

**A Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus***  
was rescued and released at Dharmaj, Gujarat



The Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* is a medium-sized bird of prey that belongs to the Acciptridae family. Short-toed Eagle is widely distributed and extends outside this continent, and breeds in southern Europe and Asia (Naoroji 2006), and also in northwest Africa (Clark et al. 2005). This species is considered a Schedule I species under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act 1972, being of high legal status. Short-toed Snake Eagle is fairly common, widespread, and a very local resident (Naoroji 2006; Ganpule et al. 2022). This is a 'Least Concern' birds species, as per IUCN Red List 2010 criteria (BirdLife International 2023).

On September 30<sup>th</sup> 2005, around 10:15 hrs. I learned at noon that a Raptor has been staying at Farmer's house at the farm for three days, unwell and without food. I would like to know which raptor it is because I couldn't get there because of time constraints. So, I carried the bird home via the forest service. They carried it wrapped in a cloth. It was a Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* and despite the fact that the bird had not eaten for four days, it was not emery less. I'm hoping it can be salvaged because there is no damage. It was my first Snake Eagle rescue, so I researched literature and began to offer boiled eggs. Vitamin and mineral supplements were given. I decided to keep the bird in the top room of my house with a bamboo perch and a well-ventilated bird. The reason for this is so that the bird may relax there alone; it gets good air, and no one bothers it like other teases. Within four days, the bird began consuming food on its own, such as chicken pieces. Every morning, when I was conducting wing training with the bird while wearing gloves, it began flapping its wings and took a brief flight in the room. I completed this workout three times a day. I placed water on the floor so the bird would have to come down to drink from the bamboo perch. After drinking water, the bird sat on the bamboo once more. Once, this Snake eagle observed a squirrel through a window and attempted to attack, but he was unable to escape as the window was shut. I witnessed all

of the bird's behaviors from a safe distance so that it was not disturbed. Looking at its internal flight, it was decided one day to release it with the assistance of the Forest Department. We let go, and it flew away, landing on a Date Palm tree. Mynas and Babblers attacked the bird, causing it to take flight and crash on the ground near a friend's house. I chose not to release the bird because of its condition, so I carried it back to my house. It was given vitamins B12, B6, B3, Calcium, and other minerals. I saw the bird become livelier after 10 days. Then we released it far away on a farm, and it flew for a long time in the sky. Unfortunately, even though I wasn't there, after hearing the news, I was certain that the Snake Eagle would hunt on its own and live. Aside from this, additional Raptors who were rescued with assistance from the Forest Department and released into the wild are listed in Table 1.

#### **What do if you find an injured or sick raptor:**

Please use darken the container to reduce stress. All raptor species are listed as Schedule - I species in the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, therefore, please inform your local forest ranger. Please wear hand gloves and sunglasses to protect the rescuer's hands and eyes because raptors have sharp talons and hooked beaks.

#### **Acknowledgment**

I appreciate the help of the Gujarat State Forest Department. During the rescue and release operations, their assistance was invaluable.

#### **References**

- BirdLife International (2023) Species factsheet: *Circaetus gallicus*. <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/short-toed-snake-eagle-circaetus-gallicus> [Downloaded on 24/06/2023].
- Clark, W. S., Fisher, D., Finch, B., Bruijn, D., & Shani, I., 2005. Status of Beaudouin's and Short-toed Eagle in Kenya. *Bulletin African Bird Conservation* 12:150-151.
- Ganpule P., Varu M., Trivedi B., & Raina A. D., 2022. *A field Guide to Birds of Gujarat*. Bird Conservation Society, Gujarat. Ahmedabad. 488 pp.
- Naoroji, R., 2006. *Birds of prey of the Indian Subcontinent*. 1st ed. London: Christopher Helm. Pp. 704.

**Table 1: A list of rescued Raptors from 1994 to 2020 (\*found injured during Kite Festival)**

No.	Species	Rescue Date	Release Date	Diseases or Injury
1	Shikra <i>Accipiter bandius</i>	10 Feb. 1994	died after 5 days	Wing born fracture
2	White-rumped Vulture <i>Gyps bengalensis</i>	Jan 1995	--	Dehydrated bird
3	Tawny Eagle <i>Aquila rapax</i>	07 Feb. 1998	17 Feb. 1998	Wing born cut
4	Short-toed Snake Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	30 Sep. 2005	27 days	This note
5	Oriental Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis ptilorhyncus</i>	17 Apr. 2008	19 Apr. 2008	Seek bird
6	Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	16 Jan. 2011	27 Jan. 2011	a small cut in wing*
7	Black-eared Kite <i>Milvus migrans lineatus</i>	17 Jan. 2013	6 Feb. 2013	a small cut in wing*
8	White-eyed Buzzard <i>Butastur teesa</i>	02 Jan 2014	06 Jan. 2014	Seek bird
9	Long-legged Buzzard <i>Buteo rufinus</i>	10 Feb. 2019	15 Feb. 2019	Dehydrated bird
10	Oriental Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis ptilorhyncus</i>	17 July 2020	1 Sep. 2020	Seek bird