



Grasshopper Warbler in Mehsana District

It was a pleasant afternoon on 5 November 2017 and we (Vaneet Daniel, C. B. Modhwadia and I) were on way to Bavlu village, District: Mehsana. We were watching some common birds when I saw some movement in the bushes of a farm, hardly 10-12 feet away from me. I stopped and tried to figure out which bird was moving in the bushes. The bird was very shy but I managed to get two photographs and did not see it again. I could not identify the bird at first sight. Later, with the help of experts, it was identified as a Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*), which is an uncommon/rare winter visitor to Gujarat (Ganpule 2016). It was indeed a thrilling sighting for me. This was probably the first photographic record from north Gujarat.

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Eurasian Hobby at Pavagadh

On 3 June 2018, we saw three Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*) at Pavagadh, near Vadodara. The birds were observed feeding on insects (mostly dragonflies) in mid-air from 09:45 to 13:30 hrs continuously without resting. We observed that the birds were in moult from juvenile to adult plumage, as fresh adult-type mantle feathers were observed along with worn juvenile feathers on the wings. There were two other sightings from Gujarat during this period; by Vikrant Vyas from Timbi Lake, near Vadodara, on 3 June 2018, by Vikrant Vyas and his friends at Wadhvana wetland near Dabhoi, Dist. Vadodara on 8 June 2018, and by Krunal Trivedi from Rajkot on 25 May 2018 (*pers. comm.*). These sightings are indicative of late spring migration and further observations would help to understand its distribution and migration in Gujarat during the spring migration season.

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Unusual nest of Tickell's Blue Flycatcher at Hingolghadh

On 27 July 2018, Raju Karia, Hiren Suba and I visited Hingolghadh Sanctuary in Rajkot District. While watching an Indian Pitta (*Pitta brachyura*), I saw a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis tickelliae*) pair constantly perching on a wall and going into the side of a fiber/plastic toilet unit with food in its bill. On watching from far, we found a dump of leaves, twigs and plant material on a short notch in the fiber wall of the toilet, behind an aluminum bar. On observing closer, we saw three chicks, which were calling for food and the parent birds were feeding them. We took photographs of this unusual nest. The species usually makes a nest in crevices in rocky walls, in tree trunks, between boulders and among roots of upturned trees (Clement & Christie 2018). This nest suggests that the Tickell's Blue Flycatcher can adapt and make a nest in a manmade structure if it is suitable.

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Sighting of Orange-headed Thrush in Velavadar National Park

I visited Velavadar National Park, in Bhavnagar District, for a routine birding trip on 14 June 2018. I reached early, at 07:15 hrs. I immediately started bird watching in a patch full of grass near the main entrance gate. I saw an Orange-headed Thrush (*Zosterops citrina*) moving on the ground and photographed it with my mobile phone. It was quite fearless and allowed close approach. This was my first sighting of the species from Velavadar. I observed this bird for more than 15 minutes without any disturbance. It was not seen again later in the day. Though the Orange-headed Thrush is resident in south Gujarat and has been noted elsewhere in the state (Ganpule 2016), this is an important record for Velavadar National Park.

Amit Vegad: Velavadar, Dist: Bhavnagar.