

## Reference

Ali, S. & Ripley, D., 1978. Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan. New Delhi Oxford University Press, Vol. 1(2), PP. 95-98.

BirdLife International 2024. Threatened birds of Asia: the birdlife international red data book. Cambridge: BirdLife International.

Datta T, Pal BC 1993. "The effect of human interference on the nesting of the openbill stork *Anastomus oscitans* at the Raiganj wildlife sanctuary, India". *Biological Conservation*. 64 (2): 149–154.

Kittur, S. and Sundar, K.S. G. 2021. Of irrigation canals and multifunctional agroforestry: Traditional agriculture facilitates Woolly-necked Stork breeding in a north Indian agricultural landscape. *Global Ecology and Conservation*. 30: e01793. doi:10.1016/j.gecco.2021.e01793. S2CID 239153561.

Koju R, Maharjan B, Gosai K, Kittur S, Sundar KG 2020. "Ciconiiformes nesting on trees in cereal-dominated farmlands: the importance of scattered trees for heronries in lowland Nepal". *Waterbirds*. 42 (4): 355–365.

Mohapatra RK, Panda BP, Panda MK, et al 2019. Colonial nesting of Asian openbill storks (*Anastomus oscitans*) in Nandankanan Wildlife Sanctuary, Odisha. *Int J Avian & Wildlife Biol.*;4(1):14-17.

Sundar, K. S. Gopi 2006. "Flock Size, Density and Habitat Selection of Four Large Waterbirds Species in an Agricultural Landscape in

Uttar Pradesh, India: Implications for Management". *Waterbirds: The International Journal of Waterbird Biology*. 29 (3), PP.365–374.

Sundar KS, Maharjan B, Koju R, Kittur S, Gosai KR 2016. "Factors Affecting Provisioning Times of Two Stork Species in Lowland Nepal". *Waterbirds*. 39 (4): 365–374.

Sundar KG, Koju R, Maharjan B, Marcot BG, Kittur S, Gosai, Kamal Raj 2019. "First assessment of factors affecting the breeding success of two stork species in lowland Nepal using Bayesian Network models". *Wildfowl*. 69: 45–69.

Tere, A. 2021. Breeding of Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* at Dhaniyavi, near Vadodara. *Flamingo Gujarat*. XIX-1: 1–4.

Thabethe, V. 2018. Aspects of the ecology of African woolly-necked storks (*Ciconia microscelis*) in an anthropogenic changing landscape in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (PDF). South Africa: Unpublished Thesis. School of Life Sciences, College of Agriculture, Science and Engineering, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Vaghela Harshit, B. 2022. "Distribution and nesting habitat of Asian Openbill Stork (*Anastomus oscitans*) in Navsari, Gujarat, India." *International Journal Of Scientific Research*, Volume:XI, Issue:VI, June-2022, PP. 46-48. DOI: 10.36106/ijrs. ISSN 2277-8179. □

## Fifth update to the Gujarat checklist: December 2024

**Prasad Ganpule:** C/o Parshuram Pottery Works, Opp. Nazarbaug, Morbi 363642. prasadganpule@gmail.com

This paper is the fifth update to the Gujarat checklist; the checklist was published in 2016 (Ganpule 2016), the first update in December 2017 (Ganpule 2017), the second update in March 2020 (Ganpule 2020), the third update in December 2021 (Ganpule 2021), and the fourth update in December 2022 (Ganpule 2022), which took the number of species documented within the boundaries of the state of Gujarat, along with the adjoining Union Territories of Diu & Daman, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli, to **615** until 31 December 2022; this is also the number of species included in the Gujarat field guide (Ganpule et al. 2022). This paper reviews vital records, lists recent additions to the state checklist and discusses significant sightings from the state from 1 Jan., 2023 till 31 Dec., 2024. A taxonomic update is also included in this note.

**The records of the following species have been reviewed:**

**Eastern Buzzard (*Buteo japonicus*):** A recent paper confirmed the occurrence of the Himalayan Buzzard (*Buteo refectus*) in Gujarat (Ganpule 2023). An unanswered question remains whether these buzzards seen in peninsular India are Himalayan Buzzards or the long-distance migrant Eastern

Buzzards. The Himalayan Buzzard was considered sedentary in the Himalayas with only altitudinal movements, while the Eastern Buzzard is known to be a long-distance migrant.

