



### A winter sighting of Yellow-legged Buttonquail *Turnix tanki* in Rajkot City

On 24 January 2020, at about 17:00 hrs, my mother called me up to see a new bird at my home, situated at Jagnath Plot, in the middle of Rajkot City. I went there and saw that a tiny bird was sitting on the first landing of the staircase. I immediately took a photo from my mobile phone and thought about taking a video but the bird suddenly flew vertically and vanished. It stayed there for hardly five minutes. I could not identify this bird. Then, I sent the photo to my brother Rupesh Ravani, and he sent it to senior birder Ashok Mashru for identification; it was identified as a Yellow-legged Buttonquail (*Turnix tanki*), and he further informed that this was a grassland bird and had possibly landed at my home due to some movement during its local migration. He stated that the plumage looked washed out, lacking rufous, and bare parts were not bright yellow, rather unlike what is seen in the breeding season. The Yellow-legged Buttonquail is a monsoon migrant to Gujarat and there are very few records from the winter months. This is a rare winter sighting of this species.

**Urvashi Ravani:** Rajkot.



### Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* near Navsari

On 23 September 2018, Nikunj Vedak sent me an unclear photograph of a bird for identification. To my surprise, it was Blue Rock-thrush (*Monticola solitarius*.) This bird, as per my knowledge, was seen in this area for the first time in the past few years. On the next day, I went to the location where it was seen, in the AB school Campus, Partapore, near Navsari. I could observe the bird and photograph it for two days, in the morning and evening. It was seen in a very small area. On 26 September 2018, it disappeared. It was probably on passage and stayed here for a few days. This bird was fairly fearless and was observed accompanying a Pied Bushchat (*Saxicola caprata*) and seen hunting an insect. Grimmett *et al.* (2011) show the distribution of Blue Rock Thrush all over the state but it is quite uncommon in our area.

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### A winter sighting of Grey-bellied Cuckoo *Cacomantis passerinus* in Little Rann of Kachchh

On 4 February 2020, I was in Little Rann of Kachchh for a nature education camp. I was accompanied by a friend and as soon as we got some free time, we visited the Rann for birding. We saw a different bird perched in a *Prosopis juliflora* and on a closer look, identified it as a Grey-bellied Cuckoo (*Cacomantis passerinus*), took several photographs and confirmed the identification. The cuckoo did not call while we observed it. This sighting in the winter, from an area like the Little Rann, is quite surprising. In and around Savarkundla, where I live, this species is quite common and vocal in the monsoon season and it is also seen in Gir NP and in the *vidis* of Saurashtra. But, after the monsoon, it is not seen at all near my home! There are sightings from Saurashtra and from other parts of the state (Bagda *et al.* 2015) but this record, in the winter, from the Little Rann of Kachchh is very interesting.

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### Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra* in Rajkot

On 14 July 2020, at 16:00 hrs in the evening, a big bird was found injured near our residence; the area is located at Chandan Park Main Road, Indian Park, Jamnagar Road, Rajkot. Later, it was identified as a juvenile Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) by posting its photograph in the 'Ask ID of Indian Birds' Facebook group. The bird was rescued by the local animal welfare organisation 'Karuna Foundation' for treatment but it did not survive. The Masked Booby is seen, quite rarely, during the monsoon season along the coast of Saurashtra. These sightings are usually of windblown birds due to bad weather; this species is mainly pelagic and does not normally venture near the coast. Recently, another Masked Booby was rescued at Jamnagar coast by Jagat Raval in June 2015 and taken for treatment (sighting posted in Facebook group.) As Rajkot is quite far from the coast, this is a surprising sighting of a Masked Booby from the middle of the city.

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