

Common Myna....

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Grey-Bellied Cuckoo *Cacomantis passerinus* in Indroda Nature Park, Gandhinagar

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calling from the top of a tree. It was continuously calling. It was photographed on 19 July 2018 at the same location, on top a *desi baval* (*Acacia nilotica*), at around 16:00 hrs by the second author. On 23 July 2018 at 11:00 hrs, the bird was busy in foraging and seen feeding on hairy caterpillars. On the same day, another male was observed near the camp site of INP by the second author. On 1 August 2018, at 15:00 hrs, one hepatic female was seen near the campsite of INP on a Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*). The aerial distance between the two locations is approximately 2-3 kms. At both the locations, the birds were seen till the middle of August and were frequently seen and heard calling. The female was seen only 2-3 times and mostly preferred to perch in the canopy and was seen flying across from one tree to another to catch insects.

The Grey-bellied Cuckoo is shown to be resident in southern Gujarat (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). However, the species is widely distributed in the state, and thought to be a resident in south Gujarat and a monsoon migrant to Gir National Park area; there are isolated records from other parts of Saurashtra and northern Gujarat (Bagada *et al.* 2015). For central Gujarat, there was a recent sighting in early summer from Vasad, Anand (Nagrecha 2018). There are now many records of the species from Saurashtra from areas like Hingolghadh and Rampara (near Rajkot) posted on the website 'eBird'. Though there are many sightings of the Grey-bellied Cuckoo from various districts in the state now, there is paucity of data regarding its occurrence in Gandhinagar. It is interesting that two males and one female were seen in Gandhinagar over a period of almost one month. It is possible that it is an uncommon monsoon migrant in this district. Further sightings will help in understanding its status and distribution here.

References

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The Indroda Nature Park (henceforth INP) is situated in Gandhinagar, which is the capital of Gujarat. INP is a well-wooded forest with dense vegetation of trees, shrubs, herbs, climbers, and grasses. The INP is situated on both banks of the Sabarmati River. As a large part of INP is less disturbed, vegetation dependent fauna including insects, reptiles, amphibians, birds and some mammals are regularly seen here. In INP and its surroundings, Asian Koel (*Eudynamis scolopaceus*), Sirkeer Malkoha (*Taccocu leschenaultia*) and Common Hawk Cuckoo (*Hierococcyx varius*) are seen regularly while the monsoon migratory Jacobin Cuckoo (*Clamator jacobinus*) and Eurasian Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) have also been noted. In July 2018, Grey-bellied Cuckoo (*Cacomantis passerinus*) was recorded from INP, which is uncommon/rare for Gandhinagar.

On 18 July 2018, at 15:15 hrs, in the Botanical Garden of INP, a familiar call of a cuckoo was heard by the first author, and an adult male Grey-bellied Cuckoo was seen perched and