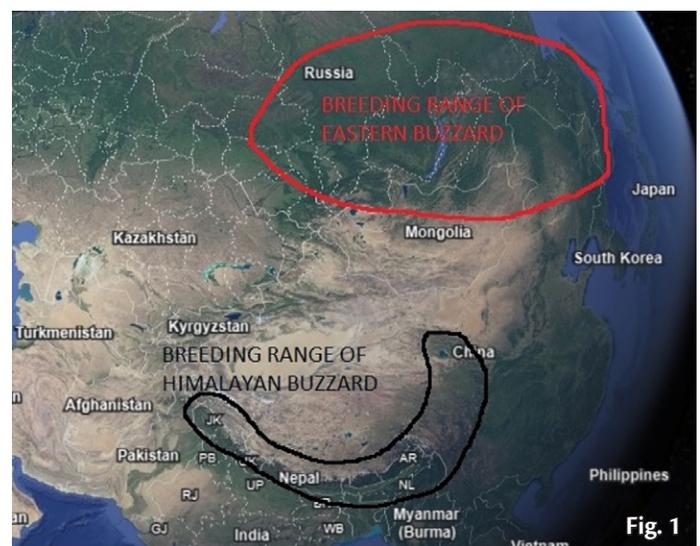


Fig. 1

Anecdotal evidence suggests that Eastern Buzzards from Siberia migrate southwards and could well be visiting India; the Eastern Buzzard was the most common migrating raptor in the South Baikal migratory corridor (Fefelov et al. 2012), and

the Birds of Siberia website shows that the Eastern Buzzard is absent there from November to February, with migration seen in September (<https://siberia.russia.birding.day/index.php?!=en>). It has been seen from data on tagged birds that Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*), Demoiselle Crane (*Grus virgo*), Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*) and many other species from Mongolia / Siberia visit India in the winter. The approximate breeding ranges of Himalayan Buzzard and Eastern Buzzard, compiled based on data from 'eBird' and other websites/sources (birds breeding in Central China are included in Himalayan Buzzard here) (Fig.1), show that the breeding range of Eastern Buzzard is roughly from Lake Baikal (Siberia), northern Mongolia, NE China, east to Far East Russia & Japan; these taxa are probably reproductively isolated, with the Gobi Desert acting as a natural barrier.

It is distinctly possible that based on the breeding range of the Eastern Buzzard and its migratory behaviour, it could well be a winter migrant or vagrant to the Indian Subcontinent. Since there are no identification keys at present to separate Himalayan Buzzard from Eastern Buzzard, it is not possible to confirm if these buzzards in peninsular India are Eastern Buzzards. Yang & Shuihua (2024) suggest that the Eastern Buzzard has a darker tail than the Himalayan Buzzard, which needs to be checked and confirmed with specimens and in the field with live birds; at present, only molecular studies can confirm the identification. A further complication is that though Himalayan Buzzard and Eastern Buzzard are currently treated as separate species, the taxonomy is still unresolved. Also, the assertion that the Himalayan Buzzard is only an altitudinal migrant is untested, and, likely, the Himalayan Buzzard could also be a migrant, either short or long-distance. Hence, with so many unknowns, it is prudent to be cautious. Thus, it is assumed that these buzzards in Gujarat are Himalayan Buzzards. The Eastern Buzzard is not included in the India Checklist (Praveen & Jayapal 2025). Its occurrence in the country is not proven since no molecular analysis of specimens or live birds has been done. If the Himalayan Buzzard is proven to be only an altitudinal migrant within the Himalayas, then the buzzards seen in peninsular India (including Gujarat) would be Eastern Buzzards. It is recommended that in-depth studies on these taxa be conducted since it is most likely that the Eastern Buzzard could occur in India as a winter migrant.

**Western Hooded Pitta (*Pitta sordida*):** An extraordinary sighting of a Western Hooded Pitta was reported from Dholka, near Ahmedabad, in December 2024. The bird was seen in a farm for two days and the farmer noted that it was feeding on the ground. It was photographed, and the identification

was confirmed, with more than five photos taken. The photos were shared in various groups.

