

Sighting of Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* in South Gujarat

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The Blue-throated Flycatcher (*Cyornis rubeculoides*), also known as the Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher, is a vagrant to Gujarat (Ganpule 2016). Here, I report a sighting of a male Blue-throated Flycatcher from South Gujarat, and give an update regarding the previous sightings of this species from our state.

I went for birding to Vansada National Park (20° 26' 24" N, 73° 16' 48" E), Navsari District, South Gujarat, with Mitul Desai, on 5 December 2021 in the morning. When we were in the Bharadi area of the park, I saw a flycatcher which was blue in colour. My first impression was that it was a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis tickelliae*) because it is a common species in this area and the only blue-coloured flycatcher seen here. But, I heard the call of this bird and immediately realized that it was different from the call of a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher. Hence, I tried to take photographs and succeeded in getting good photos when it perched on a Bamboo tree. When I checked the photographs in the field, I easily identified it as a male Blue-throated Flycatcher due to its blue throat with a slight orange wedge.

For Gujarat, this species was first recorded in 2008 at Morbi, which was the first record for the state (Ganpule 2009). Thereafter, it has been recorded at six different locations (including this sighting) in Gujarat (see Table below).

It can be seen that the previous sightings from Gujarat are mainly from Saurashtra, with one sighting from Kachchh and the present sighting is from South Gujarat. The sightings are mainly from the winter months of December and January, with two sightings from October. Though it is difficult to make any assessment regarding the status of the Blue-throated Flycatcher in Gujarat based on these sightings, it is likely that this species could be a rare winter migrant to the well wooded areas of our state or it could be a vagrant on passage. The December and January sightings indicate wintering birds rather than passage migrants. More sightings will be helpful in determining its status in Gujarat.

References

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Sr.	Date	Place	Observer	Reference
1	26 October 2008	Morbi	Prasad Ganpule	Ganpule 2009
2	5 December 2015	Porbandar	Dhaval Vargiya	Vargiya & Jethva 2016
3	17 December 2017	Nakhatrana, Kachchh	Balaji P. B.	Balaji 2017
4	14 January 2018	Porbandar	Dhaval Vargiya	Vargiya & Prajapati 2019
5	23 January 2021	Girnar, near Junagadh	Naman Doshi	Doshi 2021
6	19 October 2021	Mahuva	Batuk Bhil	Photograph posted on social media
7	5 December 2021	Vansada National Park	Mohammedhasan Usmanbhai Jat	Author's sighting