



Drongo Cuckoo in Gujarat. Later, I found out that Drongo Cuckoo is regularly seen in South Gujarat, and also around Rajpipla forest. There are sporadic records of this bird from Gir National Park, but nonetheless records in Saurashtra are very few. According to Rasmussen & Anderton (2012), the 'Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo' (*S.l.dicuroides*) occurs in our region, but taxonomy is not clear.

I was lucky enough to get photographs of the bird, showing key identification features. It was easily identifiable based on the differences from Black Drongo, and also by its very distinct call (the bird was very vocal). At around 14:00 hrs, we again spotted the bird in a different part of the Sanctuary, near the bridge behind the 'Snake House'. At both times, a single bird was observed.

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Records of Watercock in Gujarat

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The detailed note about Watercock (*Gallicrex cinerea*) sightings in Bharuch District comprising of its behaviour, habitats and threats was published earlier in this journal (Patel 2015). Through this note, I discuss records of Watercock from historical times till the present to show its distribution in Gujarat.

Historical Records:

The earliest record from Gujarat is from Harni, near Vadodara, in 1890, when a female was shot on 25 September 1890

(Littledale 1890). Barnes (1891) collected a female from Sindh (Pakistan), near Gujarat, but noted that it did not occur elsewhere in western India. Later it was seen in Kachchh by Shri H. H. Rao, who shot a pair of birds and sent them to Lester for identification. Lester (1897) wrote that these were a pair of Watercocks and further stated that he received eggs from Kachchh, presumably belonging to this species. Palin (1904) lists it from Kachchh, but he and Dr. Salim Ali did not meet with this bird during their surveys in Kachchh and Gujarat but both have noted that it is found in well-watered areas throughout India (Ali 1945, 1952). Dharmakumarsinji (1955) collected a Watercock from Victoria Park, Bhavnagar, in June 1948 and again sighted it in 1951 and stated that it is very rare in Saurashtra. Khachar (1963) noted it from Rajkot, with Reeves (1963) commenting that it could be a vagrant in the area. Shivraj Kumar (1966) and Lavkumar (1968) noted it from Saurashtra. Hence there are many historical records from Gujarat.



Present Status

In the distribution map of the species for Gujarat, Kazmierczak (2000) has shown one record, while Grimmett *et al.* (2011) shows 3 isolated records and gives it as a winter migrant to Gir