There are no reports of Western Hooded Pitta from western India. Further, this sighting, though likely correct, could not be verified. After this sighting was reported, this area was visited for three days, but further attempts to find this bird failed. This sighting was discussed with senior bird watchers here, and it was decided not to add this species to the Gujarat checklist since other bird watchers could not verify it independently. But this sighting is interesting and requires further study, and it can be assessed later if records of Western Hooded Pitta are noted in western India.

#### **The following species have been added to the state checklist after the publication of the fourth update:**

**616. Blue-and-white Flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*):** An immature Blue-and-white Flycatcher was photographed in March 2021 in Chadva *Rakhal*, Kachchh, by Riaz Khojani. The sighting was posted on social media (Facebook) with three photographs. The photographs clearly show an immature Blue-and-white Flycatcher, and there is no doubt regarding the identification vis-à-vis other flycatchers in Gujarat. However, Zappey's Flycatcher (*C. cumatilis*) is very similar to the Blue-and-white Flycatcher, and these two species cannot be separated in juvenile plumage, but, all sightings from peninsular India are considered to be of Blue-and-white Flycatcher (Vittapu & Dey 2021). The Blue-and-white Flycatcher has been reported in India, from Maharashtra, in southern states and down south to Sri Lanka in 'eBird'; it was included in the Gujarat field guide in Appendix 2 as 'possible in Gujarat'. This sighting is the first record of the Blue-and-white Flycatcher in Gujarat and is an addition to the state's avifauna.

**617. Red-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon rubricauda*):** A juvenile Red-tailed Tropicbird was rescued from Porbandar in April 2023 (Modhwadiya 2023). A few photographs show the all-dark beak well, which is a diagnostic of a juvenile red-tailed tropicbird. This species is an addition to the avifauna of Gujarat.

**618. Pied Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka*):** A Pied Wheatear of *vittata* morph was seen and photographed in Kachchh in February 2024 (Kapadi 2024). Many photographs were taken of this individual, which are also posted on the eBird website. This species is also an addition to the avifauna of Gujarat.

**619. Lanceolated Warbler (*Locustella lanceolata*):** A Lanceolated Warbler was seen and photographed in Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary in September 2024 (Kshirsagar,

## Fifth update....

*in print*). The photographs were posted on social media and in various Whatsapp groups. Experts confirmed the identification. This is the first record of a Lanceolated Warbler from Gujarat.

**620. Striated Grassbird (*Megalurus palustris*):** A Striated Grassbird was photographed near Dandi, Surat, in February 2022; Dr. Pankaj Maheria shared the sighting. The photos were posted on the 'Birds of Gujarat' website, and the bird was seen well. The photos can be seen at: [https://birdsofgujarat.co.in/bird\\_detail.php?id=27149](https://birdsofgujarat.co.in/bird_detail.php?id=27149). This is the first record of a Striated Grassbird from Gujarat.

### Details of some vagrant and interesting species which were seen or photographed in Gujarat from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024:

**Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*):** A Long-billed Dowitcher was seen and photographed at Bhavnagar in January 2023 (Vegad et al. 2023). It was seen for more than ten days in the area and was seen by many bird watchers. This was the third sighting of this species from Gujarat and the first sighting after 2012.

**Orange-headed Thrush (*Geokichla citrina citrina*):** The nominate subspecies of the Orange-headed Thrush was seen and photographed in Ahmedabad in March 2023 (Lalbhai 2023). The subspecies noted in Gujarat is *G. c. cyanotus*, which is resident in the state and seen in the forest belt from N to S Gujarat as well as in some parts of Saurashtra. However, the nominate subspecies were not known to occur in Gujarat, and this was the first record of this subspecies in Gujarat.

**Green-crowned Warbler (*Phylloscopus burkii*):** After the first sighting of a Green-crowned Warbler for Gujarat was reported from Kachchh, this species was noted again in Ratanmahal (Zabuawala 2023), which was the second record for Gujarat. This is an overlooked species, and bird watchers must be on the lookout for it here.

**Pale Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*):** An interesting sighting of a probable Pale Crag Martin was reported from Bhavnagar after Cyclone Biparjoy (Andharia 2023). The identification was discussed in detail with experts, but since the photos were not very good, the identification was inconclusive.

