

I visit Lakhota Lake almost daily for bird watching. On 17 February 2019, while birding in a part of the lake near Mig Colony, one Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) caught my attention. It seemed actively searching for prey, and so I immediately got ready with my camera. There were a few birds nearby, including a Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*) resting on the ground, adjacent to the shallow water. Suddenly, the Pelican caught this tern in its beak, with its pouch open, and within a fraction of a second, swallowed it whole. This happened so rapidly that I managed to take only one photo, wherein the tern can be seen in the pelican's beak! I was amazed to witness this event.

In both these observations, the prey taken is unusual. The White-throated Kingfisher is known to take a variety of prey; insects, crabs, fish, frogs, lizards, mice and small birds are taken (Woodall & Kirwan 2019). But, it has not been documented / photographed in Gujarat feeding on a bat and this is an addition to its already varied diet. The Dalmatian Pelican

usually feeds on different varieties of fish (Elliott *et al.* 2019). Pelicans are opportunistic feeders; the Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) has been documented feeding on birds in Jamnagar, but, the Dalmatian Pelican was observed to be reluctant in taking birds (Patel 2016). However, in this instance, the pelican caught the tern and swallowed it whole. It is possible that the Dalmatian Pelican too takes birds when the opportunity arises.

### References

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## Indian Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* and Pallid Scops Owl *Otus brucei* in Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, Jamnagar

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On 3 February 2019, the first author visited the Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, near Jamnagar, along with a group of people for the recording of his interview in an educational purpose film about the sanctuary. When he entered the 'jacana' trail, the second author, a wildlife photographer from Jamnagar, along with the other authors (who are from Rajkot), were already there and they directed him to have a look at one of the owls (*Otus* sp.) perched in a nearby tree, which they assumed to be a Pallid Scops Owl (*Otus brucei*). However, after getting some photographs of the owl, the first author realized that it was different from a Pallid Scops Owl and looked more like an Indian Scops Owl (*Otus bakkamoena*) and so he shared the photos with other birders. The identification was confirmed as an Indian Scops Owl with the help of Dr. Maulik Varu and Prasad Ganpule. While returning back, we saw two Pallid Scops Owls on a branch of a tree at a height of around 12 feet. The birds were roosting and were undisturbed by our presence. These individuals were first noted by the Forest Department staff of the sanctuary almost one month prior to our sighting them here. The birds were perching in this tree regularly. The Pallid Scops Owls were also photographed and the identification confirmed.

## Scops Owls....



Rajdeepsinh Jadeja

As per the details we gathered from other birdwatchers, both these owl species have been noted in Khijadiya for the first time. While Indian Scops Owl is regularly seen in the forest areas from north to south Gujarat, and in the Gir/Girnar forest in Saurashtra (Ganpule 2016), there are no sightings reported from any other area of Saurashtra. This is the first time that it

has been noted here in Khijadiya and it is a significant record for Jamnagar District. The Pallid Scops Owl is an uncommon but widespread winter migrant to Kachchh and Saurashtra, with many isolated records from Saurashtra in the past few years (Chauhan 2017, Dave 2017). Hence, its occurrence in Khijadiya is not very surprising. But, this is the first time that it has been photographed here and the sighting of two individuals over a period of more than one month suggests that it could be wintering in this area. The habitat in this sanctuary is indeed suitable for owls and there could be more individuals of both species here.

### References

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## Rescue of Eurasian Griffon *Gyps fulvus* at Porbandar

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The Eurasian Griffon (*Gyps fulvus*), also known as Griffon Vulture, is an uncommon winter visitor to Gujarat, mainly

seen in the desert areas of Greater Rann of Kachchh, Banni and there are isolated records from Little Rann of Kachchh (Ganpule 2016).

On the evening of 15 November 2013, the second author received a call that a raptor / bird of prey was sitting idle and not showing any movement since last three hours at the farm of Rama Odedara, near Porbandar. Later, we rescued the bird in a dehydrated condition and brought it to the Porbandar Bird Sanctuary.

It was identified as a juvenile or immature Eurasian Griffon based on the cinnamon-brown plumage, bill being completely dark with pale tip, ruff with lanceolated feathers, pointed upperwing coverts and mantle feathers with streaked appearance (Duriez *et al.* 2011). Dr. Parvez Chavda, veterinary doctor at the Porbandar Bird Sanctuary, who joined us on the same day, observed the symptoms and found a pathological infection and thus gave it primary treatment. For further treatment, the bird was immediately sent to Sakkarbaug Zoo, Junagadh. On the next day, we were informed that the bird was out of danger and recovering well.