

## Possible first record of Black-winged Cuckooshrike in Gujarat

**Mukesh Bhatt:** Mavji Nivas, Nr. Jalaram Temple, Vesu, Surat-7. mukeshbhatt\_mbhatt@yahoo.com

**Devratsinh Mori:** Opp. Kharva Pole Gate, Wadhavan City-363030. devratsinh\_mori@yahoo.com

**Mit Bhatt:** Mavji Nivas, Nr. Jalaram Temple, Vesu, Surat-7.

On 14 March 2015, we visited Sagai forest in Shoolpaneshwar Wildlife Sanctuary, Narmada District. At around 4 pm, soon after reaching there, second and third author started photographing birds in the surrounding area. At that place, they encountered an unfamiliar bird, which they could not identify at first sight. After keen observation, we were surprised to see a Black-winged Cuckooshrike (*Coracina melaschistos*), which first author had seen multiple times during his visits to the Himalayas. It was probably a female or an immature bird, with faint barring on the underparts, a broken eye-ring, barring on the vent and thicker bill. Though similar to the Grey-bellied Cuckoo, this could be identified as a Black-winged Cuckooshrike since it was seen well and the characteristic features were noted.

It was not shy and allowed us to take photos from a distance of just around 30 feet. It was hopping from one branch to another branch of a Teak (*Tectona grandis*) tree. On the next day also, it was seen moving around at the same place. After referring to the distribution maps in various field guides (Kazmierczak 2000, Grimmett *et al* 2011, Rasmussen & Anderton 2012), we came to know that its occurrence was not shown for Gujarat.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike affects open forest, riverine bamboo jungle, pine, oak and chestnut woods, abandoned lands and groves. It breeds in Himalayas and NE Indian hills and winters in the peninsula, with scattered records from Kolkata, Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, western Maharashtra,

Karnataka and as far south as Tamil Nadu (at Point Calimere) (Ali & Ripley 2007). Sighting of the bird in this area could be a change spotting on its return migration from a regular wintering area towards Himalayas. However as per published literature, there is no report of this species from Gujarat. Hence this sighting can be treated as the first photographic record of this species from Gujarat.

### References:

Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D., 2007. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka*. 2nd ed., 2nd impression. Delhi: (Sponsored by Bombay Natural History Society.) Oxford University Press [Oxford India Paperbacks.]. Vol. 6 of 10 vols. P-19-20

Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 2011. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press & Christopher Helm.

Kazmierczak, K., 2000. *A field guide to the birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives*. 1st ed. London: Pica Press / Christopher Helm.

Rasmussen, P. C., & Anderton, J. C., 2012. *Birds of South Asia: the Ripley guide*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C. and Barcelona: Smithsonian Institution and Lynx Edicions. 2 vols. □



Photo : Devratsinh Mori



"The tragedy of our times is that mankind's success has extracted a heavy cost to all other living groups."