also a small blue-gray spot on their back. Their legs are long, strong, and white. These long legs help them run fast and protect their body from the hot air coming from the ground. When flying, the black underside of their wings is clearly visible, which is the main sign to recognize them in the air.

The desert swift is distinguished by its unique behavior. When it senses danger, it does not immediately fly away. On the contrary, it runs away at great speed, then suddenly stops and remains motionless. At this time, its color blends in with the environment, making it almost impossible to see it. When it stands, it holds its body very upright, which allows it to observe its surroundings better. These birds are mainly insectivorous. They feed on insects, grasshoppers, ants, and various larvae



that live in the deserts. They catch their prey by running on the surface of the ground or by making short jumps. They do not build a special nest. They lay their eggs directly in a small hole dug in the ground or sand. They usually lay 2 eggs. The eggs are also sand-colored and spotted, so they do not stand out from the surroundings. It is mainly distributed in North Africa, the Canary Islands, the Middle East, and Central Asia. It is a migratory bird that is very rare in our country. It can be seen mainly in the dry, sparsely vegetated saline and clay deserts of Nakhchivan, the Absheron-Gobustan region, and sometimes the Kura-Araz lowland. The desert ibis is considered an ecologically sensitive species due to habitat degradation and rarity, and its protection is essential.