I sent the photos to Oscar Campbell, who has experience with this species, and he suggested that this bird looked fine for a Pale Crag Martin, but with the caveat that accepting this record would depend on a broader consensus regarding the identification. However, as explained in the note, due to

the poor quality of the photos, it was treated as a 'probable' Pale Crag Martin and could not be confirmed beyond doubt, though it is very likely that this was indeed a Pale Crag Martin.

**Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucophaeus leucogenis/salangensis*):** A first sighting of an Ashy Drongo of the subspecies *leucogenis/salangensis* was reported by Gir (Trivedi & Parmar 2023). Though the authors contended that this individual was of the subspecies *leucogenis*, no photo showing the underwing-coverts was available. A previous sighting in peninsular India (from Madhya Pradesh) was of the subspecies *salangensis*, and sightings of *leucogenis* are only known from the Andaman Islands. Further, there is no clarity regarding which birds in the *D. l. innexus* group could potentially winter or occur as vagrants in peninsular India. Until more data is available, treating this sighting as *leucogenis/salangensis* is prudent. This is the first record of the Chinese White-faced Drongo from Gujarat.

**Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*):** A Yellow-breasted Bunting was noted in Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary (Belim & Belim 2024). A single bird was seen well and photographed. This is the second record of this species from the state.

**Grey-headed Lapwing (*Vanellus cinereus*):** A Grey-headed Lapwing seen and photographed near Pavagadh was the third record of the species for the state (Dumadiya 2024). The bird stayed for a few days and was seen by many bird watchers. This species could be overlooked, and recent records show it could occur in the state.

**Chestnut-winged Cuckoo (*Clamator coromandus*):** A Chestnut-winged Cuckoo was seen and photographed in March 2024 in Vansada National Park (Patel 2024). After 2005, when the Chestnut-winged Cuckoo was first reported from Gujarat, this was only the state's second record of this species.

**Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*):** A male Lesser Frigatebird was photographed near Porbandar in July 2024 (Modhvadia 2024). This was the third record for this species in Gujarat. A pelagic species, the Lesser Frigatebird is rarely seen in coastal areas, and this record is significant.

**Northern Goshawk (*Astur gentilis*):** An adult Northern Goshawk was photographed in Kachchh in December 2013. However, it was originally reported as a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), which was a misidentification. This bird was later correctly identified as a Northern Goshawk, which Dick Forsman also confirmed. The photo is at <https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/239677071> in the checklist <https://ebird.org/checklist/S69781077> and posted on 'eBird' (Singh

2013). This is the first photo record of a Northern Goshawk from Gujarat, as all earlier records of this species from Gujarat were taken before 1990.

### Taxonomic update

After the publication of the Gujarat field guide, there have been some changes or recommendations regarding the taxonomy for a few species. In implementing these taxonomic changes to the Gujarat species list, various taxonomic authorities were referred to, and the latest India checklist

and taxonomic update (Praveen & Jayapal 2024) were consulted. Several interesting papers on taxonomy have been published recently, but the taxonomic authorities have not yet implemented the taxonomic recommendations given in these papers. Hence, such recommendations are not taken into account at present.