Sightings of Watercock in Gujarat

Sr. No.	Place	Date	Observer	Source/Remarks
1	Victoria Park, Bhavnagar	1970	Bhavbhuti Parasharya	Pers Comm
2	Rajkot outskirts, stream near A. G. Society.	16/07/1985, 18/07/1985	Author's sighting	Sighted by Dr. Taej Munkur, who informed the author
3	Khari river, Bhuj	28/6/1987	S. N. Varu	Pers Comm
4	Nal Sarovar outskirts	Monsoon 1991	Uday Vora	Pers Comm
		9/7/2015	Nirav Bhatt	Pers Comm
		13/7/2015	Bharat Rughani	eBird Website
5	Velavadar National Park	Since 1992 to 2015, every year in August	Indra Gadhavi	Pers Comm; Maximum numbers of 27 were seen in 2007.
		August 1995 then almost every monsoon	Uday Vora	Pers Comm; Nest also observed
		15/7/2000	R. B. Balar	Balar 2000
		10/6/2006	Prasad Ganpule	Pers Comm
		8/7/2011	Maulik Varu	eBird Website
		24/8/2015	David Stanton	eBird Website
		13/7/2013	S.N. Varu	Pers Comm
6	South Gujarat Univesity Campus, Surat	01/06/1999, 02/06/2000, 09/06/2000, 30/07/2000	Mukesh Bhatt	Bhatt 2000
7	Gavier lake, Surat	2/6/2000	Mukesh Bhatt	Pers Comm
8	Kamrej, Surat	11/06/2000, 04/07/2000, 30/07/2000	Mukesh Bhatt	Pers Comm
9	Viroja, behind Pariej lake, Kheda	Monsoon 2004 , Further four sightings	Uday Vora	Pers Comm
10	Gir forest	14/12/2005	Yogendra Shah	Shah 2006
11	Dandi Road, Surat	4/7/2006	Mukesh Bhatt	Bhatt 2007
12	Near Vibhapar, Jamnagar	20/7/2009	Maulik Varu, Kapilsinh Zala	Zala 2009
13	Kumbharvada wetland, Bhavnagar	2010,2011 and 2013	Indra Gadhavi	Pers Comm
		02/08/2012, 07/09/2012	S.N. Varu	Pers Comm
14	Between Rohini village and Padad	Monsoon 2009	Uday Vora	Pers Comm
15	Khijadia Bird Sanctuary	25/11/2010 02/01/2011	P G Akbar, Jay Bhayani	eBird Website
16	Untiyadra, Ta. Ankleshwar, Dist. Bharuch (Sighted in 10 Villges of Ankleshwar taluka and 9 villages of Hansot taluka)	15/06/2011, then every year in good numbers in the monsoon season. Maximum 23 in a day.	Jugal H. Patel	Patel (2015)
17	Kosamba Ta. Ankleshwar Dist. Bharuch	7/8/2012	Arpit Deomurari	Oriental Bird Images Website
		Jul-15	Minal Patel	Pers Comm
18	Chhapara road, Navsari	Monsoon 2013	Jayesh Joshi	Pers Comm
19	Ahmedabad outskirts	28/10/2014	Pankaj Maheria	Oriental Bird Images
20	Pipalava Talav, Amreli	25/07/2015, 03/08/2015, 05/09/2015, 08/09/2015	Viral Joshi	eBird Website
21	Kheta Khatali, Ta/Dist.Bhavnagar	Jul-15	Bhavbhuti Parasharya	Pers Comm
22	Between Bagodara and Nalsarovar	15/7/2015	Kartik Patel	Pers Comm
23	Gosabara Wetland, Porbandar	28/11/2014	Bharat Rughani	eBird Website
24	Amreli	8/11/2016	Viral Joshi	Joshi & Legha 2016
25	Randarda, Rajkot	11/6/2016	Jignesh Rathod	Pers Comm
		12/6/2016	Ashok Mashru, Manoj Finava	Pers Comm

forest area. Ramussen & Anderton (2012) show it as a summer visitor to an isolated area of Saurashtra, noting it as scarce but wide spread.

The collected records of Watercock are listed in table and locations of same are displayed in the accompanying map. At many places, isolated records of Watercock have been reported, with one or two individuals seen. At Velavadar National Park, where sightings since many years have been noted, a maximum number of 27 birds were seen by Dr. Indra Gadhavi in 2007. Another important place for the occurrence of Watercock is Bharuch District, where it is found in good concentrations. Sightings from villages of Ankleshwar and Hansot taluka (Bharuch District) have been given by Patel (2015), wherein details of these sightings can be obtained and it is fairly common in that area.

The sighting of Watercock in December 2005 (Shah 2006) in Gir is also noteworthy. This is one of the few sightings of the Watercock in the winter months, with other winter sightings from Khijadiya (near Jamnagar) and from Porbandar.

Looking at the sightings of Watercock in Gujarat, it can be said that Watercock visits not only Saurashtra, but also Kachchh, central and south Gujarat mainly in summer- monsoon season. It can be seen from the map that Bhal area in Bhavnagar District and well-watered areas of south Gujarat near the Gulf of Khambhat region are areas where it is regularly seen in good numbers. Elsewhere, isolated records are found, except in the dry regions of North Gujarat; mainly Banaskantha, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Panchmahal and Dahod districts. It is possible that the Watercock might be occurring in well watered areas in these districts too, but has not been observed due to its shy nature and skulking habits. Surveys in the monsoon season will be useful to know its status there.

Breeding

There are only two records of its breeding in Gujarat; one is mentioned by Lester (as stated earlier) and second is by Uday Vora in 1995 at Velavadar National Park. These two records are insufficient to know whether the Watercock is a widespread breeding migrant to Gujarat, and more records will be helpful in understanding this. The widespread sightings in the monsoon months indicate that it could be breeding here.

Conclusion

The Watercock is widely distributed in Gujarat. Though there are sightings since 1890 till the present, it is still not certain whether the Watercock is mainly a breeding migrant to Gujarat or whether it is also a winter visitor. A concentrated study of Watercocks, including satellite tracking, is required to understand its status and migration.

Acknowledgements

I thank all birdwatchers who shared their sightings of Watercock from Gujarat.

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