

Breeding of Clamorous Reed Warbler at Nal sarovar

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On 15 April 2014, we visited Nal sarovar Bird Sanctuary (22° 45' N, 72° 00' E). Nal sarovar, spread over 120 km², is a natural shallow lake, with lagoons and numerous small islands. It is declared as a 'Ramsar' site recently, in 2012.

In an area with reeds, we observed a Clamorous Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus stentoreus brunnescens*) frequently going into the reeds with insects/worms. We suspected that there could be a nest with chicks and that the warbler was engaged in feeding its young ones. We searched and located a nest with three chicks, which were visible just above the rim of the nest. We observed the nest for some time from a distance without disturbing the parents. The Clamorous Reed Warbler continued to feed its young ones with both the male and the female sharing feeding duties. We took some photos and then we left the place so as not to disturb it further.

On another visit to the area on 8 June 2015, we again observed a nest of a Clamorous Reed Warbler. This time there were two chicks in the nest and both birds were observed feeding the chicks.

The nesting of Clamorous Reed Warbler has been observed by the second author [KS] at Nal sarovar since past several years. We had seen a nest in late March 2010 (Trivedi 2010). The species is said to breed at Pariej and Kanewal Tanks in central Gujarat (B. M. Parasharya, *Pers Comm.*). Nests have been observed by the second author in many locations inside Nal sarovar area and up to 50 nests have been seen in one season. There could be more nests, as the area in which the birds are seen is quite large. Breeding has been observed from April – July, with nest building usually starting in late March – early April. It is a common breeding bird in the Nal sarovar Bird Sanctuary area.

[According to Ali & Ripley (2001), the Clamorous Reed Warbler is a winter visitor, passage migrant and also a resident breeder in India, with breeding recorded in north-western India and Pakistan. It is stated that the Clamorous Reed Warbler 'Breeds mostly in northwestern India and Pakistan - Kashmir (very common in Srinagar valley), Punjab, Uttar Pradesh (Oudh, Bahraich), N.W.F.P. (Kurram valley), Baluchistan (Quetta, Chagai, Malezai, Makran coast), Sind (Karachi, Narra), Rajasthan (Sambhar Lake), West Khandesh (Tapti river), and the Bombay area (nest not actually found in the last three localities)']



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For Gujarat, Ali (1955) does not give any details regarding its breeding and Dharmakumarsinhji (1955) presumed that it did not breed in Gujarat, but was a winter visitor. There are no published records of breeding of the Clamorous Reed Warbler in Gujarat. It was believed that it is mainly a winter visitor to Gujarat, and this is reflected in the latest field guides; Grimmett et al. (2011) give it as mainly a winter visitor (though it is shown to be resident for a small area in south Gujarat), while Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) give it as a passage migrant in Gujarat. However this status will have to be revisited, as the nesting observed in large numbers in Nal sarovar over a period of many years shows that the Clamorous Reed Warbler is a breeding species in Gujarat – Eds]

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