

Sighting of Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris* near Mahuva, Bhavnagar: a second record for Gujarat

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On 10 October 2019, at around 14:45 hrs, I was birding near my home and taking photographs of a Rusty-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscicapa ruficauda*). While taking photographs, I noticed that a warbler (*Phylloscopus* sp.) came and perched on the branch. I was able to take five photos before it flew away. Out of these five photographs, two photographs showed well all the features of this warbler. I noted that it was larger sized than a Greenish Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*), with longer and all dark bill. It had dark green upperparts, greyish

underparts, a large looking eye, broad and dark eye stripe, yellowish-white supercilium with dark crown and greyish ear-coverts. I identified it as a Large-billed Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus magnirostris*) based on the above features. I shared the photographs with other senior birders here and the identification was confirmed by them too.

The Large-billed Leaf Warbler breeds in the Himalayas and winter in the Western and Eastern Ghats (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). It is a vagrant in Gujarat and there is only one previous record of the Large-billed Leaf Warbler from the state; an individual was seen in Little Rann of Kachchh (Ganpule 2016). Thus, this is the second record of a Large-billed Leaf Warbler from Gujarat. It is possible that it could be a vagrant during passage migration and needs to be looked out for in our state.

References

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Observations of Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* as predator and prey

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The Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), also known as Indian Myna, is a member of the family *Sturnidae*, a native to Asia. This species is very widely distributed across Asia, including Iran, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, peninsular Thailand, Indo-China and China (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

This myna has been introduced in many other parts of the world such as Canada, Australia, Israel, New Zealand, New Caledonia, United States, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, islands in the Indian Ocean (Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, Maldives, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep archipelago) and also on islands of the Atlantic, such as Ascension and St Helena (Ali & Ripley 2001). The distribution range of the Common Myna is increasing to such an extent, that in the year 2000, the IUCN Species Survival Commission declared it among the 'World's 100 worst invasive

species' (Lowe *et al.* 2000). The Common Myna is omnivorous and an opportunistic feeder. The diversity of ingredients found in its dietary spectrum includes various species of insects, arachnids, crustaceans, reptiles, small mammals, seeds, grain, fruits and discarded waste from human habitation (Mathew *et al.* 1978, Ali & Ripley 2001). We were able to observe three instances of Common Myna, whereby it preyed on lizards (reptiles) on two different occasions and localities; the other observation is an account of an attempted predation of a Common Myna by a frog. Detailed observations are given as follows:

Observation I: On 1 July 2015, few mynas were observed foraging under the dense hedge cover in the garden of Vishwamitri River Project office, Karelibaug, Vadodara. Suddenly, a myna somehow was able to catch a live lizard, about 6-8 cm long, from the grass cover. The myna continued to repeatedly poke its beak and attack the lizard on the head.