

Flamingo



Newsletter of the Bird Conservation Society, Gujarat Vol. 6, No.3 & 4 (Jun-Dec): 2008

FROM THE PRESIDENT

To come together, each one of us will have to examine our motives for what all we are doing in the name of bird conservation. Ego clashes or highly personal agendas merely generate conflicts among us every time we come together. It is best then not to have seminars or workshops or attempt to form umbrella organizations. Let every person, or group of persons go their own way and hope for the best. Before you all is the friendship between Lalsinhbhai and I. We enjoy each other's company in shared interests and concerns; we respect one another, and this small association has achieved a great deal for birds and for conservation. Why cannot we all just be friends and strengthen our associations to produce a formidable force? The most wonderful example is that of bees, so small, so focused in their individual pursuit of flower nectar and pollen and yet so fearsome in their onslaught when danger threatens! The difference is that we human beings are not merely social animals; we are social, individualist animals. We have the instincts of the social lions along with those of the lonely tiger. Herein lie the strengths and the weaknesses of human society! It is the delicate balancing of the two seemingly divergent compulsions that makes for maturity and wisdom.

What has this got to do with birdwatching? Casually considered, nothing; and yet everything. Birdwatching is best done alone or with a couple of friends. Birds just do not like crowds. This is also true for bird photographers. Going our separate ways is alright up to a point. If we are pursuing our hobby for the very personal pleasure and not attempting to draw attention and public applause, there is no harm done; and the larger the number of such individuals

in Society, the better, since they provide the favorable public opinion so very essential in generating social proscriptions. The Sarus and the Peacock are still plentiful in our crowded Gujarat because of this social force. Like gravity, it is a very weak though cohesive force and can be strengthened by legislation. Unhappily, it can be seriously disturbed by the least bit of egocentric behavior. It can also be weakened by apathy spreading among the people. Unhappily with the huge increase in human population and the great demand for resources for the very basic of human needs, the quiet influences of traditional values are evaporating and it is therefore necessary to form associations and "go public". This then is the reason why today I am compelling myself to spend more and more of my time attending gatherings and writing such letters.

Before leaving Hingolgadh for Ahmedabad I conducted a snake show for a cosmopolitan group of children; I was surprised to find Gujarati children among them more ready to handle the snakes than their friends from other parts of India. It should not be a surprise if this was on account of the Nature Education Programme I had the privilege of conceiving and initiating there. Hingolgadh has therefore acquired an importance far greater than its geographical or historical significance. Dharmakumarsinhji used to consider his annual visit to Hingolgadh an act of performing a pilgrimage! How do we carry forward this tradition even as we recognize other locations and strive for their conservation?

Lavkumar Khachar.

CONTENTS

	Page No.
FROM THE PRESIDENT	1
BCSG AND FLAMINGO	2
ARTICLES	
Save Bhal Area -I. R. Gadhvi and Shrenik Shah	3
Chhari-Dhand Conservation Reserve -J. K. Tiwari	4
BIRDING NOTES	
First Record of Hooded Wheatear in Kachchh and India - S. N. Varu	6
Nesting of Painted Stork at Palasva Village, Kachchh – Anika Tere	7
Breeding of Purple-rumped Sunbird at Ahmedabad -P. S. Thakker	8
Sighting of Blue-throated Flycatcher at Morbi: A New Record for Gujarat -Prasad Ganpule	9
White-winged Black Tern, Marshall's Iora and Sarus Crane -Prasad Ganpule	9
Crab Plover at Dhadhar Estuary in Bharuch District-Dishant Parasharya	10
Breeding Record of Blue-tailed Bee-eater near Vadodara -Pritesh Patel	10
Birds of Nyari-I Dam – Ashok K. Mashru	11
Houbara Bustard Census – February 2008 in Little Rann of Kachchh -Chiku Vora <i>et al.</i>	12
Breeding Records of River Tern at Jamnagar -Maulik S. Varu	14
Good Concentration of Greater Short-toed Lark in Kachchh -S. N. Varu	15
Bird Count at Chhari Dhandh and Bhimasar Tank During Summer -Ashwin Pomal	15
Sightings of Little Green Heron in Kachchh - S. N. Varu	16
BCSG EVENTS	
Painted Stork and Sarus Watch	17
VULTURE UPDATE	
Vulture Conservation State Level Committee Meeting -Snehal Patel	18
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	19
RECENT PUBLICATIONS ON BIRDS OF GUJARAT	20
SOME INTERESTING BIRD SIGHTINGS	20

BCSG and Flamingo

Bird Conservation Society, Gujarat (BCSG) was founded in 2000 with the objective of conservation of birds of the state through field research, documentation, training, awareness activities, networking with like-minded NGOs; and lobbying for protection of birds and their habitats. It is the only statewide network of bird-watchers, ornithologists and conservationists of Gujarat striving to achieve the above goal.

BCSG brings out a quarterly newsletter – ‘Flamingo’ for its members. Articles, notes, interesting bird sightings, important bird area, information/appeal regarding conservation issues, field programme reports related to Gujarat State are published in the Flamingo. For publication of articles/notes in the Flamingo, both the common English and scientific name must be given when a bird species is mentioned for the first time and later on the common English name only. Common English names and scientific names should follow Manakadan, R. and Pittie, A. (2002). Standardized English and Scientific Names of the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent –2002. NLBW 42 (3): 1-35. If the nomenclature is adopted from other source, full reference should be given.

ARTICLES

Save Bhal Area

I. R. Gadhvi¹ and Shrenik Shah²

¹ Plot No. 2200, Ankur Society, Hill Drive, Bhavnagar-364002. E-mail: indragadhvi@rediffmail.com

² C-15, Parmarth Flates, 46 Hariyala Plots, Nr. Rubber Factory, Bhavnagar -364 001. e-mail: shrenikwild@yahoo.com

Velavadar National Park in the Bhal region at the edge of the Gulf of Khambhat is one of the last few grasslands left in the country. This National Park is world-famous for its Blackbuck and Wolf population. Velavadar National Park is the second largest roosting site of harriers in the world. Four species of migratory harriers (about 2500 birds) forage and roost for more than six months in the grassland of Bhal. The park also supports several other species of the birds of prey. This grassland is also an important breeding ground of the globally threatened Lesser Florican.

The protected area supporting more than 15 mammals, 150+ bird species and several reptiles is already facing problems since last few years due to an industry. Now Dholera Port and SEZ/ SIR are coming up in this area. Under this development programme, request for the forest and revenue land around the National Park, within the distance of 0 to 13 km from the National Park boundary, is already made to the government. About 3270 hectares are required for Dholera Port project, and another 3883 hectares are required for SIR. Furthermore, the

proposed International Air Port near Fedara-Pipli, a Power Plant and a six-lane highway will take toll of additional grassland area. The land proposed for acquisition belongs to Adhelai, Bavali, Jaswantpura, Gundana and salt-affected wasteland. Elevated areas of this landscape provide refuge to the wildlife during monsoon flooding. Figure 1 gives an idea of the proximity of the proposed developments to the National Park.

Possible Threats to the wildlife and the landscape are as follows:

- This particular area supports several wild species belonging to Schedule I and II of the Wildlife Protection Act. Hence any developmental activity in this area directly or indirectly threatens their existence.
- Illegal activities, particularly poaching of wildlife is likely to increase with infiltration of labourers from other states.
- New residential areas, transportation, hotels etc will have indirect effect on wildlife.

VELAVADAR NATIONAL PARK.
Velavadar, Bhavnagar District.
Distribution of Blackbuck

PLAN SHOWING LAND APPLIED FOR DHOHLERA PORT & SEZ/SIR BACKUP AREA

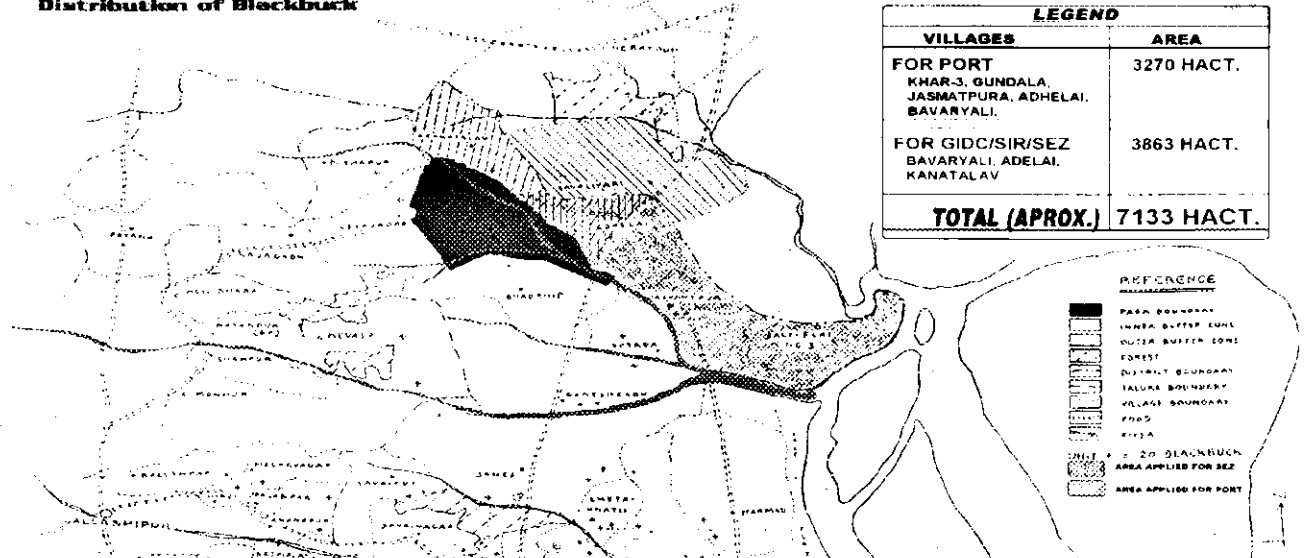


Figure 1. Proposed development close to the Velavadar Blackbuck National Park

- Industrial effluents and chemicals are likely to pollute air and water and have adverse impact on the ecosystem.
- Adverse impact of industrial development on the coastal area on the marine environment is clearly seen on Jamnagar, Porbandar and Kachchh coast. Similar adverse environmental impact is being anticipated in this area.
- Construction activity in the coastal area is likely to block water flow and create flood situation.
- Not only the wildlife, industrial development is likely to affect the human life too. Chemical dyes in the groundwater of Jetpur (Junagadh district) and Vatva Industrial area of Ahmedabad; air and water pollution at Vapi and Ankleshwar are the examples in front of us.

