

## Observation of Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush in Kachchh

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birdwatchers. It was identified as a female Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush.



The Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush (*Monticola saxatilis*), formerly Common Rock Thrush or Rock Thrush, is a Chat belonging to the family Muscicapidae. It was formerly placed in the family Turdidae. It breeds in southern Europe, across Central Asia to northern China. This species is strongly migratory, with all populations wintering in Africa, south of the Sahara (Collar & Bonan 2017).

On 23 September 2015, we went birding near Karaghogha village (22° 57' 1.99" N 69° 41' 14.72" E) of Mundra Taluka, Kachchh, when we saw a bird perched on a tree, at around 11:00 hrs. We initially identified it as a female Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*), but after taking some photos and referring to the field guide (Grimmett *et al.* 2011), we concluded that it was a Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush. We further confirmed its identity by sending the images to senior

We observed this individual for one week, as it remained in the same area. It was seen in a scrub forest, in an area dominated by *Zizyphus nummularia* (locally called as *Bor*). We observed this bird perching on *Acacia nilotica* (locally called as *Baval*) and *Prosopis cineraria* (locally called as *Khijado*). It was continually hunting for insects and made short sallies from its perch. It was not seen after one week and presumably had moved on to its wintering grounds.

The Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush is a passage migrant in India (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). On studying the records of the species from southern, and western India (Balar *et al.* 2016), five recent records are from Kachchh. While all records are from the autumn passage migration season, interestingly, only one record is from February (Mishra 2015), indicating early spring migration. All the records from Gujarat are listed in table.

### Records of Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush from Gujarat

No	Observers	Date	Place	Remarks
1	R. D. Jadeja, Kavi Tej	October 1998	Naliya, Kachchh	Jadeja & Shah 2007
2	R. D. Jadeja, Kavi Tej	October 2000	Naliya, Kachchh	Jadeja & Shah 2007
3	R. D. Jadeja, Kavi Tej	October 2002	Naliya, Kachchh	Jadeja & Shah 2007
4	Veer Vaibhav Mishra	4 February 2015	Banni Grassland, Kachchh	Mishra 2015
5	Dilipsinh Chudasama & Akshit Suthar	23 September 2015	Mundra, Kachchh	author's sighting

It was interesting to note that this individual was seen for one week in the same area. It is possible that it may remain in suitable habitat, before resuming its migration. Thus, suitable sites in Kachchh may act as stop-over sites for the species during migration. But, this can only be proved if there are more observations from Kachchh in the future.

### References

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