

the state, some individuals do stay back for an extended period in the winter. But, more observations will help in understanding the status and distribution of the Eurasian Scops Owl in Gujarat.

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Sighting of Plain Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus neglectus* near Nal Sarovar

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collybita) of the *tristis* subspecies, which is also known as Siberian Chiffchaff, and which winters in India; Plain Leaf Warbler can be separated from Siberian Chiffchaff by its smaller size, proportionately shorter tail and larger head. Its call is a hard *tak tak* and a low-pitched *churr*, which is different from the call of a Siberian Chiffchaff (Grimmett *et al.* 2011).

The Plain Leaf Warbler is thought to be a rare winter migrant or a vagrant to Gujarat, and is probably overlooked due to identification difficulties. Sight records from Little Rann of Kachchh and Amreli are known and it is thought to occur in the Greater Rann of Kachchh (Ganpule 2016). However, there are no photographic records from Greater Rann.

On 13 February 2019, we were birding in the areas surrounding Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary. At around 08:00 hrs, on the outskirts of Aniyari, a small village near the sanctuary, we saw a flock of Black-headed Buntings (*Emberiza melanocephala*) and Red-headed Buntings (*Emberiza bruniceps*). We stopped to photograph these birds. After a few minutes, we noticed a

The Plain Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus neglectus*) is a winter migrant to western India (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) state that there are a few sight records from India, but no specimens were traced. The Plain Leaf Warbler looks very similar to a Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus*

Plain Leaf Warbler...

small warbler (*Phylloscopus* sp.) perched on a dried branch of a *Prosopis* just about 15-20 feet in front of us. It stayed there for 10-15 seconds and changed its position once or twice. Since it was very near to us, we could get good photographs. We initially thought that it was a Common Chiffchaff but saw that it had a shorter tail and a larger head, lacked any yellow at the wing-bend and had a small bill. We referred to Shirihai & Svensson (2018) and in addition to the features described, confirmed the identification as a Plain Leaf Warbler based on the pale olive-tinged edges to the secondaries forming a hint of a panel, white undertail-coverts, whitish supercilium in front of eye become isabelline-tinged behind the eye, darker eye-stripe extending beyond eye, and pale brownish-tinged head and mantle. On the same day and near this area, we saw another warbler which was smaller and looked different from a Common Chiffchaff. However, we could not get any images to confirm the identification. But, we felt that it could also have been a Plain Leaf Warbler.

This sighting confirms the occurrence of Plain Leaf Warbler near Nal Sarovar. Since the identification of Plain Leaf

Warbler in the field is quite difficult, we feel that it is probably overlooked and could be present in suitable habitats, especially in Saurashtra and Kachchh. The Plain Leaf Warbler prefers open wooded areas, tamarisks and acacias in the winter; these are the habitats in which it should be looked out for in the state.

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Unusual prey by White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* and Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* in Jamnagar

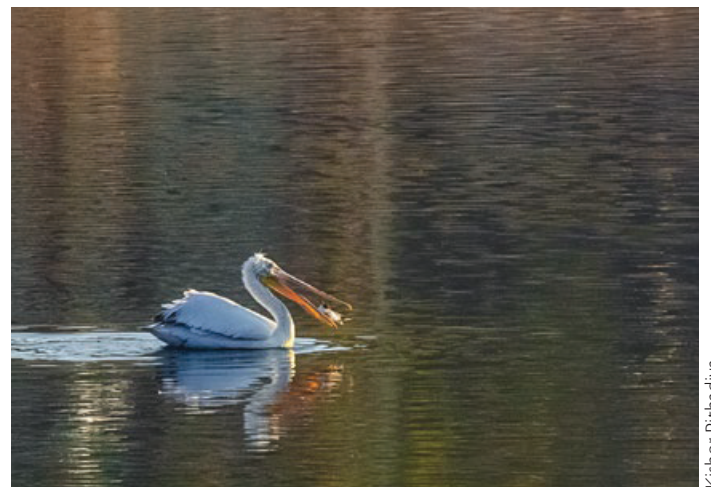
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On 25 May 2018, while birding at Lakhota Lake, Jamnagar, which is also known as Ranmal Lake, I saw three White-throated Kingfishers (*Halcyon smyrnensis*), most likely a family, which included both parent birds along with one juvenile, perched on a tree. While searching for prey, they found a bat (*Chiroptera* sp.), which was probably a juvenile, and had come on to the ground and was hiding in a small hollow in the ground. I could not identify the species of the bat – it was probably either a *Chiroptera* sp. or a juvenile of flying fox

(*Pteropus* sp.). It was not the pipistrelle since it was quite large in size. One parent bird caught the bat in its beak and settled on the ground. The other adult bird rushed towards it and snatched the prey with its beak. Thereafter, a competition started and both the birds got busy snatching, tearing and eating the prey. After about seven minutes, they finished the prey, and only the wings were left. The juvenile bird was sitting nearby and observing the parents during the whole event. I took many photos of the birds feeding on the bat.



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