- Traditional cotton and wheat varieties are cultivated by organic farming. We will lose traditional varieties grown organically in addition to fertile agricultural land.
- Due to the loss of agricultural land, 'Gauchar land', and revenue land for industrial purpose, there will be a crisis of fodder for the wildlife as well as for domestic animals.

Industrial development may be necessary for the country's progress but if such development being done at the cost of our natural wealth, we will soon lose our natural heritage. This should not be tolerated. Progress is necessary but it has to be sustainable. So we all have to unite to save our heritage. Our wildlife and environmental laws do not permit development which is not environment-friendly and should be considered illegal. Let us make collective efforts to save our 'Bhal' region.

Chhari-Dhand Conservation Reserve

J. K. Tiwari

Centre for Desert and Ocean, village Moti-Virani, Ta. Nakhtrana, Kachchh - 370665. e-mail: jugal2000@yahoo.com

Chhari-Dhand is a seasonal wetland in the grasslands of Banni in the north-western part of Kachchh. Chhari-Dhand (Chhari meaning salt-affected and Chhari is a Sindhi word for a shallow saucer shaped depression) is situated near the village Fulay in Nakhtrana tahsil of Kachchh.

There are four terms for wetlands in Banni area and across the border: *Kar* (smallest wetland), *Chhachh* (bigger wetland than *Kar*), *Thathh* (bigger wetland than *Chhachh*) and *Chhari* (biggest wetland).

The area of these seasonal freshwater bodies depends upon the amount of rainfall received in that particular year. These wetlands are located on the migration pathway of Palearctic migrants and play very important role as foraging, wintering, roosting, resting and staging grounds for millions of waders, waterfowls, cranes and other feathered migrants that visit the area from August and spend time till March every year.

The area of Banni grasslands is 3847 sq. km. There are several waterbodies all ephemeral or

seasonal in nature e.g. Vakerio-Dhand, Kheerjog, Vinzar varo Thathh, Hodko Thathh, Servo-Dhand, Bhagadio Thathh, Kar near Kirro, Kunjevri Thathh, Hanjtal etc., and the biggest in size among all is Chhari Dhand.

Chhari Dhand is 80 km south-west to Bhuj and 30 km from Nakhtrana town. The wetland is unique in its floral and faunal composition. *Eleocharis* reeds (4 - 6 feet tall) grow on the edges of this shallow wetland. The maximum depth of Chhari Chhari is 5-6 feet in the centre and on the water channels. The main source of water for Chhari Dhand is river Chhari (Dhurud), Layari river, Gajansar river, and the large catchment areas of Kiro, Palkhiari and Vazira hills.

The south-west monsoon brings water to the parched landscape of Banni. The alluvial soil of Banni becomes inundated with the rain-water and sedges like Dhamor (*Cyperus rotundus*), Kalur and Lana (*Suaeda fruticosa*) and Oocyn (*Cress cretica*) grow here profusely. The area is in-accessible to

people for almost 2-3 months. This is the time when Chhari Dhand supports the nesting of resident waterbirds. The first week of October is the time when one can see Chhari Dhand from all angles.

Failure of monsoon (generally once every three years) gives time to nature to take its own course. In drought years, Chhari Dhand is a bone dry, billiard-table flat landscape. The Lesser Bandicoots *Bandicoota bengalensis* is the main prey base for all Mammalian, Avian and Reptilian predators. The flooding of Banni and Chhari Dhand is nature's own way of controlling the population of rodents. In favourable years, rodents multiply in millions and spread over the entire Banni landscape, causing loss of crops on the fringes of Banni and entering the human-dwelling.

There are 315 species of birds reported from Kachchh district, out of which Chhari Dhand and the surrounding terrestrial habitat supports over 200 species of birds. Endangered species like Black-necked Stork (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*) and Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) have also been reported here.

Chhari Dhand supports over 40,000 Common Cranes (*Grus grus*) in a good winter. The Dhand is a good foraging area for Great White Pelicans (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*); about 1500 Great White Pelicans can be seen in winter.

The Common Crane population is seen feeding on the tubers of Dhamor or *Cyperus* sedge. They play an important ecological role as nature's own tractor and dig the soil to make it fertile and allow aeration. The exposed tubers of the sedges in upturned soil are fed upon by the birds like doves, larks and sandgrouse, which cannot dig soil.

Chhari Dhand was selected as a field station by Bombay Natural History Society. I came there along with the team of BNHS Scientists and Bird-trappers on 3rd January 1990 for bird banding and migration studies. Mr. S. A. Hussain was the Principal Scientist of BNHS Bird Migration Project. We did bird ringing till 1992 and trapped over 5000 birds from our field station established at Fulay village. Our ringed birds were recovered in Russia and we found the *MOSKWA* rings on Little Stint

(*Calidris minuta*). One Great White Pelican ringed at Ily Delta, Lake Balkash, Kazakhstan was found dead near Mithdi (Abda Jheel) near Chhari Dhand.

Dr. Asad Rahmani selected Banni grasslands as one of the BNHS Grassland ecology field station and the field station at Fulay was continued. I was working again in the same area. This time I was looking into other ecological parameters of Banni and Chhari Dhand. While working at Fulay we made many significant findings on the ecology of Banni and Dhands. The village jheels of Banni supports good bird populations in monsoon and also some important heronries. Luna heronry, about 17 km from Chhari Dhand is one of the top 10 heronries of India, with over 10,000 nests of 8 species of waterbirds; Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) being one of them.

Chhari Dhand is a wetland which qualifies for the status of Ramsar site as mentioned in 'Potential and existing Ramsar Sites of India' by M. Zafar -ul-Islam and Asad R Rahmani, 2008. This wetland is declared as a Conservation Reserve by the Gujarat Government in May 2008. The status of Conservation Reserve will help Chhari Dhand enjoy protection from commercial fishing which really disturbs the birdlife. Other human activities will not be controlled. Grazing, fuel-wood collection and honey and gum collection will be allowed as before.

Persons exploring the rocky habitat near Kiro, Palkhiari for gravel and stone mining tried to prevent its declaration as Conservation Reserve. These areas are safe havens for wildlife, where it takes shelter during flooding in monsoon. All mining leases were cancelled by District Administration and Mining Department. The conservation reserve status will certainly help conserve this pristine wetland habitat and its birds.

The Chhari Dhand Conservation Reserve will open the avenues for Eco-tourism and Cultural tourism in Kachchh. Efforts are under way to get the Chhari Dhand area developed as an ideal eco-tourism site (author is a member of District Ecotourism Committee). An Interpretation Centre at Fulay, some eco-huts, boat-ride, traditional food of Banni are all good plans taking shape.

Thanks to the efforts of District and State Forest officers Chhari Dhand now enjoys the status of Conservation reserve. Worth mentioning here are

Shri R. L. Meena (CF), Shri L. N. Jadeja (DFO), Shri Gujjar (Sub-DFO), Shri Roychoudhary (Forest Secretary) and Shri Nanda (present Forest Secretary). The advocacy role of IBCN Gujarat was significant in this issue. The press played a positive role; Indian Express and Kutchmitra are worth mentioning here. Pelican Nature Club Members S.N. Varu and N. N. Bapat always did their best to see that Chhari-Dhand is protected. Continued interest by the Late M. K. Himmatsinhji will always be remembered. In fact it is suggested to name the Wetland as 'Chhari Dhand - Himmat Conservation Reserve'.

Ever since I started Centre for Desert and Ocean (CEDO) for ecotourism and Nature education work and settled at Moti Virani, birders from at least 20 countries have visited the place and admired the beauty of the place. Four nature education camps of BNHS had been organized so far at Chhari Dhand in past two years. I have organized some 20 one-day nature camps for school students of 10 villages. Chhari Dhand is now not an unknown name. We will try our best to see that Chhari Dhand is declared as a 'Ramsar Site'.

BIRDING NOTES

First Record of Hooded Wheatear in Kachchh and India

S. N. Varu

Junavas, Temple Street, Madhapar, Ta. Bhuj, Kachchh- 370 020. e-mail: snvaru@yahoo.in

While visiting Dhonsa Jheel, Ta. Bhuj for birding with Jaysukh Parekh (bird photographer from Bhuj) on 28th October 2008 on the way between Khari River-Ratiya, we saw one species of wheatear with white crown and white in tail feathers (*picata* race) perching on the rock. Mr. Jaysukh Parekh took the photograph of this bird also.

