

## Sighting of Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin near Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, Jamnagar

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Though it occurs in Saurashtra (Dharmakumarsinhji 1955, Naik *et al.* 1990), it has not been recently reported from Jamnagar area. Reported earlier from Dwarka and Jasdan (Ali & Ripley 2001), it is said to be common in Kachchh (Ali 1955). All recent images of Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin on the Oriental Bird Images website (<http://orientalbirdimages.org>) from Gujarat are from Kachchh and Varu (2014) has reported 26 sightings from Kachchh during last 24 years period. It seems it is rare in other parts of Gujarat, or is overlooked. Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary lies south of Kachchh, across the Gulf, so this could be on its passage migration route.



**Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin** (*Cercotrichas galactotes*) is an autumn passage migrant in Gujarat (Grimmett *et al.* 2011). It is mainly seen in late August and September, but is not very common and is usually seen in the grassland areas of Kachchh during passage migration season (Ali 1955).

On 13 September 2013, I went for bird watching near Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, Jamnagar, with fellow birder Nirav Bhatt. Since it was the passage migration season, we were expecting to see Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (*Merops persicus*) and Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*). Early winter migrants, mainly waders, were also seen in the area. There, we came across a bird which was unfamiliar to me but Nirav immediately recognized it as a Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, due to its distinctive rufous tail, structure, face markings and its habits. We photographed it.

### References:

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It is true that I despise purposeless killing, and regard it as an act of vandalism, deserving the severest condemnation. But my love for birds is not of the sentimental variety. It is essentially aesthetic and scientific, and in some cases may even be pragmatic. For a scientific approach to bird study, it is often necessary to sacrifice a few, ... (and) I have no doubt that but for the methodical collecting of specimens in my earlier years – several thousands, alas – it would have been impossible to advance our taxonomical knowledge of Indian birds ... nor indeed of their geographic distribution, ecology, and bionomics.

- Dr. Salim Ali