

photographed by Oscar Campbell at Khor-al Beida in the UAE (OSME 2017), which had established for the first time a migratory link between the Russian Far East and the Middle East. Thus, the present sighting by us from India further supports this migratory link and points to a few birds from the Russian Far East wintering in the Indian Subcontinent and the Middle East.



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Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME), 2017. E1 in the UAE: A story of one Great Knot. www.osme.org (Accessed on 16/11/2018). □

The Great Knot is a regular winter visitor to the Gulf of Kachchh (Ganpule *et al.* 2011). It breeds in north-east Siberia, Russia, and winters mainly in Australia, but also throughout the coastline of South-East Asia and on the coasts of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. (Bird Life International 2018) This species has been moved from ‘Vulnerable’ to ‘Endangered’ owing to recent evidence showing a very rapid population decline caused by reclamation of non-breeding stopover grounds, and under the assumption that further proposed reclamation projects will cause additional declines in the future (Bird Life International 2018).

Purple Heron preying on a Barred Buttonquail

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On 28 June 2018, at 17:30 hrs, we went for birding and photography in Navsari outskirts area, mainly looking for birds seen in the early monsoon season. We observed few egrets (*Egretta* sp.) in the grass near a wetland. We then spotted a Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and later we saw through our binoculars that it was hunting and had caught a Barred Buttonquail (*Turnix suscitator*). We identified the buttonquail as a Barred Buttonquail as its typical plumage was seen and photographed. The Purple Heron was trying to swallow the buttonquail while we were watching it. Unfortunately, some cattle in the area disturbed it and the heron flew away in a

dense *Prosopis juliflora* patch. After that we could not find it again.

The Purple Heron has a varied diet with fish, small mammals, amphibians (frogs and salamanders), nestlings or small birds, reptiles (snakes, lizards and skinks), crustaceans, mollusks (water snails), and insects (*Hemiptera* sp., grasshoppers, dragonflies, bees, flies, spiders, beetles, and aquatic larvae) taken (Kushlan & Hancock 2005, Martínez-Vilalta *et al.* 2018). In India, stomach contents of 70 adult specimens of Purple Herons, collected in the Sundarbans, in West Bengal, showed that their diet mainly comprised of fish (57%), but reptiles

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(21%), crustaceans (14%), and insects (8%) were also taken (Mukherjee 1971).



Minal Patel

In Bharatpur, Rajasthan, a Purple Hereon was noted swallowing a full grown Jungle Babbler (*Turdoides striata*), which it had presumably killed (Johnson 1988). It has been noted feeding on a White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*) also

(Patel 1998). Recently, the Purple Heron was seen hunting a lark (*Alaudidae*) species in Gujarat (Mistry & Patel 2018). The Purple Heron has not been noted feeding on a Barred Buttonquail and it is an addition to the already varied diet of this heron.

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Golden Eagle near Palanpur: an addition to the avifauna of Gujarat

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The areas around Palanpur and Deesa, north Gujarat, are very good for bird watching. We regularly visit areas like Balaram-Ambaji Sanctuary, Jessore Sloth Bear Sanctuary, etc. and record the birds in these areas. These areas are especially good for raptors – we have recorded good numbers of Egyptian Vultures (*Neopron percnopterus*) and also other vulture species (*Gyps* sp.). Falcons (*Falco* sp.) and eagles (*Aquila* sp.) are also commonly seen in these areas.

On 7 December 2018, we had gone for birding at a 'panjrapole' (cattle enclosure) (41° 14' 24" N, 72° 35' 18" E), about 20 kms east of Palanpur, north Gujarat. While watching and photographing Egyptian Vultures, at around 09: 30 hrs, we saw an unidentified eagle perched on a *Butea monosperma*. Two House Crows (*Corvus splendens*) were harassing the eagle. We took some photographs. The third author took some photos with a DSLR camera and 200-500 mm lens, wherein the bird was seen more clearly in the photos.

After coming home, we tried to identify the eagle but were confused. We posted the photos of the eagle on the 'North