On first sight we identified it as Variable Wheatear (*Oenanthe picata, capista* morph) but soon we realized that it was actually resembling to Hooded Wheatear (*Oenanthe monacha*). So we decided to send the photograph to Bombay Natural History Society for identification. So Mr. Jaysukh Parekh sent this photograph to BNHS for identification. This was forwarded to Dr. T. J. Roberts (an authority and author of 'Birds of Pakistan') for identification. Finally it was identified as Hooded Wheatear. Thus, this is the first record of this species in India and Kachchh too. Hence it is worth recording.

Late S. D. Ripley (1982) stated that it occurs in Egypt, Iran, Sinai, Afghanistan, South Arabia and

Pakistan. It is recorded in winter in Pakistan at Gvadar Port, Baluchistan. In summer, it is recorded in Iranian Baluchistan. Thus, he has not mentioned of the occurrence of this Bird in India. It seems it came here from Pakistan as straggler.

Roberts (1992) had personally seen a pair of this bird once in Pakistan at hills near Cape Monze on 21st July 1978. Brooks got specimen of this bird from western hills of Manchar Lake, Hume collected specimen from Korebutt and Kirthar of Makran coast and from Nurrenai Gorge of Dadu district of Sindh and Blandford collected specimen from Gvadar, Shah Gag and Dasht of Baluchistan. All these specimens are lying in British Museum.

References:

- Ripley S. D. (1982). A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan. Bombay Natural History Society - Oxford University Press, Mumbai. pp. 470.
Roberts T. J. (1992). Birds of Pakistan. Oxford University Press, Karachi. pp. 153.

Dr. Ravisankaran -A departure too early

Dr. Ravi sankaran has passed away after suffering a massive heart attack on January 17 2009 at the young age of 46. On his sudden demise the world of conservation has lost one of its most passionate, dedicated and innovative person. He was a brilliant scientist and an outstanding field worker. But above all, a finest human being.

He has contributed a lot to wildlife conservation in India. Ravi will be remembered for his work on the Lesser Florican and studies of the Nicobari Megapode and Edible Nest Swiftlet in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. His analysis of the impact of the earthquake and tsunami of December 2004 on the ecology of the islands were outstanding. He was associated with SACON for a long time. He recently took charge as director of SACON.

May God rest his soul in peace. We offer the deepest and sincere condolences to Mrs. Shankaran and their daughter and share their grief and loss.

Nesting of Painted Stork at Palasva Village, Kachchh

Anika Tere

AINP on Agricultural Ornithology, Anand Agricultural University, Anand-388 110

e-mail: anikatere@rediffmail.com

We visited Munjasar Tank (23° 26' 44" N; 70° 56' 51" E) about 2-3 km south to Palasva village in Rapar Taluka of Kachchh district on 25th January 2006. The tank had almost dried up as the stored water was being lifted for irrigation by installing diesel pumps. The soil of tank was moist at the western end indicating that it had dried recently.

The tank harbours a colony of Painted Stork which came to the notice of bird watchers in 2005. A detailed account of the colony was given by Varu and Pomal (2006). They recorded about 150 active nests of Painted Stork and 300 nests of Eurasian Spoonbill. When the colony was visited by the authors in January 2006, a total 33 adult Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*) were seen soaring in the sky. They had nested on the *Prosopis juliflora* grown on tank bed and their 9 juveniles (old enough to fly) were standing on ground as a testimony to their successful breeding. *Prosopis juliflora* is the dominating plant species within this tank. The nesting had terminated when we visited the site. All the juveniles had left the nests and those present were old enough to fly.

The colony was primarily composed of Painted Storks nests on *Prosopis juliflora* bushes. A total 156 large nest platforms were counted on more than 40 bushes. The numbers of nests on each bush were between 2 and 6, most frequently 3. This nesting site was spread in an area of 1 sq. km. Storks had used thorny sticks of *Prosopis juliflora* as nesting material. All nests looked white due to deposition of excreta of the birds. A few nests had fallen on ground. Several small nest platforms of Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) were also seen interspersed with the larger nesting platforms of storks.

Average height of *Prosopis juliflora* varied from 2 to 3 m suggesting that the nests might have been very close to the water surface when nesting activity commenced in September. *Prosopis* bushes standing in water undoubtedly provided a safe substratum for nesting and safety against ground predators.

Painted Storks are known to nest on large trees such as Banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*), Peepal (*Ficus religiosa*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Babul (*Acacia nilotica*), etc. in Gujarat and elsewhere in the country (Ali and Ripley, 1983; Parasharya and Naik, 1990). The storks were also reported nesting on large *Prosopis juliflora* trees at Delhi Zoo (Desai *et al.*, 1978; Urfi, 1993), however nesting on *Prosopis* bushes standing in water is uncommon.

According to Shri Dharsinh Raydhan Prajapati, a local person of Palasva village (*Pers. Comm.*, October 2005), the water of Munjasar tank was used up for irrigation by local people. Rapid decline in water level might have forced the storks to terminate breeding activities. However, no mortality was observed at the nesting sites. Many big trees such as Banayan, Neem, Peepal were present at the tank periphery, however the storks used only *Prosopis* for nesting.

References:

- Ali, S. and Ripley, S. D. (1983). Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Desai, J. H., Menon, G. K. and Shah, R. V. (1978). Studies on the reproductive pattern of the Painted Stork *Ibis leucocephalus* (Pennant). *Pavo*, 15(1&2): 1-32.
- Parasharya, B. M. and Naik, R. M. (1990). Ciconiiform birds breeding in Bhavnagar city, Gujarat: A study of their nesting and plea for conservation. In: Conservation in Developing Countries: Problems and Prospects. Proceedings of Centenary Seminar of Bombay Natural History Society, (Eds. Daniel, J. C. and Serrao, J. S.). BNHS and Oxford University Press, Bombay. PP. 429-445.
- Urfi, A. J. (1993). Breeding patterns of Painted Storks *Mycteria leucocephala* (Pennant) at Delhi Zoo, India. *Colonial Waterbirds* 16(1): 95-97.
- Varu, S. N. and Pomal, A. (2006). *Kachchhma panikanthana pakshioni malavasahat*. *Vihang*, 27: 11-12.

Breeding of Purple-rumped Sunbird at Ahmedabad

P. S. Thakker

24, New Nandanvan Society, B/h ISRO, Ahmedabad-380 015. e-mail: thakkerps@yahoo.com

A few years ago I wrote a note in 'Vihang' about the presence of the Purple-rumped Sunbird at Ahmedabad (Thakker, 2001).

The Purple-rumped Sunbird (*Nectarinia zeylonica*) is known to occur in peninsular India, south of a line from Nasik (NW Maharashtra) to Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh), (Ali and Ripley, 1983). According to Raol (1986), in Gujarat the bird is found in south Gujarat only. Spread of this bird in Gujarat state around Ahmedabad was shown by Raol (1999). Parasharya and Vyas (2002) have mentioned about distribution of this bird in Gujarat. Presence of the bird is recorded at Pavagadh, Rajpipla, Vadodara, Anand, Nadiad, Pariej, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. Pandey and Teli (---) have shown its presence at GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar. Parasharya and Vyas (2002) have given an account of its breeding places in Gujarat.

I saw the Purple-rumped Sunbird on 10th February 2007 at 13:15 hrs from the higher elevation (than the bird) and sunlight falling on the bird. It had bright maroon colour on the back and bright metallic green colour on head. It had purple colour on throat, yellow colour on breast and rest of the under parts were white. I saw the bird thrice on the same day; on Mexican Oleander or 'Yellow Karen' (*Thevetia peruviana* Pers., *Thevetia neritifolia* Juss.), on Malabar Nut or 'Ardusi' (*Adhatoda vasica* Nees.), and on Scarlet Cordia (*Cordia sebestina* Linn.), bearing the orange flowers. Again on 18th February I saw the bird on Mexican Oleander *Thevetia* sp. in the morning. On 14th March 2007 at 07:45 hrs, I saw both male and female birds together sitting on Maulsari or 'Borsali' tree (*Mimusops elingi* Linn.)

On 17th March at 14:00 hrs I saw the male sitting on Mast Tree or 'Asopalav' (*Polyalthia pendula*). Later on, following the movements of a female, I found a nest on this tree at a height of about

25 feet. This was the first time I saw the nest at such a height. I assumed it to be that of Purple-rumped Sunbird and further confirmed it on 18th March that it was so. I have taken photograph of the nest and of a Purple Sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*) chasing the Purple-rumped Sunbird.

On 15th July at my residence, I saw both male and female Purple-rumped Sunbirds feeding the fledgling on various trees mentioned earlier. On 16th July I saw a male bird feeding the young one on a flowering tree *Betulia* sp. and on 19th July 2007 again I saw a male bird feeding the young one at Vikram Sarabhai Space Exhibition building at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad. This confirms the breeding of Purple-rumped Sunbird at Ahmedabad. Thus, the breeding record at Ahmedabad is an extension of breeding range of the species established by Parasharya and Vyas (2002).

