

Re-sighting of tagged Greater Sand Plover at Modhava, near Mandvi, Kachchh

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It was a matter of luck, to click a very small tag on the leg of a wader on a six kms long beach, where thousands of birds are moving around, flying and foraging.

As the same, tagged, Greater Sand Plover was reported for two consecutive years at same spot and almost at the same time, we were hopeful to sight the bird once more and started to visit Modhava as many times as possible. We visited Modhava beach, near Mandvi, Kachchh, on 8, 10, 20, 25, and 31 March 2017, and again on 4 April 2017.

After photographing many birds, on 25 March 2017, we saw one Greater Sand Plover which seemed to have a tag on its leg. It was in a mixed flock of waders, which had around 40 Greater Sand Plovers. On enlarging the image on my computer, I was overjoyed to see that it was the same individual seen in the previous years, with an orange plastic tag marked 'TA' on the right tibia. The ringing details for this individual have been given earlier (Tewari 2016).

It is extraordinary that this same individual was seen at the same place, almost at the same time, for three consecutive years during migration. It reaffirms the observation that Greater Sand Plovers are faithful to stop-over sites on migration.

References

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Jaysukh Parekh

I was very excited when I saw a tagged Greater Sand Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) and Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) last year in March 2016 at Modhava beach, near Mandvi, Kachchh (Tewari 2016, Parekh 2017).

Sighting of Red-breasted Parakeet in Tena village, Surat

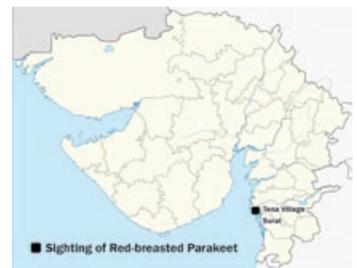
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The Red-breasted Parakeet (*Psittacula alexandri*) is listed as a 'Near Threatened' (NT) species by IUCN (BirdLife International 2013). It is resident along the foothills of the entire Himalayas, in North-eastern India, and the Andaman Islands (Grimmett *et. al.* 2011).



A single Red-breasted Parakeet was seen and photographed on 6 November 2016 in Tena village, near Surat. Gujarat is home to three species of parakeets; Plum-headed Parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*), Alexandrine Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*) and

Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*). This could be the first record of Red-breasted Parakeet in Surat District; maybe even a first in the state, as there is no past data or record of this species here. The Red-breasted Parakeet can be identified easily by its 'moustache' like black stripe below its beak, uniform grey-blue head, narrow line from forehead to eye, salmon pink breast and upper abdomen and green-yellow tipped beak.

There can be many reasons behind the sighting of this bird beyond its native range, but the main reason seems to be pet trade. Such introductions by humans have often led to the successful establishment of many exotic birds and expansion of ranges beyond native areas. In general, feral populations of Red-breasted Parakeets are known to occur in cities like Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore. This bird could have been surviving in the wild, as it was seen with a group of Rose-ringed Parakeets. It came with the flock of Rose-ringed Parakeets and sat on a tree and started feeding. The flock remained there for 4-5 minutes and flew off far away on the arrival of a Eurasian Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*). The sighting of this species in Gujarat is interesting.

[A Red-breasted Parakeet was seen again on 4 December 2016 at Tunda village, about 10-15 kms north-west of Tena village, where it was seen earlier. The bird was not with the Rose-ringed Parakeets group and was seen alone. On speaking

with the villagers, we came to know that it was being seen there since the last three months. We will keep looking for this individual – Palak Thakor & Pradip Sharan, Surat]

[The Red-breasted Parakeet is not included in the checklist of birds of Gujarat (Parasharya et al. 2004, Ganpule 2016). As explained above, this individual is most probably an escapee from the pet trade, which is a major problem. If a feral population is established and survives in the future, then it can be considered in the state checklist. This sighting is similar to the sighting of Vernal Hanging Parrot (*Loriculus vernalis*), reported from Morbi earlier (Ganpule 2011), which was not included in the Gujarat checklist. At present, these sightings are best treated as isolated records. Hence, this species is not included in the state checklist at present – Eds]

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Orange-headed Thrush in Surat

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On 16 June 2015, Nature Club Surat received a call regarding an injured bird. As soon as the call was received, a volunteer was deployed for rescue. After reaching the spot, the volunteer found that an Orange-headed Thrush (*Zoothera citrina*) had been recovered in an injured condition. After examining the bird, the first author discovered that it was just dehydrated. After bringing it to the rescue center, the bird was given plenty of water to drink and kept for 24 hrs to observe its recovery. After it looked to have recovered sufficiently, it was decided

to release it at Gavier Lake, Surat, which is around 10 kms from the rescue site. The Orange-headed Thrush flew away strongly as soon as it was released and perched on a tree close to the lake. On 29 May 2016, an Orange-headed Thrush was observed by Ashish Chaudhari at Gavier Lake. This species is an uncommon resident in south Gujarat (Ganpule 2016), and these sightings from Surat confirm its occurrence here.



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References

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