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## Sighting of Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* in South Gujarat

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I was able to take a few clear photographs of the bird. Pankaj Maheria and his friend's vehicle were just behind our car and they also saw the bird.

Our first impression was that this bird was a Common Hawk Cuckoo (*Hierococcyx varius*), which is one of the common birds of this area. However, when I checked the photographs in the camera, I got suspicious of this bird's identity due to its bigger size and somewhat different plumage from a Common Hawk Cuckoo. After arriving home, I sent the photographs to Adesh Shivkar and Prasad Ganpule for identification. Both identified this bird as a Large Hawk Cuckoo (*Hierococcyx sparverioides*) based on the brownish mantle, slate-grey head and broader banding on tail. Later, Pankaj Maheria also confirmed that the bird was a Large Hawk Cuckoo.

For Gujarat, there are two confirmed records of this species from Saurashtra and one unconfirmed record from Kachchh. On 10 March 2018 and 3 January 2019, a Large Hawk Cuckoo was seen and photographed in Girnar, near Junagadh. In November 2019, a probable juvenile/immature Large Hawk Cuckoo was seen in Kachchh by S. N. Varu. The details of all these records are given in Bagda *et al.* (2020). Thus, this is the third confirmed record of the Large Hawk Cuckoo from Gujarat and is a first record from South Gujarat.

The Large Hawk Cuckoo breeds in the Himalayas and it is a winter visitor mainly to the Eastern and Western Ghats (in Kerala), with scattered records from other parts of Peninsular India (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). In the Western Ghats, there are two records of this species from Maharashtra; at Mumbai and from Satara District (Dhaigude *et al.* 2020). Further south, two photographic records of the Large Hawk Cuckoo from Goa are listed in eBird (eBird 2022). This record from Vansada National Park is from the northernmost part of the Western Ghats. The earlier two records from Girnar were also in the winter season and in a forest area. Hence, there is a

I visited Vansada National Park (20° 26' 24" N, 73° 16' 48" E) on 19 December 2021 with my friend Jayesh Joshi and his son Rohan. The park is adjoining the district where I live; hence, we visit the area almost every fortnight. Vansada National Park is a tropical moist deciduous forest in Navsari District and is the northernmost part of the Western Ghats.

We were birding in the Bharadi area of the park at around 13:30 hrs; suddenly, one bird landed in front of our car, took some prey and perched on a branch of a tree just 20 feet away.

possibility that this species may not be a vagrant but a few birds could be wintering regularly in well wooded areas or forests of Gujarat and are not recorded due to the difficulty in separating it from the Common Hawk Cuckoo.

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## Ringed Bridled Tern *Onychoprion anaethetus* recovered near Surat

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The terns (Sternidae) are a distinctive group of birds that occupy aquatic environments around the world. The Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*), also known as the Brown-winged Tern, is medium-sized pelagic bird which is mostly seen off-shore. We report here the recovery of a ringed Bridled Tern near Surat.

On 17 September 2021, in the late evening, Nature Club Surat (NCS) received a call that a sick unidentified bird had fallen on the ground in Bhimpore area of Surat. NCS team members immediately left to rescue the bird. The rescue site was 8 km from the city centre near a coastal area. On arriving at the rescue spot, the rescuers found a pelagic tern. It looked severely dehydrated when observed. No external injury was visible on the body. It later died and we assumed that severe dehydration was the probable cause of death. On close observation, we found that the bird had a ring on its right foot. We recorded the ring number to find details regarding the ringing location and date. Later, the bird was buried after doing the necessary formalities. We thought that this was probably a juvenile Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) due to the brownish plumage and darker head. We discussed the identification of this tern with Madhumita Panigrahi and referred to Peterson & Harrison (1991), and concluded that this was, in fact, a juvenile Bridled Tern. It could be identified as a juvenile Bridled Tern based on the scaly pattern formed by pale feather edges on the mantle, less distinct face pattern, brown cap streaked with white and a diagnostic white stripe above the eye extending till the rear of the eye. Immature Sooty Terns have an all-dark face and breast, with white only on the belly, as opposed to the white underside from the chin to the vent in Bridled Tern.

We tried to obtain the ringing information and the following ringing details were received from Dr. Abbas Ashoori (Department of Environment, Rasht, Iran) which are given here (Table 1) and the ringing location and recovery location are given in the map presented here.

**Table 1: Ringing and re-sighting details of Bridled Tern recovered at Bhimpore, Dumas, near Surat**

Right leg ring number	ENVIRONMENT, TEHRAN, CW02935
Age when rescued	Juvenile
Ring color	Silver aluminum
Ringing date	28 July 2021
Ringed by	Farhad Hosseini Tayefeh and colleagues
Ringing place	Nakhiloo Island, South Iran
Age when ringing	Chick
Coordinates of the release site	27° 52' 22.8"N, 51° 26' 48.12"E
Finding date	17 September 2021
Finding time	18:05 hrs
Country	India
State	Gujarat
Finding place	Bhimpore, Dumas, near Surat
Distance	2280 km from ringing place
Finding coordinates	21° 4' 52.32" N, 72° 43' 44.04"E