References:

- Ali, S. and Ripley S. D. (1983). Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan. Vol. 10, pp. 22-24. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Parasharya B. M. and Vyas R. (2002). Status of the Purple-rumped Sunbird *Nectarina zylonica* in Gujarat state. *J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.* 99(1): 119-120.
- Raol L. M. (1986). *Aspasna Pankhi - Jivan bharna Sathi. Prakruti Parichay Shreni 1, Paryavaran Shikshan Kendra* (CEE), Ahmedabad. pp. 87-88.
- Raol L. M. (1999). Pachrangi Shakkarkhoru- Purple Rumped Sunbird. *Vihang* 2 (1) 6.
- Thakker P. S. (2001). *Amdavadman Pachrangi Shakkarkhorani* (Purple-rumped Sunbird) *hajri. Have, Niymit Ghatna. Vihang* (Gujarati) 14: 8.
- Pandey C. N. and Janki Teli (---). Handbook of Birds in and around Indroda Nature Park. GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

ID Cards to BCSG members

BCSG is preparing ID cards for its members. All the BCSG members are requested to submit their correspondence and e-mail address along with stamp size photo (preferably in soft copy) to Dr. Chandresh Borad, AINP on Agricultural Ornithology, Biocontrol Laboratory, AAU, Anand-388110. e-mail : chandresh_borad@yahoo.com.

Sighting of Blue-throated Flycatcher at Morbi: A New Record for Gujarat

Prasad Ganpule

Parshuram Pottery Works, Opp. Nazarbaug Station, Morbi – 363 642. e-mail: prasadganpule@yahoo.com

On Sunday 26th October 2008 at around 11 a. m., I was photographing a female Red-throated Flycatcher (*Ficedula parva*) on a tree behind my house at Morbi, District Rajkot. The Red-throated Flycatcher used to perch on a branch of the tree quite regularly. While photographing the bird, suddenly another flycatcher resembling Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher



(*Cyornis tickelliae*) appeared on the tree. But soon we realized that it was not a Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher. I have seen many Tickell's Blue-Flycatchers in the Gir National Park. The bird had very dark blue upperparts, much darker than Tickell's. It had a blue throat with a slight orange wedge, and orange breast with white belly and vent. It had slight lighter blue on the crown. It was like a typical flycatcher, but perching high on the tree and making short

sallies for insects.

We (my brother was accompanying me) took photographs of the bird and referred to the books (Grimmett *et al.*, 1999; Kazmierczak, 2000). We identified the bird as a male Blue-throated Flycatcher (*Cyornis rubeculoides*). There are no records shown for Western India in either reference book. I have never seen it

here before and I do not know if there are any records for the Gujarat. Hence, I think it is a very interesting sighting.

References:

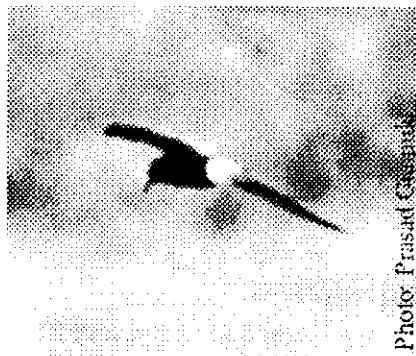
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp C. and Inskipp T. (1999). Pocket Guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
Kazmierczak K. (2000). A Field Guide to the Birds of India. Om Book Services, New Delhi.

White-winged Black Tern, Marshall's Iora and Sarus Crane

Prasad Ganpule

Parshuram Pottery Works, Opp. Nazarbaug Station, Morbi – 363 642. e-mail: prasadganpule@yahoo.com

I visited Paneli Vidi and Paneli tank on 5th May 2008 at around 07:00 am in the morning. At the tank, I saw a tern which was quite different from the terns seen regularly. It had a white rump and tail. The under-parts (breast and throat) were completely black. The head was also completely black. The beak was slim and blackish. The under-wings were black and white. The bird was seen flying. I managed to take a photo but it is quite out of focus, although above described features are seen. I identified the bird as a White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) in breeding plumage. Since it was seen in early May, it could have been a passage migrant. There are some records of the species in the Gujarat as described in the books (Grimmett *et al.*, 1999; Kazmierczak, 2000).



In my next visit to the vidi and tank on 11th May 2008 early in the morning, Shri Ashok Mashru and Shri Darshak Karia from Rajkot accompanied us. We searched for the tern but we could not see it. However, we managed to see two pairs of Marshall's Iora (*Aegithina nigrolutea*) in breeding plumage in the vidi.

We then went to Machchhu –II dam at around 10 in the morning.

There we saw 11 Sarus Cranes (*Grus antigone*). We also saw a flock of approximately 100 Comb Ducks (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*).

References:

- Grimmett, R., Inskipp C. and Inskipp T. (1999). Pocket Guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
Kazmierczak K. (2000). A Field Guide to the Birds of India. Om Book Services, New Delhi.

Crab Plover at Dhadhar Estuary in Bharuch District

Dishant Parasharya

Bombay Natural History Society, 507/B. Apte Apartments, Raopura, Vadodara-390 001.

On 21st November 2007 I saw a flock of Crab-Plovers (*Dromas ardeola*) feeding on the mudflats of Dhadhar Estuary near Gandhar in Bharuch District. The flock had around 120 birds. I observed this flock occasionally till April 2008.

The Crab Plovers are known to occur in great abundance in the Gulf of Kachchh (Palm and Briggs, 1986). However, it is considered to be a rare winter visitor in Gulf of Khambhat (Dharmakumarsinhji, 1955). According to Dharmakumarsinhji, he had recorded only two to three birds occasionally on the west coast of Gulf of Khambhat (near Bhavnagar). In recent publications by Grimmett *et al.* (1999) and Kazmierczak (2000), the distribution map does not show its presence in Gulf of Khambhat. Presence of 120 odd birds on the east coast of Gulf of Khambhat for a period of more than four months suggests that birds are certainly occurring in this area but

published records might be scanty. As far as abundance is concerned, it is definitely less than that of Gulf of Kachchh. During my winter visits to Gulf of Kachchh, I have observed flocks of 200 to 300 birds on almost every island I visited.

References:

- Dharmakumarsinhji, R. S. (1955). The Birds of Saurashtra. Times Press, Bombay.
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp C. and Inskipp T. (1999). Pocket Guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Kazmierczak K. (2000). A Field Guide to the Birds of India. Om Book Services, New Delhi.
- Palm, P. and Briggs, C. (1986). Crab Plovers *Dromas ardeola* in the Gulf of Kachchh. *Forktail* 1:21-28.

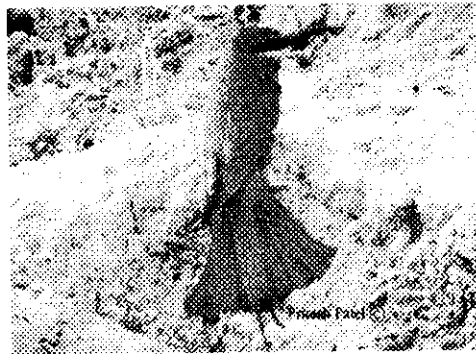
Breeding Record of Blue-tailed Bee-eater near Vadodara

Pritesh Patel

D/16, Pramukh-Ashish Society, Near Sun Pharma, Ataladra, Vadodara - 390 012, e-mail : pritesh7777@yahoo.com

On 9th May 2008, my friend Dhruv Gandhi and I visited an area near Sindhrot village of Vadodara district on the edge of Mahi River for birdwatching. Here we saw a bee-eater much bigger in size than the Small Bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*). So I photographed the bird. It had blue rump, tail and undertail coverts, chestnut throat, and its forehead and supercilium were mainly green. We compared the photograph with picture plates and identified it as Blue-tailed Bee-eater (*Merops philippinus*) from reference books (Ali, 1996; Grimmett *et al.*, 1999).

According to Grimmett *et al.* (1999), it is a winter visitor. It breeds in north and north-east part of the subcontinent and winters in peninsulas and Sri Lanka. It is mostly seen near water source. We saw this species during hot summer in Vadodara district, Gujarat and observed well its nesting behaviour (I



have its photographic evidence, too). So, this bird was sighted breeding near water source in summer in western part of the country. According to Grimmett *et al.* (1999), this bird is summer visitor in the states like Delhi, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Jammu & Kashmir etc.; and in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra, it is winter visitor. I thank wildlife

photographer Shri Kartik Upadhyay for his help.

References:

- Ali, S. (1996). The Book of Indian Birds. Oxford University Press – BNHS, Mumbai
- Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C. and Inskipp, T. (1999). Pocket Guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Kazmierczak, K. (2000). A Field Guide to the Birds of India. Om Book Services, New Delhi

Birds of Nyari-I Dam

Ashok K. Mashru

A-7. Alap Heritage. Nr. Satyasai Heart Hosp., Kalawad Road, Rajkot-360005. e-mail: mashruashok@gmail.com

Nyari-I dam is situated near village Vajadi, just 15 km away from Rajkot city, Gujarat. The dam was constructed for the purpose of supplying water to the city in year 1977. Afterwards on the same river another irrigation dam was constructed on the downstream, named Nyri-II, near Rangpar village, at a distance of about 20 km from Nyari-I dam. Some salient features of the Nyari-I dam are as follows:

1. Location : 22° 15" N, 70° 42" E
2. River : Nyari, Vagudadi
3. Annual Rainfall : 671 mm
4. Reservoir Area : 19.30 sq. km
5. Storage Capacity : 27 m.cum.
6. Length of dam : Earthen-4206 m,
Spillway-54 m
7. Catchment Area : 158 sq.km

As a wetland it is an ideal place to host thousands of migratory birds, as well as resident birds, since many years. The dam is never totally dry throughout the year. This characteristic has made it a favorite for birds of different species at different time, as the type of food available are different as per depleting level of dam. The dam has many undisturbed habitats available as well for birds. They are as follows:

1. Wetland:

Nyari-I dam is constructed on two rivers namely Nyari and Vagudadi. It has a good catchment area. Having good influx of water every year makes it a reliable place for birds to visit and reside. Also the dam is not very deep and is spread over a large area. This is a desirable feature for birds. I have observed the congregation of at least 5000 Demoiselle Cranes for return migration here on 31st March. The wetland-dependent family of birds to be found on this reservoir are flamingos, ducks, herons, egrets, various waders, kingfishers, terns, cranes, geese, pelicans, storks, Eurasian Spoonbills (*Platalea leucordia*), swallows, Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*), cormorants, harrier, eagles and Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*).

