

Acknowledgements

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Sighting of Spangled Drongo at Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh

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to my familiarity with the species around Bangalore, where they are not uncommon. The Silk Cotton Tree on which the birds settled and started vocalizing, was back lit against the hazy morning sky. I could only manage a few silhouette photos of the pair whose largish head and bill that looks long and down-curved, besides a long, squarish tail-end, with lower outer-edges curved-up and inwards, were very characteristic to indicate and confirm the identity. The birds flew away as I tried to approach closer for a better photo.

The Spangled Drongo is known to be a resident in India, found from the Himalayan foothills to north-eastern India and down to southern India, encompassing both the Eastern and the Western Ghats, with a noticeable absence in western and north-western India – namely Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab (Ali & Ripley 1987, Rasmussen & Anderton 2012).

In Gujarat, it is given to be a rare resident in south Gujarat, with an isolated record from Kachchh (Ganpule 2016). Recent sightings of the species from the Shoolpaneshwar Wildlife Sanctuary, Narmada District, by Viral Joshi on 9 March 2012 (Joshi 2012) and from Dangs, south Gujarat (Theba 2017) are known. Earlier, it had been noted in Mandvi, Kachchh, many times over a period of a few years from 1948 to 1966 (Himmatsinhji 1998).

It has also been sighted at Indroda Park near Gandhinagar, central Gujarat, in 1992 by Bakul Trivedi and Uday Vora in separate visits. (*pers. comm*)

In this regard, the present sighting assumes importance as the first record of the species in Saurashtra. This sighting indicates that there may be other locations where the species could possibly occur in the right season, coinciding with

I happened to be at the Junagadh Agricultural University (JAU), Junagadh, between 23 January 2018 to 25 January 2018 to take part in an official meeting, and I did not want to miss-out on the birding opportunity that the University Campus offered. Even before I arrived at the Campus, I had picked my birding spots based on Google Earth, as JAU appeared to be a very poorly birded area as per data on the website 'eBird'. On 23rd morning, while I made my way towards a large constructed pond, the Pari Talav area (21° 29' 54.24" N, 70° 27' 2.70" E), which is surrounded by a garden and orchards, I observed a Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) pair making their way away from me. I watched over half a dozen Asian Palm Swifts (*Cypsiurus balasiensis*) milling around a Palmyra Palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) found around Pari Talav, and my attention was drawn to a pair of drongos (*Dicrurus* sp.) flying towards a Silk Cotton (*Bombax ceiba*), locally called as 'Shimalo'. The birds were readily identified as Spangled Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*) pair, also known as Hair-crested Drongo, owing

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the flowering of Silk Cotton and *Erythrina* sp. trees, as the Spangled Drongo is known to undertake widespread seasonal wanderings, governed largely by the flowering of these trees (Ali & Ripley 1987). The earlier sightings from Kachchh were also from December to February. Thus, the Spangled Drongo is a species that one should look for in the winter and early summer, coinciding with the flowering of *Bombax* and *Erythrina* sp. in other parts of Gujarat.

Ali & Ripley (1987) indicate that there appears to be a clinal variation in the populations of Spangled Drongo from south to north India based on size; the northern population being larger morphometrically (Vaurie 1955). Thus, it would be interesting to ascertain if the occurrence of the species in Gujarat is indeed due to the movement of birds from the Western Ghats population or whether it is a rare resident in the south Gujarat and is a local migrant to other parts of the state in the winter. Details of the sighting of this species with more photographs, along with other species seen during the visit, are available on 'eBird' at Subramanya (2018).

[The exact status of Spangled Drongo in Gujarat is not known; there are no recent photos of this species from Gujarat on popular birding websites. The records posted on 'eBird' from south Gujarat are not photographic records. It is possible that this is an overlooked species. This sighting from Saurashtra is important and indicates that it

could be a winter visitor to some well wooded parts of the state. Birders are urged to look for this species here – Eds]

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Sightings of tagged waders near Jamnagar

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On 25 April 2018, we were birding near coastal areas of Jamnagar in the morning hours. We noticed two Bar-tailed Godwits (*Limosa lapponica*) which were tagged and ringed. We took some images of the tagged birds. Further, we saw two more Bar-tailed Godwits, one Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), one Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) and two Crab Plovers (*Dromas ardeola*) which were also tagged and ringed. All the tagged birds looked healthy and were seen along with groups of their own species. Six out of eight tagged birds were in breeding plumage except the Kentish Plover and the Crab Plover. We were able to take photographs of mostly all of them along with tags which could be read in the photographs. But, we saw one other Crab Plover which was also tagged and ringed, for which we could not get good photos to read the tag details.

The photographs were sent to BNHS (Bombay Natural History Society) for getting the ringing and tagging details. Following

details were received from the BNHS:

Ringed done by - BNHS team

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