

## Short Birding Notes



### Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus* near Gir Sanctuary, Dhari, Amreli District

On 20 January 2022, we were exploring the Matangmala revenue area, Dhari. We observed a Hair-crested Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*), also known as Spangled Drongo, along with a flock of the Black Drongos (*Dicrurus macrocercus*) and Lesser Goldenbacks (*Dinopium benghalense*). We were looking for flycatchers and thrushes in that area when we heard a very unusual and noisy bird. It was moving under the canopy of an Indian Cotton Tree (*Bombax ceiba*), Indian Kino Tree (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Arjun (*Terminalia arjuna*), and Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*). We saw the Hair-crested Drongo following the woodpecker from one tree to another. It was feeding on insects in the holes dug by the woodpecker and imitating a Black Drongo's call. We observed the bird for 10 straight days in the same area and photographed it many times. We saw that the bird mostly perched on Indian Cotton and Arjun tree near the riverside. In Gujarat, the Hair-crested Drongo is rare winter visitor; there are only a few records from Saurashtra (in the Gir region) but it is rare here.

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### Rosy Minivet *Pericrocotus roseus* in Vansada National Park, South Gujarat

On 28 April 2022, I visited Vansada National Park, in the Dangs, South Gujarat. There, I saw and photographed a male Rosy Minivet (*Pericrocotus roseus*). I could get good photographs and the identification was confirmed by the rosy underparts and grey-brown upperparts. The Rosy Minivet has been recorded in Vansada National Park earlier but there are only a few records from the Dangs on 'eBird'. All the records from the Dangs are from January till April. This record in late April is interesting and shows that this species remains in the Dangs till at least the end of April. Further records will help in understanding its status here in Gujarat.

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### Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris* in Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary

On 7 January 2022, I went to the Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary. I was with a few guests from Mumbai and we took a boat and visited some islands in the sanctuary. We were hoping to photograph the Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) which was seen there. At around 10:50 hrs, we reached the island and saw the plover. There were a few Common Teals (*Anas crecca*) present. There was a Marbled Duck (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) with the Common Teals. It flew away and landed further away. I took my guests nearer and we got very good photographs of this rarity. The Marbled Duck remained in this area for a few weeks and bird watchers from all over India visited Nalsarovar and saw it here. The Marbled Duck is uncommon in Gujarat; it was recently seen in Kachchh in September 2021 (Sodha 2021). There are previous records from Nalsarovar area but it is rare here.

**Latif Alvani:** At – Nalsarovar.



### Sighting of Shaheen Falcon *Falco peregrinus peregrinator* near Vadodara

On 12 September 2021, at around 15:00 hrs during my outing to Sindhrot, near Vadodara, with Parag Parikh, we were just driving around enjoying nature. While coming back, I saw a perched bird of prey and could not identify it. Since the weather was overcast, and light was low, we could not see it well from far. Luckily, there was a camera in my car, so I took some record shots and then realised that it was a Shaheen Falcon (*Falco peregrinus peregrinator*). To confirm the identification, I sent the photographs to Kartikbhai Upadhyay and Ayaz Mansuri who confirmed that it was indeed a Shaheen Falcon. I had seen the Shaheen Falcon earlier in Jambughoda WLS and I was lucky to see this bird near Vadodara. There are infrequent sightings of this falcon from Vadodara but it is uncommon here.

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