### The species for which the taxonomy is changed from the Gujarat field guide (Ganpule et al. 2022) are as follows:

Scientific names to be used/adopted	Notes on changes in taxonomy
Grey Francolin <i>Ortygornis pondicerianus</i>	genus change from <i>Francolinus</i> to <i>Ortygornis</i>
Little Bittern <i>Botaurus minutus</i>	genus change from <i>Ixobrychus</i> to <i>Botaurus</i>
Yellow Bittern <i>Botaurus sinensis</i>	genus change from <i>Ixobrychus</i> to <i>Botaurus</i>
Cinnamon Bittern <i>Botaurus cinnamomeus</i>	genus change from <i>Ixobrychus</i> to <i>Botaurus</i>
Black Bittern <i>Botaurus flavicollis</i>	genus change from <i>Ixobrychus</i> to <i>Botaurus</i>
Eastern Cattle Egret <i>Ardea coromanda</i>	split from Cattle Egret <i>A. ibis</i> , genus change from <i>Bubulcus</i> to <i>Ardea</i> and corrected specific epithet
White-bellied Sea Eagle <i>Icthyophaga leucogaster</i>	genus change from <i>Haliaeetus</i> to <i>Icthyophaga</i>
Shikra <i>Tachyspiza badia</i>	genus change from <i>Accipiter</i> to <i>Tachyspiza</i> and corrected specific epithet
Besra <i>Tachyspiza virgata</i>	genus change from <i>Accipiter</i> to <i>Tachyspiza</i> and corrected specific epithet
Northern Goshawk <i>Astur gentilis</i>	genus change from <i>Accipiter</i> to <i>Astur</i>
Grey-headed Swamphen <i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>	split from Purple Swamphen <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Demoiselle Crane <i>Anthropoides virgo</i>	genus change from <i>Grus</i> to <i>Anthropoides</i>
Little Ringed Plover <i>Thinornis dubius</i>	genus change from <i>Charadrius</i> to <i>Thinornis</i>
Caspian Plover <i>Anarhynchus asiaticus</i>	genus change from <i>Charadrius</i> to <i>Anarhynchus</i>
Kentish Plover <i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	genus change from <i>Charadrius</i> to <i>Anarhynchus</i>
Greater Sand Plover <i>Anarhynchus leschenaultii</i>	genus change from <i>Charadrius</i> to <i>Anarhynchus</i>
Tibetan Sand Plover <i>Anarhynchus mongolus</i>	genus change from <i>Charadrius</i> to <i>Anarhynchus</i> and split from Lesser Sand Plover <i>A. mongolus</i>
Steppe Gull <i>Larus barabensis</i>	split from Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>
Mongolian Gull <i>Larus mongolicus</i>	split from Vega Gull <i>Larus vegae</i>
Spotted Dove <i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	genus change from <i>Streptopelia</i> to <i>Spilopelia</i>
Laughing Dove <i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	genus change from <i>Streptopelia</i> to <i>Spilopelia</i>
Asian Barn Owl <i>Tyto javanica</i>	split from Common Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>
Forest Owlet <i>Athene blewitti</i>	genus change from <i>Heteroglaux</i> to <i>Athene</i>

## Fifth update....

Dusky Eagle Owl <i>Ketupa coromandus</i>	genus change from <i>Bubo</i> to <i>Ketupa</i> and corrected specific epithet
Spot-bellied Eagle Owl <i>Ketupa nipalensis</i>	genus change from <i>Bubo</i> to <i>Ketupa</i>
Blyth's Swift <i>Apus leuconyx</i>	split from Pacific Swift <i>Apus pacificus</i>
Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker <i>Yungipicus nanus</i>	genus change from <i>Picoides</i> to <i>Yungipicus</i>
Malabar Flameback <i>Chrysocolaptes socialis</i>	split from Greater Golden-backed Woodpecker <i>Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus</i>
Black-lored Tit <i>Machlolophus aplanotus</i>	split from <i>Machlolophus xanthogenys</i> , which is now Himalayan Black-lored Tit
Indian Bushlark <i>Plocealauda erythroptera</i>	genus change from <i>Mirafra</i> to <i>Plocealauda</i>
Delicate Prinia <i>Prinia lepida</i>	split from Graceful Prinia <i>Prinia gracilis</i>
Bristled Grassbird <i>Schoenicola striatus</i>	genus change from <i>Chaetornis</i> to <i>Schoenicola</i>
Rusty-rumped Warbler <i>Helopsaltes certhiola</i>	genus change from <i>Locustella</i> to <i>Helopsaltes</i>
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Curruca curruca</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Desert Whitethroat <i>Curruca minula</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Hume's Whitethroat <i>Curruca althaea</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Eastern Orphean Warbler <i>Curruca crassirostris</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Asian Desert Warbler <i>Curruca nana</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Common Whitethroat <i>Curruca communis</i>	genus change from <i>Sylvia</i> to <i>Curruca</i>
Jungle Babbler <i>Argya striata</i>	genus change from <i>Turdoides</i> to <i>Argya</i>
White-rumped Shama <i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	genus change from <i>Kittacincla</i> to <i>Copsychus</i> and corrected specific epithet
Indian Robin <i>Copsychus fulicatus</i>	genus change from <i>Saxicoloides</i> to <i>Copsychus</i>
Thick-billed Flowerpecker <i>Pachyglossa agilis</i>	genus change from <i>Dicaeum</i> to <i>Pachyglossa</i> and corrected specific epithet
Siberian Pipit <i>Anthus japonicus</i>	split from Buff-bellied Pipit <i>Anthus rubescens</i>

