

Sightings of Indian Shaheen *Falco peregrinus peregrinator* at Timbi lake Vadodara and preying on Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

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Photo: Pinak Vashi

over seven minutes to finish its prey they were extremely lucky to have witnessed this. Later, they met Manish Sitlani and shared this with him, and he also observed the bird.



Photo: Soumya Chandan Panda

Timbi Lake has been a hotspot for birders in and around Vadodara and it never ceases to surprise. On date on date 5th November 2023 morning. First Author visited Timbi Lake near Vadodara. For regular bird watching along with Ashit Gandhi, Pranav Maggon and Nagardas Gandhi. At about 9.45 am, He pointed out a falcon on the high-tension electric tower (Photo 1). After a few minutes, the falcon flew off, and Ashit Gandhi took photos in flight. After seeing the photo, I concluded that it was Peregrine Falcon. Later on, consulting bird watcher Mr. Ashok Mashru, the falcon was identified as Indian Shaheen (*Falco peregrinus peregrinator*).

On 25th November 2023, second author went to explore the areas around Timbi Lake along with bird watcher friend's friend Mohammad Anees early in the morning. After nearly an hour of photographing small birds along the road, he suddenly saw a bird just swoop down into the farms at a distance. The next moment, it carried something and sat high above a distant electricity tower (Photo 1). He shot some pictures. Initially, he thought it was a Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, to be corrected later by my expert birding fraternity as a rare Shaheen Falcon, *Falco peregrinus peregrinator*. The falcon was very far off, and he could get some distant shots of the hunter and the prey, which turned out to be a Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops* (Photo 2 & 3). It merely took the Shaheen a little



Photo: Soumya Chandan Panda

It's possible that both birds sighted are the same bird visiting the Timbi Lake area for food. On searching references in year 2018, Mr Kartik Upadhyay regularly saw Indian Shaheen roosting at a high water tank in Vadodara city. Another sighting was at Sindhrot in the year 2021, near Vadodara, by Ms Rajvi Parikh (2022).

Reference

Parikh Rajvi. 2022. Sighting of Indian Shaheen at Sindhrot, Vadodara. Flamingo Gujarat 7: 18