2. Scrub, Vegetation, Grass Cover:

The dam has plantation of Lead Tree or 'Subabul' (*Leucaena leucocephala*) parallel to earthen bund and Thorn Mimosa or 'Desi Baval'

(*Acacia nilotica*) on small hills near its spillway side. After the first spell of monsoon, native grasses also flourish over surrounding hilly area, on the slopes of the earthen bund and on the islands. These Grassy areas become a good attraction for bird families like Cuckoos, Larks, Doves, Ibises, Sunbirds, Shrikes, Bee-eaters, Buntings, Pipits, Wagtails, Warblers etc. Another feature of this reservoir is the patches of 'Gando Baval' (*Prosopis juliflora*) over peripheral submergence area. When there is a good monsoon, the dam overflows and these trees are partially submerged in the water and become safe havens for nesting colonies for hundreds of herons, egrets, Oriental spoonbills and Darters. In a small check-dam near the Nyari dam, heronry forms every year in trees of Desi Baval. Important bird species like Darter, Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and Oriental White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*) nest there. Total Ten species of birds breed here in such heronries. The monsoon grassland becomes a good nesting sites for larks, robins, and partridges. So many species of insects and butterflies flourishes in grassland and they makes good food chain for birds and their youngs depending of them during nesting season.

3. Small Islands:

As the time passes and water depletes from the reservoir, some small islands emerges. As the islands emerge, it is as if they trigger the instinct to start breeding, for birds like River Tern, pratincoles, and plovers etc. These islands are safe places for the ground-nesting birds, providing protection from other predators as well as from humans. Nearly 1000 River Terns (*Sterna aurantia*) were found seating on one big island in May- 2008, probably occupying their respective territories for laying eggs. But unfortunately in my next visit after one month, I found this island open for approach and found no signs of nesting of River Terns there. If the water level had not depleted that much, this would have been the largest breeding colony ever recorded. Afterwards River terns established their breeding colony on two small islands, consisting of about 200 birds. These islands are also ideal safe place for birds like cranes, pelicans and storks to rest by day and

roost by night. Various owls also visit or reside in the islands.

4. Reeds Line:

The overflow and seepage water flows continuously in these rivers during almost the entire year. This constant flow of water encourages the growth of reeds along the entire flow. The two species of reeds found here are locally known as 'Ghabajariu or Pan.Chiya' (*Typha angustata*) and 'Gondaro' (*Scirpus littoralis*). These reeds provide habitat for foraging and nesting of different species of Birds. Reeds of Nyari-I dam attracts weavers, munias, bitterns, herons, ducks, plovers, crakes, water hens and warblers. Insects and butterflies also breed here in abundance and become part of the food web. Snails and other aquatic creatures also occur here.

The checklist of Birds of Nyari-I dam consists of 150 species of birds and the list of breeding birds has so far reached to 45 species of birds. This indicates how important this wetland is, harbouring such a diversity of birds.

A checklist of the breeding birds of Nyari – I dam, Rajkot.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)
 Indian Shag (*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*)
 Little Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax niger*)
 Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*)
 Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)
 Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)
 Indian Pond-Heron (*Ardeola grayii*)

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
 Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
 Chestnut Bittern (*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*)
 Yellow Bittern (*Ixobrychus sinensis*)
 Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)
 Black Ibis (*Pseudibis papillosa*)
 Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)
 Grey Francolin (*Francolinus pondicerianus*)
 Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)
 White-breasted Waterhen (*Amurornis phoenicurus*)
 Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)
 Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*)
 Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)
 Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)
 Stone-Curlew (*Burhinus oedichenus*)
 Great Stone-Plover (*Esacus recurvirostris*)
 Small Pratincole (*Glareola lactea*)
 River Tern (*Sterna aurantia*)
 Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)
 Red Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*)
 Little Brown Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*)
 Spotted Owlet (*Athene brama*)
 Red-winged Bush-Lark (*Mirafra erythroptera*)
 Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark (*Eremopterix grisea*)
 Wire-tailed Swallow (*Hirundo smithii*)
 Common Babbler (*Turdoides caudatus*)
 Large Grey Babbler (*Turdoides malcolmi*)
 Streaked Fantail-Warbler (*Cisticola juncidis*)
 Plain Prinia (*Prinia inornata*)
 Ashy Prinia (*Prinia socialis*)
 Common Tailorbird (*Orthotomus sutorius*)
 Large Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla maderaspatensis*)
 Purple Sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*)
 Baya Weaver (*Ploceus philippinus*)
 Black-breasted Weaver (*Ploceus benghalensis*)
 Red Munia (*Amandava amandava*)
 White-throated Munia (*Lonchura malabarica*)

Houbara Census –2008 in Little Rann of Kachchh, Gujarat Chiku Vora¹, Tana Mewada², Faruk Chauhan¹, Vishal Thoria³, Shivbhadrasinh Jadeja⁴ and Pratap Zinzuvadia⁵

¹ Laxmi Para, Dudharej Road, Surendranagar. e-mail: gavora71@gmail.com; ² 15, Dayalkripa Society, Near G.E.B., Gotri, Vadodara. e-mail: tana_mewada@yahoo.co.in; ³ 5, Arun Society, Dal mill Road, Surendranagar. e-mail: vishal_thoria@hotmail.com; ⁴ Snehal Park, Opp. T. B. Hospital, Surendranagar. e-mail: shiiv.jadeja@gmail.com, ⁵ Forest Office, Bajana, Dist. Surendranagar.

Introduction:

Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata*) is a globally threatened bird presently found only in the low lying wet grassland with bushes and semi-desert areas. It breeds in Baluchistan, and in winter it visits Kachchh and Saurashtra of Gujarat, Rajasthan and the rest of the Pakistan. The census was carried out as a part of the research project conducted by the BCSG.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the census were to document the population status of the Houbara Bustard. To identify threats faced by this species and to record other significant/ critical observations with respect to the flora / fauna found in the ecosystem for the better management of the entire ecosystem.

Description of the Area:

The landscape of Little Rann of Kachchh (LRK) passes through the tropic of cancer. The climate is tropical monsoonal. There are wide fluctuations in inter and intra-annual temperatures and rainfall. In general terms, the landscape has arid and semi-arid climate. In the entire landscape, the average monthly temperature ranging between 12° C in winter to around 44° C in peak summer. Inside the LRK, temperature sometime reaches as highest as 50° C in May and also drops below freezing point in winter. The evaporation rate is considered as one of the highest in the country. It receives average annual rainfall less than 300 mm. The area is also prone to disasters like drought, cyclones and earthquakes.

The Little Rann broadly encompasses area from 10 Talukas of Kachchh, Surendranagar, Rajkot, Patan, and Banaskantha Districts. The Little Rann is having an area of 5180 sq. km of which 4953 sq. km is declared as Sanctuary.

The census was done in the Little Rann of Kachchh Wild Life Sanctuary and the adjoining grassland, shrubland of the fringe villages. From the wildlife protected area networking point of view this area comes under the Desert biogeographic zone, and the Kachchh biogeographic province. This is a unique habitat of its type, which still has its natural characters and above all supports the population of the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*) - a globally threatened bird species. In addition to this, it also supports other endangered fauna like Spiny-tailed Lizard (*Uromastix hardwickii*), Chinkara (*Gazella bennetti*), Wolf (*Canis lupus*), Asiatic Wild Ass (*Equus onager*), Desert Fox (*Vulpes bengalensis*) and vulnerable species, Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*).

Methodology:

The census area was stratified into two zones: the *bets* having grasslands / shrubland and the fringe *Dhassis* having grasslands / shrubland. This further subdivided into smaller blocks. Information regarding sighting of Houbara Bustard was recorded in the data sheet provided. In addition, we also recorded other mammals, avifauna and reptiles using standard reference books which are listed in Annexure 1 to Annexure 3.

Observations:

Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*) census started on 16th February 2008 with the help of

total five teams. Here we have presented data of two teams collectively. On the first day of the census our team visited central part which includes the *Bets* and on the second day we surveyed the fringe area of the Little Rann.

We found comparatively good number of Houbara Bustard in the fringe area. Total directly sighted birds were 10 individual out of which 8 individuals were recorded in the fringe area, *Dhasis*.

On first day morning at the Mardak *Bet* we saw two Houbara Bustards. After that we moved to Nanda *Bet* but could not see any. Next day we could record 8 individuals at different locations on *Dhasis* - Degam ni *Dhasi*, Sultanpura ni *Dhasi*, Odu ni *Dhasi*, Vachharajpur ni *Dhasi*, Bhimka ni *Dhasi* and a site little away from the fringe of the Rann known as Rajpura no *Bhaatho*.

