



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* in Little Rann of Kachchh

On 4 October 2020, at around 09:00 hrs, I was bird watching in the western part of Little Rann of Kachchh, near Venasar Village, with Jignesh Miyatra and Jayesh K. Joshi. Due to a good monsoon, the small lakes and ponds in the area were full of water. In a small lake with reeds, I saw and photographed a Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*). The bird was foraging on the edge of the lake, in the open, and we would see it well for more than five minutes and also take good photographs. After foraging in the open for a few minutes, it disappeared back into the reeds. I have been bird watching in this area for more than 10 years now but this is the first time I had seen a Water Rail here. I am not aware of any recent records of Water Rail from Little Rann of Kachchh and this was a surprise sighting for the area.

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Colour aberrant Greylag Goose *Anser anser* near Nalsarovar

On 17 December 2020, at around 08:00 hrs in the morning, we were on our routine birding around the outskirts of Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary. We were in the search of Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) which had been seen in this area a few days ago. While scanning flocks of Greylag Geese (*Anser anser*), we saw a white looking Greylag Goose. We were surprised and went nearer and took some photographs. This bird was looking pale whitish, and moving in a large flock with other Greylag Geese. We observed the bird for almost 25 minutes before it flew away with the other birds. It was a colour aberrant individual but we could not identify the correct mutation.

[We sent the photos to Hein Van Grouw who replied that 'The Greylag Goose appears to have a form of Dilution (there are many different dilution mutations). It is not Progressive Greying; Progressive Greying causes feathers without melanin (white), and this Goose does not have a single white feather. The Plumage is lighter all over, but still pigmented'.

We thank Hein Van Grouw for helping with the identification of the correct mutation – Eds]

Latif Alvani & Kamruddin: At – Nalsarovar.



A colour aberrant Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulicatus* near Jamnagar

On 29 May 2020, we were on a birding trip in the outskirts of Jamnagar. There, we saw a white-colored, sparrow-sized bird, on a *Prosopis juliflora* tree. After careful observation, we confirmed that it was a colour aberrant Indian Robin (*Saxicoloides fulicatus*). However, we could not identify its gender as it was almost completely white except for a few dark feathers on the face. We observed the bird for about one hour and took photos. It had normal coloured eyes, bill and feet. Based on its colour and after searching on internet, we concluded that it was probably an individual with the mutation 'Progressive Greying' or 'Leucism'. We could not identify the correct mutation in this bird. An Indian Robin with the mutation 'Brown' has been reported earlier (Van Grouw *et al.* 2016). We had never seen such a bird earlier and this is possibly the first such record from this region.

Ankur Gohil, Vishwas Thakkar & Anand Prajapati: Jamnagar.



Sighting of melanistic Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* near Rajkot

In September 2007, I saw and photographed a Baya Weaver (*Ploceus philippinus*) in the reeds at Nyari River, near Rajkot. This bird was having yellow band on breast but had black belly and vent. I identified it as a partially melanistic Baya Weaver. Melanism is abnormal deposit of melanin, which results in increased black or reddish-brown colour. Colour aberrant birds are now frequently reported from Gujarat and other parts of India. Van Grouw *et al.* (2016) listed nine instances of melanism in Indian birds. However, there is no report of melanism, partial or otherwise, in Baya Weaver. This is another record of a colour aberrant bird from Gujarat and adds to our knowledge regarding colour aberrant birds in the state.

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