For the following species, the taxonomy has been updated but there is no change in the scientific names used:

Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx erithaca* has been split into Black-backed Dwarf Kingfisher *C. erithaca* and Rufous-backed Dwarf Kingfisher *C. rufidorsa* (extra-limital). We continue to use the name Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, and there is no change in the scientific name used.

Indian Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei* has been split from *C. javensis*. However, this was given as *C. macei* in the field guide but with the name Large Cuckooshrike.

Eastern Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* has been split from European Red-rumped Swallow *C. rufula*. We have used *C. daurica* in the field guide while *C. rufula* is not known to occur in Gujarat.

Many of the taxonomic changes adopted here were alluded to in the field guide. Still, they were not accepted since

the taxonomic authorities had not updated the respective checklists. With these changes implemented here, the Gujarat checklist is more in line with the taxonomic changes adopted by these authorities. Mongolian Gull and Steppe Gull are the only taxa which see a species level change; Mongolian Gull was treated earlier as a subspecies of Vega Gull but has now been treated as a separate species, while Steppe Gull was treated as a subspecies of Lesser Black-backed Gull (*L. fuscus*) but is now treated as a separate species. However, since both were assigned an individual serial number, this change does not affect the number of species listed for the state. The elevation of Steppe Gull to species status remains controversial but is adopted here following full species status to Mongolian Gull. Since white-headed gull taxonomy remains complicated, this treatment seems practical to address this group's confusion.

This taxonomic update will help align the Gujarat checklist with global taxonomic authorities. The species-level differences

in the Gujarat checklist vis-à-vis the India checklist are as per the details given in the field guide. Some species split adopted in the Gujarat field guide may be widely accepted in the future; for example, the Swedish Taxonomic Committee, in their 2024 report, accepted the split of the Variable Wheatear (*Oenanthe picata*) into three species. This is not yet done by the major taxonomies (or the India checklist) but the Variable Wheatear complex was split into three species in the Gujarat field guide. Thus, future research may confirm or refute the decisions on species-level splits.

As reported in the second update, the Working Group of Avian Checklists (WGAC) (under the IOU) is expected to publish a final draft of the world checklist in 2025, which will be made public. Many of the changes proposed by the working group have already been accepted by IOC and Clements (and are implemented in 'eBird'). An interesting development is that the Howard and Moore Checklist will be published online, probably in 2025, independent of the WGAC. Hence, the notion of having a unified world checklist seems unlikely and it remains to be seen if there are significant differences in these checklists. For the Gujarat checklist, it will be interesting to compare whether it aligns more with the Howard and Moore checklist or the WGAC. But it is probably for the better that there are different checklists as alternative views can be looked at before making any decision regarding the taxonomy for some problematic taxa.

## Discussion

This update brings the species list for Gujarat to **620**, with five species added after the publication of the Gujarat field guide / fourth update to the Gujarat checklist. This paper has also updated the taxonomy, and the Gujarat checklist is now up-to-date with the latest taxonomic recommendations. The updated checklist (v2.0) will be available shortly on the 'Flamingo Gujarat' for all users to access.

There are a few species for which there is insufficient data. For example, the taxonomy of the Blue-throated Flycatcher (*C. rubeculoides*) complex in India has changed – for a simple explanation, see <https://bou.org.uk/blog-singh-blue-throated-flycatcher-taxonomy/>. Though the nominate *rubeculoides* from W Himalaya are expected to mainly occur in Gujarat, vagrancy from eastern populations in peninsular India remains unstudied. Though there is no change in the Gujarat checklist, future work will shed more light on whether the east taxon occurs in peninsular India as a vagrant. Similarly, Hanuman Plover (*A. seebohmi*), recently split from Kentish Plover, is said to appear in southern India, but its exact distribution in southern India remains a matter for further study. The Siberian

Sand Plover (*A. mongolus*) could occur as a vagrant in India and remains a less studied species. Thus, more work must be done on many other taxa since there is less knowledge regarding their status and distribution.

