

Sighting of Tickell's Thrush in Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary

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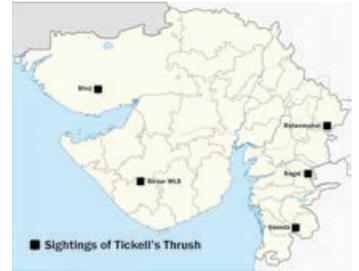
I visited Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Dist. Junagadh, on 10 January 2015. Around 3 km away from Bhavanath Temple, there is a place called Kashmiribapu's Ashram and Temple (21°30'55" N, 70°30'23" E). I went there with my wife for birding. It is a dense deciduous jungle with dark shady areas. We have seen Brown-breasted Flycatcher (*M. muttui*), Asian Paradise-Flycatcher (*T. paradisi*), Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (*C. tickelliae*), Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher (*C. ceylonensis*), Black-naped Monarch (*H. azurea*), Common lora (*A. tiphia*) and many other common birds in this area in the course of previous visits to this place.

In a muddy area filled with garbage, near the temple, I saw a bird feeding on the ground. It was probably feeding on insects/worms in the garbage. It was a grayish bird with yellow bill. I took some images. Initially I thought, it was an Indian Blackbird (*T. merula nigropileus*). Sometime later I saw the same bird perched on a branch of a tree. This time I could observe it in detail and take good photographs. It had a yellow bill, light yellow eye ring, with grey wing coverts, head and wings slightly darker grayish, whitish vent and pale legs. After some time I saw another similar bird with yellow bill and legs, and grayish, buffy streaked breast on another nearby tree. I took photos of that bird also.



Gaurang Bagda

After comparing the images with illustrations in the field guides (Kazmierczak 2000, Grimmett et al. 2011); consulting Maulik Varu, Prasad Ganpule and Ashok Mashru and referring to Oriental Bird Images and other websites, I concluded that it was a Tickell's Thrush (*Turdus unicolor*).



Tickell's Thrush was seen again this winter (2015-2016) in the same area on 8 December 2015, when an adult pair was photographed. Further sightings of a female on 23 December 2015 (Image 2) and a male on 15 January 2016 were made, suggesting that it was a winter visitor to this area.

Tickell's Thrush is not shown to occur in Gujarat as per Kazmierczak (2000) and Grimmett *et al.* (2011). Records of Tickell's Thrush from Gujarat are given below:

Date	Place	Remarks
December 2010 January 2013	Ratanmahal Sanctuary	Trivedi 2015
January 2011	Ratanmahal Sanctuary	Deomurari 2012
March 2013	Vansda National Park	Kshitish Barada, personal comm.
March 2, 2014	Sagai, Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary, Rajpipla	Bakul Trivedi, personal comm.
November 7, 2014	Sharad Baug, Bhuj, Kachchh	Gani Khatri, personal comm.

Thus there are a few records of Tickell's Thrush from Gujarat. It seems to be a rare winter migrant in Gujarat with scattered records from different regions in the state.

References

- Deomurari, A. 2012. Tickell's Thrush (*Turdus unicolor*): a new bird for Gujarat, India. *Indian Birds*, 7 (6): 168.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T., 2011. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press & Christopher Helm.
- Kazmierczak, K., 2000. *A Field Guide to the Birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives*. 1st ed. London: Pica Press / Christopher Helm.
- Trivedi, R. 2015. Some important photographic records from Gujarat. *Indian Birds*. 10 (3&4): 108–110. □