

....Breeding record

Conclusion

The breeding records of Black-headed Cuckooshrike and Black-naped Monarch confirm that both these species breed in Kachchh. It is possible that the breeding occurred this year to an unusually heavy monsoon, with rains more than 250% of normal. This habitat, in Mandvi Taluka, supports very good vegetation and it is likely that the Asian Brown Flycatcher could also be breeding here. The breeding of Marshall's lora in this area is not unusual but the breeding biology of this species needs further study. This area should be monitored from late May till September in the coming years to see whether the Black-headed Cuckooshrike and the Black-naped Monarch continue to breed here.

References

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Breeding of Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea* near Jamnagar

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Jamnagar has always been on high priority when it comes to birding, bird studies and bird photography. Birding in Jamnagar is always a treat for all birders and especially when we talk about waders, we cannot forget Jamnagar. We present here a few observations about the breeding of Small Pratincole (*Glareola lactea*) near Jamnagar and draw attention towards the impact of human activities on the breeding of this species near Jamnagar.

The Small Pratincole is a resident in almost all parts of India and it is a breeding migrant to Pakistan (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). It is a Least Concern species (BirdLife International 2020) and is mainly found near lakes, pools, freshwater marshes, rivers, agricultural fields, dam sites, irrigation canals etc. For Gujarat, it is a common to uncommon resident and local migrant, with sightings from all over the state (Ganpule 2016). We thought it was not very common around Jamnagar but after intensive

search, we were able to find the Small Pratincole at several places. We were lucky to observe its nesting near Jamnagar.



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Sightings

The maximum sightings of the Small Pratincole were around Ranjit Sagar Dam and Sapda Dam. Both these dams are located near Jamnagar. Our first visit was in February 2019, while we were going for our regular birding and bird photography, as per our routine. On that day, we saw Small Pratincoles in the area. We saw a pair where it appeared that a male was courting a female. It was exciting to see this behaviour and so we started regularly visiting the sites to observe the complete breeding cycle of this species near Jamnagar.

Subsequently, we saw a maximum of about 200 individuals at these sites over a period of more than two months. We documented pre-courtship display, courtship display, fight among males during mate selection, mating, nesting, eggs, egg hatching, chicks, feeding of chicks, until the chicks became independent and fledged. We documented 12 nests at Ranjit Sagar Dam site and only one nest at Sapda Dam site. At both these sites, there is anthropogenic pressure, with excavation for purpose of water conservation, fishing and use of dry dam area for agriculture being the main impediments to successful breeding. Despite the fact that there is a good population of the Small Pratincole at Sapda Dam, only one nest was seen and the breeding was not successful. At Ranjit Sagar Dam, only 12 pairs made nests and out of these, only 8 pairs were able to successfully raise young.

We wish to draw the attention of the bird watching community toward this habitat destruction. We observed that there is considerable pressure on the Small Pratincoles at both these dam sites. While it is possible that these birds could be nesting at some other places nearby, the nesting here is difficult. Due to human activities, the breeding is often not successful. Though the Small Pratincole is not a threatened species, it is unfortunate that the conditions are not conducive for its breeding at these two dam sites. It is suggested that the local people should be made aware that these birds are nesting there and some area should be kept undisturbed for the breeding of the Small Pratincole. We intend to work towards conserving the habitat and making efforts so that the breeding activities of the Small Pratincole are not interrupted by human activities.

Reference

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