

## Sighting of tagged Lesser Sand Plover from Kachchh

**Jaysukh Parekh:** Suman Remedies, C/17 R.T.O. Relocation Site, Bhuj 370001, Kachchh. nisusuman@gmail.com



Jaysukh Parekh

I visited Modhava beach, near Mandvi, Kachchh, on 22 May 2016, with my son Nirav. Late in the evening, while returning back, I saw a group of three Lesser Sand Plovers (*Charadrius mongolus*) and photographed them. There was one Lesser Sand Plover with a metal ring on left leg and a white tag with mark 'S6' on right leg. Ringing details were confirmed by Colin Jackson as under:

Species: Lesser Sand Plover

Ring number: F00344 (metal ring on left leg); White flag on right leg with black script: "S6"

Date ringed: 20/1/2013

Time: 01:00 hrs

Location: Mida Creek High Tide Roost, Watamu, Kenya

Coords: 03° 22 S, 39° 58 E

Ringer: Andrew Kinzer (A Rocha Kenya)

Age: 4 (adult)

Wing: 130mm

Weight: 51.6g

Primary Moul: 555555531

(completing moult)

Time elapsed since ringing: 3 years, four months, one day.

Distance from ringing site: 4308km.

Colin Jackson also informed that this was only the second ever recovery of a Lesser Sand Plover from East Africa - the only other one was a bird ringed in December 1982, also in Mida Creek, by David Pearson and found in Pasni, Baluchistan, Pakistan, two and a half years later in September 1985.

Further comments by the A Rocha International, who conduct the ringing in Kenya, were as follows: 'This is hugely interesting as it shows that the Lesser Sand Plovers we have on the Kenyan coast follow the same route as the Greater Sand Plovers (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) - but trail behind them by 1-2 months. Unlike the Greater Sand Plovers, which breed on more low-lying plains and Steppe, the Lesser Sand Plovers breed in mountain valleys, which presumably only get warm enough for them around May and in early June. They therefore start their breeding season quite a bit later, probably having a faster turnaround in order to be back in Kenya by mid-August or early September'.

It is to be noted that a tagged Greater Sand Plover was seen at the same location for two consecutive years (Tiwari 2016). Hence, this sighting suggests that Kachchh lies on the migration route of Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers from eastern Africa to their breeding grounds.

### References

Tiwari, P. 2016. Tagged Greater Sand Plover from Kachchh. *Flamingo* 14 (2):18 □



## Sighting of Drongo Cuckoo at Hingolghadh, Rajkot Dist.

**Dhaivat Andhariya:** B-4, Rang Tarang Apt., Nr. Aakash Deep Tower, Shreyas Crossing, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad 380015. dhaivat.a@gmail.com

**Mayank Ghedia:** B-61/62, Sharnam-1, Opp. Lotus School, Jodhpur Gam, Satellite, Ahmedabad 380015. mayankghedia@gmail.com

On 28 June 2015, we visited Hingolghadh Nature Education Sanctuary near Jasdan, Rajkot Dist., to watch the Indian Pitta (*Pitta brachyura*). Kamal Shah was also with us. We reached there at around 08:30 and we were greeted with loud and incessant calls of Common Hawk Cuckoo (*Hierococcyx varius*). At around 10:45 hrs, we heard a distinct, Cuckoo like call, which was different from the call of Common Hawk Cuckoo. So we tried to locate the bird. After some searching, we spotted a bird sitting on a branch of a large *Ficus* tree (*Ficus*

*benghalensis*). It looked similar to a Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*). I immediately identified it as a Drongo Cuckoo (*Surnicululus lugubris*). None of the field guides (Kazmierczak 2000, Grimmett *et al.* 2011) I referred have shown the distribution of





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.

### References

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

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

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

## Records of Watercock in Gujarat

**Ashok Mashru:** A-7, Alap Heritage, Kalavad Road, Rajkot. mashruashok@gmail.com



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