Annexure – I. List of Birds sighted during the survey

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)
 Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*)
 Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)
 Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)
 Indian Shag (*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*)
 Little Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax niger*)
 Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)
 Indian Pond-Heron (*Ardeola grayii*)
 Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
 Large Egret (*Casmerodius albus*)
 Median Egret (*Mesophoyx intermedia*)
 Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
 Western Reef-Egret (*Egretta gularis*)
 Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)
 White-necked Stork (*Ciconia episcopus*)
 Oriental White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*)
 Black Ibis (*Pseudibis papillosa*)
 Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)
 Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)
 Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)
 Lesser Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus minor*)
 Lesser Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna javanica*)
 Spot-billed Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)
 Northern Shoveller (*Anas clypeata*)
 Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*)
 Cotton Teal (*Nettapus coromandelianus*)
 Comb Duck (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*)
 Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)
 Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)
 Shikra (*Accipiter badius*)
 Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)
 Long-legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*)
 Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)
 White-eyed Buzzard (*Buteo teesa*)
 Bonelli's Eagle (*Hieraaetus fasciatus*)
 Booted Eagle (*Hieraaetus pennatus*)

Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*)
 Tawny Eagle (*Aquila rapax*)
 Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*)
 Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*)
 Saker (*Falco cherrug*)
 Laggar (*Falco jugger*)
 Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
 Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)
 Grey Francolin (*Francolinus pondicerianus*)
 Common Crane (*Grus grus*)
 Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*)
 Demoiselle Crane (*Grus virgo*)
 Brown Crake (*Amaurornis akool*)
 Common Coot (*Fulica atra*)
 Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata*)
 Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*)
 Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)
 Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)
 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)
 Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)
 Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*)
 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)
 Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)
 Indian Courser (*Cursorius coromandelicus*)
 Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus*)
 Greater Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*)
 Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)
 Lesser Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)
 Small Blue Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)
 White-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)
 Small Bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*)
 Common Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)
 Red-winged Bush-Lark (*Mirafra erythroptera*)
 Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark (*Eremopterix grisea*)
 Greater Hoopoe-Lark (*Alaemon alaudipes*)
 Common Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*)

Sykes's Crested Lark (*Galerida deva*)
 Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*)
 Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)
 Rosy Starling (*Sturnus roseus*)
 Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*)
 White-eared Bulbul (*Pycnonotus leucotis*)
 Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*)
 Common Babbler (*Turdoides caudatus*)
 Ashy Prinia (*Prinia socialis*)
 Booted Warbler (*Hippolais caligata*)
 Desert Warbler (*Sylvia nana*)
 Common Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*)
 Desert Wheatear (*Oenanthe deserti*)
 Variable Wheatear (*Oenanthe picata*)
 Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)
 Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*)
 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
 Yellow-throated Sparrow (*Petronia xanthocollis*)
 White-throated Munia (*Lonchura malabarica*)

Annexure – II. List of Wild mammals sighted during the survey

Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*)
 Black Buck (*Antelope cervicapra*)
 Asiatic Wild Ass (*Equus onager*)
 Desert Fox (*Vulpes vulpes pusilla*)
 Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*)
 Grey Mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsii*)
 Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*)
 Indian Hare (*Lepus nigricollis*)

Annexure – III. List of reptiles sighted during the survey

Agile Agama (*Trapehus agilis*)
 Spiny-tailed Lizard (*Uromastix hardwickii*)
 Fan-throated Lizard (*Sitana ponticeriana*)
 Common Garden Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*)
 Indian Monitor Lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*)

Breeding Records of River Tern in Jamnagar

Maulik S. Varu

Department of Physiology, M. P. Shah Medical College, Jamnagar. e-mail: drmaulikvaru@gmail.com

On 18th May 2008 I visited Ranjitsagar dam with Shri Arpit Deomurari. Ranjitsagar dam is situated about 10 km away from Jamnagar city. It was morning, about 7:30 a.m. We observed one River Tern (*Sterna aurantia*) flying with a fish in its bill which led us to suspect its breeding.

We searched desperately and found one island where breeding occurred. Through binocular we counted about 20-25 nests; however the exact number of nests could not be determined. I visited this place

for the second time with Dr. Jalapan on 20th May 2008. He reached the island and confirmed that there were 30 nests. 12 of them had chicks, 10 had 3 eggs and 8 had 2 eggs. There were also 4 nests of Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) with eggs. River Tern is our common resident bird and breeds throughout Gujarat, but in Jamnagar area no significant area is available for its breeding so this sighting is worth recording.

Good Concentration of Greater Short-toed Lark in Kachchh

S. N. Varu

Junavas, Temple Street, Madhapar, Tal. Bhuj, Kachchh- 370 020, e-mail: snvaru@yahoo.in

Ample growth of grasses and shrubs due to good rain during 2006 in Kachchh attracted good number of Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella*

brachydactyla) in winter. I came across this species at several places in Kachchh during winter this year. Information of the same is given as under:

Date	Site Name	No.
03.09.06	Nandabet, Little Rann of Kachchh	12
29.10.06	Between Shervo -Vekariya (Banni)	100
29.10.06	Between Bhirandiyara - Shervo (Banni)	06
12.11.06	Between Shervo -Chhari dhandh (Banni)	50
13.11.06	Between Bita-Kunathiya, Ta-Abdasa	30
13.11.06	Between Pingeshwar -Kothara, Ta -Abdasa	10
14.11.06	Kiro hill, Fulay	20
17.11.06	Between Fulay - Chhari dhandh	50
18.11.06	Between Pingleshwar -Kothara, Ta -Abdasa	50
18.11.06	Kala Talav, Ta - Abdasa	30
26.11.06	Mapar, Ta-Mandvi	50
26.11.06	Between Moti Rayan- Durgapur Ta -Mandvi	20
03.12.06	Lala- Buddiya -Suthri, Ta -Abdasa	80
10.12.06	Vanku, Ta-Abdasa	100
23.12.06	Hodka Thath-Shervo (Banni)	80
24.12.06	Bitra to Kunathiya, Kala Talav, Sudadhro, Vighaber, Lala, Ranpar Rakhal, Between Lala -Jakhau, Budiya, Ta -Abdasa (grassland area)	1020

30.12.06	Bambhdai, Ta- Mandvi	50
30.12.06	Sandhan - Suthri, Parjau -Vighaber, Lala and Lala Bustard Sanctuary, Ta - Abdasa	172
13.01.07	Poladia Ta - Mandvi	100
27.01.07	Sai to Rapar Ta Rapar	60
27.01.07	Fatehgadh to Shivagadh Ta - Rapar	50
27.01.07	Balasar, Ta-Rapar	150
28.01.07	Ravechi, Ta- Rapar	50
31.01.07	Bhanada - Kala Talav - Kunathiya, Ta-Abdasa	350
01.02.07	Kunathiya -Bhitiyari, Ranpar Rakhal, Naliya, Jasapar, Lala, Ta-Abdasa	1250
05.02.07	Poladiya, Ta- Mandvi	30
05.02.07	Ganga creek, Mandvi	100
18.02.07	Fulay -Chhari-Hodka, Chhachhlo, Shervo (Banni)	90
21.02.07	Between Vaghot - Ramvada, Ta-Abdasa	200
21.02.07	Between Lala -Vanku, Ta -Abdasa	20
21.02.07	Between Sukhpar -Charopadi, Ta -Abdasa	20
11.03.07	Between Sandhan-Suthri, Ta-Abdasa	50
11.03.07	Lala, Ta- Abdasa	20

Bird Count at Chhari Dhandh and Bhimasar Tank During Summer

Ashwin Pomal

Pomal Jewellers, Gram Panchayat Road, Juna Vas. Madhapar, Bhuj-370 020. e-mail: aspomal@yahoo.co.in

On 21st May 2008, I visited Chhari Dhandh with the team of GEER Foundation. Following birds were recorded:

Species & Number

Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*)-60
 Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)-05
 Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)-08
 Little Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax niger*)-23
 Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)-16
 Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)-03
 Indian Pond-Heron (*Ardeola grayii*)-8
 Median Egret (*Mexophoyx intermedia*)-50

Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)-600
 Black-necked Stork (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*)-05
 Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)-20
 Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)-250
 Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)-3000 Ad · 500 Juv
 Lesser Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus minor*)-1000 · 175 Juv
 Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)-60
 Common Teal (*Anas crecca*)-35
 Spot-billed Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)-86
 Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)-50
 Northern Shoveller (*Anas chrypeata*)-30
 Common Crane (*Grus grus*)-03
 Purple Moorhen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)-150

Common Coot (*Fulica atra*)-1500
 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)-45
 Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)-01
 Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*)-1Ad+1Juv
 Pallas's Gull (*Larus ichthyaeus*)-1
 Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybridus*)-48
 Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)-21
 Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*)-07
 River Tern (*Sterna aurantia*)-05

Besides waterbirds at Chhari Dhandh, Grey Hypocolius (*Hypocolius ampelinus*)-08 were recorded at Fulay Rakhil at 6.00 P.M. On 1st June 2008, I visited Bhimasar Village Tank (Ta, Anjar-Kachchh) with Shri Ruchir Thakkar of Anjar. Following birds were counted there:

Species & Number

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)-23
 Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)-06
 Little Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax niger*)-30
 Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)-12
 Indian Pond-Heron (*Ardeola grayii*)-08
 Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)-02
 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)-01
 Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)-60
 Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)-32
 Spot-billed Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)-12
 Purple Moorhen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)-100
 Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)-05
 Common Coot (*Fulica atra*)-22
 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)-20
 Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybridus*)-10

Sightings of Little Green Heron in Kachchh

S. N. Varu

Junavas, Temple Street, Madhapar, Tal. Bhuj, Kachchh- 370 020. e-mail: snvaru@yahoo.in

Little Green Heron (*Butorids striatus*) is a solitary species (Kazmierczak 2000). Moreover, it occurs on inland waters with dense shrub cover and mangroves (Grimmett *et al.* 1999). It is a solitary bird which usually gets camouflage with the aquatic vegetation and it is hard to find unless disturbed. As a result, published records of this species are very few. Here I am putting up my sightings of Little Green Heron in Kachchh.

