

## Jessore Sloth Bear Sanctuary....

sanctuary, the first author was able to photograph a Eurasian Sparrowhawk. The bird was perched on the lower branches of a tree in a patch of forest. Earlier we had captured many flying records of the bird from the Sanctuary premises. The bird was identified by white underparts with chevron-shaped markings, lack of gular stripe, and prominent white supercilium. Though the Eurasian Sparrowhawk is a widespread winter visitor to our state, it is probably overlooked and there are very few published records from Jessore.

**Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin** (*Cercotrichas galactotes*) – A Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin was seen perching along with an Indian Robin (*Saxicoloides fulicatus*) at around 17:30 hrs on 18 August 2018 in the foothills of Ranitook region, which is a part of the sanctuary. Both the authors, along with birders Akshay Chauhan and Ravi Dave, were present. During our two hour birding trail, we were able to see three individuals, which were quite bold and we were able to get good photographs. The birds were foraging on the lower branches of trees, on the ground, and all its features were noted. No call was heard during our observations. The second author made consecutive



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visits to the same location in an attempt to relocate it and was successful in seeing it again on 15 September 2018 at 17:00 hrs, on 23 September 2018 at 09:40 hrs and on 7 October 2018 at

10:45 hrs. The last sighting was on 7 October 2018, i.e. 51 days from the first sighting date. The Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin bird is a passage migrant in Gujarat and is seen regularly in Kachchh and sometimes in Saurashtra (Ganpule 2016). These records from Jessore suggest that it is a passage migrant in this area too.

In addition to the records mentioned above, we have noted a juvenile Indian Courser (*Cursorius coromandelicus*), which is uncommon in this area and indicates that it could be breeding here. The endangered and endemic White-naped Tit (*Parus nuchalis*) is resident in the sanctuary and is frequently seen in Jessore. Most of the sightings of White-naped Tit are from the foothills of the sanctuary. We have never seen the species at higher regions of the sanctuary, where Great Tit (*Parus major*) is resident and seen in good numbers. Indian Yellow Tit (*Parus xanthogenys aplonotus*) has been recorded from Ranitook and in the north-east area of sanctuary, facing Mt. Abu. The Mottled Wood Owl (*Strix ocellata*) has been heard thrice from Ranitook, during the night and in the early morning hours. More intensive bird watching, in different seasons and covering more areas of the sanctuary, may result in some more interesting sightings from this area and can further increase the avian species recorded from the sanctuary.

## References

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## Radio-collared Greylag Goose *Anser anser* at Vadla, near Nal Sarovar

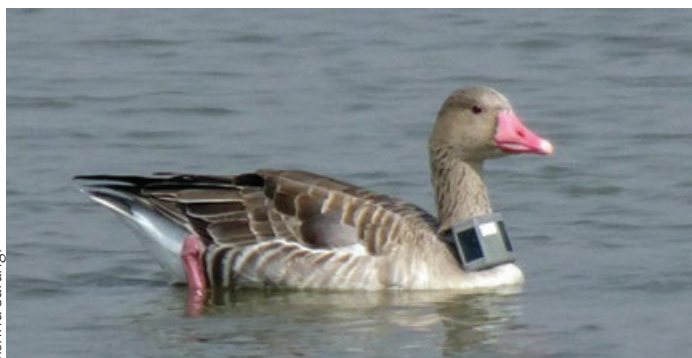
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Vadla Wetland is situated about 90 kms from Ahmedabad, on the Viramgam-Surendranagar highway, towards Gangad. It is a shallow wetland north-west of Nal Sarovar and is a part of the same watershed. Due to very less rainfall, the Nal Sarovar Sanctuary is running dry this year. But, Vadla has water this year due to the Narmada Canal, and has turned into a stop-over spot for migratory birds. The water birds and other common birds have found an alternate home in Vadla this year.

On 13 January 2019, a Sunday, I was on my way back from Ahmedabad. I decided to visit this area. I reached Vadla at around 11:00 hrs in the morning. I was greeted by a profusion of birds, both migratory as well as resident. I took a round of the water body, to do a reconnaissance survey of the area, during which I could spot the following birds without the aid of binoculars:



Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*), Bar-headed Goose (*Anser indicus*) Common Crane (*Grus grus*), Demoiselle Crane (*Grus virgo*), Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*), Common Teal (*Anas crecca*), Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*), Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) and many other common birds.



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The Demoiselle Cranes were in thousands. There were about twenty Bar-headed Geese and about fifty Greylag Geese. I spent about two hours taking photographs. On my return to Rajkot, I downloaded the photos on my computer. I was surprised to see that one of the Greylag Goose had a neck band. In order to share this discovery with other birdwatchers, I posted the photograph on Facebook. Very soon, I started receiving comments from other bird watchers. There was a

general consensus that the band on the neck of the goose was a solar-powered radio transmitter.

It was Dr. Taej Mundkur, Programme Manager at Wetlands International, Ede, Netherlands, who noted the post and referred it to Dr. Nyambayar Batbayer in Mongolia. In no time, he confirmed that the bird was radio-collared on 23 June 2018 at Lake Dorgon, in the province of Khovd, in western Mongolia. Dr. Batbayer, from his data, also confirmed that one of the radio-collared birds was indeed in our area, i.e., at Vadla, in Gujarat. This site is about 3350 kms from the radio collaring site and he further confirmed that this individual was not marked with coloured / numbered bands.

This is the first time a radio-collared Greylag Goose has been observed in Gujarat. From this observation, it is interesting to note that the birds visiting us fly over the Himalayas, all the way from Mongolia. More such observations and interactions with birdwatchers from all over the world can help in knowing about the migration route and conservation requirements of many of these migratory species which winter in India.

### Acknowledgements

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## Sighting of Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* in Vadodara

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### Introduction

The Red-breasted Parakeet (*Psittacula alexandri*) is a resident species of the foothills of the Himalayas, from Uttaranchal to Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (Grimmett *et al.* 2011, Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). It is now a 'Near Threatened' species (Birdlife

International 2018). It usually occurs in small flocks of 6-10 individuals, but much larger flocks are found where food is plentiful (Ali 2002, Arlott 2014). We report its occurrence in the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda arboretum (22.320° N, 73.179° E), located in Vadodara city, Gujarat.

### Observation

On 12 March 2018, at 08:45 hrs, while birding at the arboretum of M. S. University of Baroda, Vadodara, a loud squeaky call of a parakeet (*Psittacula* sp.) caught our attention. It was being chased by a House Crow (*Corvus splendens*). The chase continued for about five minutes till the parakeet could find a safer place to conceal itself in a nearby bush. Intrigued by the unusual calls of the parakeet, we saw, on closer observation through binoculars, that it looked different from the Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*), a common species in the region. We thought it to be an Alexandrine Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*), which has been observed here occasionally. However, when it shifted to the nearby *Eucalyptus* sp. tree, the breast colour was different from an Alexandrine Parakeet. The clear