Chhatardi Tank, Bhuj	30.1.1977	01
Hamirsar Tank, Bhuj	16.10.1977	01
Ningal Tank, Anjar	7.12. 1980	01
Pragsar Tank, Chaduva	23.1.1983	01
Fatsar Pond, Chaduva	23.1.1983	01
Fatsar Pond, Chaduva	20.11.1983	01
Rudramata Dam, Bhuj	29.6.1986	01
Pragsar Tank, Chaduva	22.11.1986	01
Babiya Dam, Mundra	23.11.1988	01
Pragsar Tank, Chaduva	22.3.1989	01
Dhonsa Jheel, Bhuj	13.1.1990	01
Bhukhi Reservoir,	20.1.1991	01
Nakhtrana		
Dhonsa Jheel, Bhuj	22.1.1991	03
Kalaghogha Reservoir,	25.3.1993	01
Mundra		
Dam at Sanghipuram,	20.6.1998	02
Abdasa		
Dam at Sanghipuram,	16.8.1998	01
Abdasa		

Nullah, near Ramvada,	16.8.1998	01
Abdasa		
Khatri Pond, Bhuj	23.1.1998	01
Rudramata Dam, Bhuj	22.1.2000	03
Pragsar Tank, Chaduva	25.12.2002	01
Kukma Tank, Bhuj	28.12.2002	01
Pragsar Tank, Chaduva	28.07.2007	01
Gelada Dam, Mundra	17.07.2008	01
Pond at Bocha, Mundra	17.07.2008	01
Jakhau Creek, Abadasa	08.02.2009	01

This species is not shown to occur in Kachchh (Grimmett *et al.* 1999, Kazmierczak 2000, Hancock and Kushlan 1984). So now it is established that the species is wide spread in Kachchh also. [Shri Jignesh Joshi had put up his query about the species in his 'Letter to the Editor' (Flamingo 3(1):15, 2005)].

References:

Grimmett, R., Inskipp C. and Inskipp T. (1999). Pocket Guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
 Hancock, and J. A. Kushlan. (1984). Herons Handbook. Croom Helm, London and Sydney. pp. 176-177.
 Kazmierczak K. (2000). A Field Guide to the Birds of India. Om Book Services. New Delhi.

BCSG EVENTS

Painted Stork and Sarus Watch

Area between Tarapur and Kheda harbors a Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*) colony at Chikhaliya village near Tarapur, a mixed heronry of waterbirds, mainly cormorants and egrets, at Shekhupur and good numbers of Sarus Crane around Narda tank near Limbasi. A "Painted Stork and Sarus watch" programme was arranged on 7th September 2008. The programme was announced in local newspapers and communicated telephonically to local BCSG members. In spite of rain in the early morning, there was overwhelming response from the participants. Thirty-six participants attended the programme.

Participants first visited Painted Stork colony at Chikhaliya village which is 5 km from Tarapur on Tarapur - Bagodara Highway. The colony is known to exist since last 15 years. The colony was distributed over two tree of Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*). The colony was in the early development stage. Courtship, nest building and incubation activities were seen. Some birds were seen bringing nest material for repairing their nests or for building new ones. The colony was earlier spread over 8-10 larger trees at the edge of village pond and harbored 200+ nests of Painted storks. The colony was also shared by White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*). However most of trees are uprooted /dried and only three trees are now available for nesting. Hence it was planned to plant trees suitable for nesting around the village ponds e.g. Banian (*Ficus benghalensis*), Sacred Fig or Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), Belleric myrobalan or 'Baheda' (*Terminalia bellirica*) with the involvement of local villagers. Large-sized saplings were made available by Shri Dhaval Patel of Vidyanagar Nature Club. Volunteers and villagers were briefed about the current status of Painted Stork in the country and the state and conservation measures needed.

The participants than visited Pariej tank. The tank had hardly any birdlife in the water. However across the road on eastern boundary of the tank, several waterbirds were sighted in the water spread over the small area from a distance of a few metres only. Some of the important species sighted were Black Bittern (*Dupetor flavicollis*), Cormorants, Purple Moorhen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Painted Stork, Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), and Black-headed Munia (*Lonchura malacca*).

We than visited a colony of cormorants and egrets on the road side at Shekhupur village. Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) trees on eastern side were occupied by the birds for nesting. The young ones were almost grown up and were perching outside their nests.

We than traveled through rice fields around Limbasi and saw 5-6 pairs of Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*). Presence of large number of farmers and labors in the field might have driven away the Sarus Cranes. Usually 50-60 birds are sighted in 10 km area around Limbasi. However participants rejoiced to see 6 birds at Narda tank. Participants were informed that this area possesses highest density of Sarus Cranes in the state. They were also briefed about specific problems faced by Sarus Crane in successful breeding although this species is considered human friendly and there is no direct danger from human.

Participants were very happy to see Painted stork, Sarus Cranes and other waterbirds and more specifically to participate in conservation activity in the form of tree plantation at Chikhaliya to save the depleting colony. BCSG thankfully acknowledges the conveyance provided by Shri Dhaval Patel of Vidyanagar Nature Club.

VULTURE CELL – BCSG

The BCSG is running a 'Vulture Cell' and publishing a newsletter "Gyps" dedicated to vulture conservation. For further details please contact:

Shri Snehal Patel, 81, Sarjan Society, Athwa Lines, Surat. e-mail: snehalpatel81@rediffmail.com, 9825110283 OR

Shri Kartik Shartri, Ashokwadi, Panchvati, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad- 380 006. e-mail: kartikshastri@hotmail.com

VULTURE HELP LINE

If you find an injured vulture, please contact following persons for rescue:

Surat: Snehal Patel -9825110283; Ahmedabad; Kartik Shartri 98240 25045; Bakul Trivedi 98256 29587;

Mahuva: Ruchi Dave- 9998047755; Bhuj: S. N. Varu 99257 30354; Rajkot: Ashok Mashru 98797 58818;

Bhavnagar: Indra Gadhi 94271 82755 Anand: Dhaval Patel- 9898142170;

VULTURE UPDATE

Meeting of the State Level Committee on Vulture Conservation

Snehal Patel

81, Sarjan Society, Athwa Lanes, Surat – 395 007, e-mail: snehalpatel81@rediffmail.com

Government of Gujarat has recently formed a state level committee for Vulture Conservation consisting of following members: Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment Department, Gandhinagar; Director, GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar; Director, Animal Husbandry, Gandhinagar; Director, Drug Control, Gandhinagar; Representative, Animal Welfare Division, Gandhinagar; CF, Wildlife, Junagadh; CF, Social Forestry Division, Ahmedabad; CF, Kachchh Forest Circle, Bhuj; CF, Junagadh Forest Circle, Junagadh; CF, Surat Forest Circle, Surat; Nature Club Surat; Dharmakumarsinhji Nature Conservation Society, Bhavnagar; Shri Amrutlal Harakhchand Doshi, Khada Panjarapole, Vav; Shri Samveg Lalbhai Dhabla Panjarapole, Ahmedabad; Shri Lalsingh Raol, Ahmedabad and Shri Shantilal Varu, Bhuj.

The first meeting was held on 16th June 2008 at Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar. Except the two trustees from Panjarapole, all other members were present. GEER Foundation declared the data of last count of vultures made during 2007 in the Gujarat State. It showed a drastic decline in number with just 1450 birds surviving in the wild.

During discussions in presence of Mr. Nanda, Principal Secretary, FED, BCSG and Nature Club Surat highlighted following points along with photographs of the conservation work being carried out by the two NGO's:

1. To create more awareness through newspaper, press release and newspaper advertisements to stop using the toxic drug Diclofenac for animal treatment and availability of substitute drug, Meloxicam at subsidized rates.
2. To monitor Diclofenac sale strictly all over Gujarat.
3. To create awareness programs for veterinary doctors and locals initially at sites where vulture are existing and then all over Gujarat.
4. To interact with Panjarapoles and to check regular the medicines used.

5. To make at least three fenced feeding sites at Dabhla- Ahmedabad, Chhapari- Mahuva and Hazira –Surat.
6. To Avoid disturbances at vulture feeding sites near panjarapole by:
 - Keeping away dogs by making large enclosed area of chain link and one side wall for birds to land and take off.
 - Dumping the carcass at two separate sites on alternate days. So that vultures can feed on previous day's dump, if *Chamars* are present till late evening.
7. To provide safe food (Diclofenac-free carcass) to vultures. Practice of carcasses being buried or sprayed with pesticides should be discouraged. Food shortage is one of the prime causes for vulture decline. Besides domestic livestock, dead Blue bulls should be left for vultures to scavenge in open area, away from habitation. They are being buried at present.
8. To establish rescue shelters for injured/sick vultures at Mahuva and Ahmedabad along with trained doctors. Large enclosures have already been made in Surat by Nature Club Surat.
9. To provide compensation to coconut growers regularly for damage to trees on which vultures are nesting/ roosting.
10. To create a fund of at least 2 to 3 Crores for vulture conservation. (same as fund of 40 Crores for lion conservation)
11. To make public request for use of cotton threads in place of nylon thread for flying kites. Cotton threads can break or decay over the period and prevent serious injury to big birds like vultures.
12. To assign the work of awareness programs and co-ordination work to some NGOs.

Mr. Pande informed about the vulture feeding program started by Nature Club Surat and the distribution of Meloxicam. This work is now being

supported by the Forest Department and GEER Foundation. They also appreciated and praised our efforts of supplying the alternate drug Meloxicam at subsidized rates.

The issue of transporting Vultures (injured, sick or juvenile) from the place of origin to Junagadh was also discussed. Mr. Bharat Pathak, C.F., Junagadh suggested about forming a protocol for shifting the vultures. We suggested following protocol:

1. First stabilize the injured/ sick birds by keeping them in the temporary shelters, wherever available e.g. in Surat at Nature Club's rescue centre and in Ahmedabad at Van Chetna Kendra.
2. Veterinary advice and checkup of the bird should be carried out before shifting to Junagadh.
3. Vulture should be shifted at night, as it will be cool and less stressful. Bird should be fed early in the morning and can be shifted at night.
4. Use the boxes fabricated by the department for bird shifting.
5. Shift the bird in passenger sleeper coach in the overnight bus.
6. Inform C. F., Junagadh in advance about the bird's arrival.

Another issue discussed was the scarcity of food for the vultures. It has been generally observed that dogs are present in large number at all the feeding sites near Panjarapole, scaring the vultures. At Dhabla not only dogs but pigs were also competing for food and keeping the vultures away.

At all these places the *chamars* are first removing the skin, then the dog squad moves in and the vultures are the last ones to enter. Forest Department has made fencing at two places to keep the dogs away but the area that has been enclosed is too small. At Poladia there is no gate and hence the dogs are always there. At Chhappariali the fenced area was too small and the birds did not land. Ultimately the fence was removed and birds have started coming but dogs are competing.

The point for temporary shelters for vultures was also discussed. Cages of at least 10 x 10 x 12 feet are needed to keep the bird at places like Mahuva, Rajula, Ahmedabad and Surat where vultures were found falling from the nests or injured or sick. At Surat, Nature Club has already made enclosure of the above size and an occupant (a baby vulture which was being chased by crows) is also housed there. It was informed that Junagadh Zoo is selected by the Central Zoo authority for breeding the vultures in captivity. Work has been started already for the same.

At Mahuva the coconut growers who are affected due to vulture roosting and nesting on the coconut trees are given compensation by the Forest Department @ Rs. 500/- per tree. But no such compensation has been given up until now at Rajula.

Mr. Nanda (Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment Department) asked us to conduct more awareness programmes through quiz and other means. After this meeting awareness programmes have been organized at Mahuva, Ahmedabad and Surat. More volunteers are needed for expansion of the awareness programmes in other areas of Gujarat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for the latest issue of Flamingo [Vol. 6(1&2)] which arrived recently. Referring to the article on page 9: "Sightings of Painted Sandgrouse from Kachelh" by S. N Varu I need to point out an error of interpretation of the map referred to in my book "A Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent."

Unfortunately, the printing of the maps did not come out very well and the spotting and hatching on the maps look very similar, which no doubt led to the misinterpretation. The distribution of the Painted

Sandgrouse is meant to be interpreted as per the key to the maps in the inside back cover as "known to be occasional, scarce or erratic". In this case the green colour indicating "known to be occasional, scarce or erratic resident", not "former resident".

- Krys Kazmierczak, OBI Editor

I enjoy these Newsletters. You have certainly succeeded in creating a serious interest in birds. The article by Yagnesh Bhatt on the rescue of the Short-toed Snake Eagle is fascinating.

- Zafar Futehally, Bangalore

RECENT PUBLICATIONS ON BIRDS OF GUJARAT

- Khachar, L. (2008). A flight down memory lane – The little brown puzzles - 3. *Indian Birds* 3(6): 231-232.
- Khachar, L. (2008). A flight down memory lane – The little brown puzzles - 4. *Indian Birds* 4(1): 30-31.
- Khachar, L. (2008). A flight down memory lane – The Yellow-rumped Honeyguide. *Indian Birds* 4(2): 75.
- Mashru, A. and Pandya, M. (2008). sighting of Yellow-bellied Prinia (*Prinia flaviventris*). first record in Gujarat. *Newsletter for Birdwatchers*. 48(3):45.
- Tere, A. and Parasharya, B. M. (2008). Breeding range extension of the Large Indian Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*). *Newsletter for Birdwatchers*. 48(1):13.

SOME INTERESTING BIRD SIGHTINGS

1. Lesser Florican (*Sypheotides indica*) – 4 male + 2 female 24th July 2008 near Rajpur no bhatho, Taluka Patdi, District -Surendranagar. Chiku Vora, Surendranagar.
2. Eurasian Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) at Gamania bit, Dhari, Dist. Amreli on 21st August 2008 Ajit Bhatt, Dhari.
3. Demoiselle Crane (*Grus virgo*) – 50+ at 35 km on Bhavnagar-Dholera road, Dist. Bhavnagar on 14th August 2008. Earliest arrival date in recent past. – Piyush Parasharya, Bhavnagar.
4. Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*) – 2Ad. nr. Jambusar, Dist. Bharuch on 19th June 2008. Dishant Parasharya, Vadodara.
5. Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata*) - 1 near Narara, Dist. Jamnagar on 31st October 2008. – Arpit Deomurari, Anand.
6. Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*) – 11 at Machhu –II dam, Morbi, Dist. Rajkot on 11th May 2008. – Prasad Ganpule, Morbi.
7. Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) – 2 at Rampara Wildlife Sanctuary, Ta. Wankaner, Dist. Rajkot on 6th March 2008. Ravi Ardesana and Bhavesh Trivedi, Rajkot
8. A pair of Laggar (*Falco jugger*) in courtship with a nest on *Prosopis cineraria* at Mandav Vidi near Than, Dist. Surendranagar on 26th January 2008.
9. Rufous-tailed Wheatear (*Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna*) – 1 nr Ranjitsagar dam, Dist. Jamnagar on 17th February 2008. Maulik Varu, Mehul Dodia, Manish Trivedi, Jamnagar.
10. Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush (*Monticola rufiventris*) – female nr Jalandhar beach, Div on 13th January 2008. Ajit Bhatt, Dhari.
11. Amur Falcon (*Falco amurensis*) – 1 nr. Kalibel, Dist. Dang on 14th April 2008. Jayesh Joshi, Navsari.
12. A Red-crested Pochard (*Rhodonessa rufina*) at Devsar Dam, near Billimora on 27th January 2008. First record for his area. Mohamad Jat & Jignesh Joshi, Valsad; Rajendra M. Desai & Subhashbhai Shah, Navsari.
13. A Red-crested Pochard (*Rhodonessa rufina*) at Lambhval Sewage near Anand on 2nd February 2008. D. N. Rank & B. M. Parasharya.
14. Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata*) - 1 near Poshtra, Dist. Jamnagar on 11th November 2008. - Dishant Parasharya, Vadodara.
15. Barbary Falcon (*Falco peregrinus babylonicus*) at Kumbharia –about 45 km from Morbi, on southern fringe of Little Rann on 23rd November 2008. Prasad Ganpule, Morbi.

Private Circulation Only

President: Shri Lavkumar Khacher, **Vice-President:** Shri Lalsinh Raol,

Hon. Secretary: Dr. B M Parasharya, **Hon. Joint Secretary:** Dr. Bakul Trivedi

Hon. Treasurer: Dr. D. N. Rank

Executive Members: Shri Snehal Patel (Surat), Shri Shantilal Varu (Bhuj), Dr. P. S. Thakker (Ahmedabad), Dr. Geeta Padate (Vadodara), Shri Ajay Desai (Dahod), Dr. Piyush H. Patel (Valsad), Dr. C. K. Borad (Anand), Dr. Indra Gadhvi (Bhavnagar), Shri Bharat Rughani (Porbandar), Shri Mayur Mistri (Vijaynagar), Prof. V. C. Soni (Rajkot), Shri Ashok Mashru (Rajkot), Dr. Rajendra Desai (Navsari), Shri Mukesh Bhatt (Surat), Shri Ajit Bhatt (Dhari), Dr. R. V. Devkar (Vadodara) Shri Jaydev Nansey (Jamnagar), Shri G. A. Vora (Surendranagar), Ms Nandita Muni (Gandhinagar)

Editors: B. M. Parasharya (02692-262214), e-mail: parasharya@satyam.net.in ; parasharya@yahoo.com

Bakul Trivedi (079-2686 1878), e-mail: trivedibakul@yahoo.com

Nandita Muni (9879260940), e-mail: nandita.muni@gmail.com

Geeta Padate (0265-2792271) email: geetaspadate@rediffmail.com

For private circulation only. For information, write to: Hon. Secretary, BCSG, E Vishrut Park-1/18, Jitodia Road, Anand-388 001, India

Membership (Rs): Life=1000, Ordinary Annual=200, Students=100, Corporate Annual = 1000

DD preferred, add Rs. 30 for outstation cheque.