The next update will again aim to carry new and interesting records from Gujarat along with taxonomic changes, if any.

## Acknowledgements

I thank Ashok Mashru and Maulik Varu for reviewing the draft manuscript. I thank Dick Forsman and Oscar Campbell for identification help. I am grateful to Dr Pankaj Mahria for sharing the sighting details of Striated Grassbird and to Devvratsinh Mori for the Northern Goshawk sighting details. I would like to thank Sunil Kini for sharing sightings from Nalsarovar and helping get details of many interesting records from the state.

## References

- Andharia, K., 2023. Sighting of probable Pale Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne obsoleta* at Hathab, Bhavnagar. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (4): 1-2.
- Belim, S., & Belim, L., 2024. Sighting of Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola* at Nalsarovar: A Second record from the state. *Flamingo Gujarat* 7 (1&2): 11.
- Dumadiya, J., 2024. Sighting of Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* at Pavagadh, third photographic record. *Flamingo Gujarat* 7 (1&2): 13.
- Fefelov, I., Alexeyenko, M., Malysheva, V., & Povarintsev, A., 2012. Spatial and temporal characteristics of raptor migration in the South Baikal corridor. *Ornis Mongolica* 1: 47-51.
- Ganpule, P., 2016. The birds of Gujarat: Status and distribution. *Flamingo* 8 (3) -12 (4): 2-40.
- Ganpule, P., 2017. First update to the Gujarat checklist: December 2017. *Flamingo* 15 (4): 17-20.
- Ganpule, P., 2020. Second update to the Gujarat checklist: March 2020. *Flamingo Gujarat* 3 (2&3): 11-20.
- Ganpule, P., 2021. Third update to the Gujarat checklist: December 2020. *Flamingo Gujarat* 4 (3 & 4): 3-8.
- Ganpule, P., 2022. Fourth update to the Gujarat checklist: December 2022. *Flamingo Gujarat* 5 (4): 8-10.
- Ganpule, P., 2023. Identification of Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo refectus* and its status in Gujarat and peninsular India. *Indian BIRDS* 19 (5): 131-147.
- Ganpule, P., Varu, M., Trivedi, B., & Raina, A. D., 2022. A field guide to the birds of Gujarat. Bird Conservation Society, Gujarat. Ahmedabad
- Kapadi, B., 2024. Sighting of Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* at Chhari-Dhandh, Kachchh: An addition to the Gujarat avifauna. *Flamingo Gujarat* 7 (1&2): 8-9.

## Fifth update....

Lalbhai, I. P., 2023. Orange-headed Thrush *Geokichla citrina citrina* at Ahmedabad: a first record for Gujarat. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (3): 1-2.

Modhvadia, R. B., 2024. Sighting of Lesser Frigatebird *Frigata ariel* near Porbandar. *Flamingo Gujarat* 7 (3): 17.

Modhwadiya, N. C., 2023. Rescue of Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda* at Porbandar: Adding to Gujarat Avifauna. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (3): 14.

Patel, D., 2024. Sighting of Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* at Vansda National Park – A second record for the State. *Flamingo Gujarat* 7 (3): 11-12.

Praveen J., & Jayapal, R., 2024. Taxonomic updates to the checklists of the birds of India and the South Asian region—2025. *Indian BIRDS* 20 (6): 165–169

Praveen J., & Jayapal, R., 2025. Checklist of the birds of India (v9.0). Website: <http://www.indianbirds.in/india/> [Date of publication: 01 January 2025]

Singh, S., 2013. Website URL: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S69781077> [Accessed on 15 February 2025].

Trivedi, B., & Parmar, D., 2023. First sighting record of Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus leucogenis* in Gir, Gujarat, India. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (4): 9-11.

Vegad, H., Langaliya, J., Langaliya, P., & Dave, B., 2023. Sighting of Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) at Kumbharwada Wetland, Bhavnagar. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (1): 12.

Vittapu, M., & Dey, S., 2021. The Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*: A new record for Telangana, India. *Indian BIRDS* 17 (4): 125-127.

Yang, L., & Shuihua, C., *Birds of China*. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton University Press, Oxford, UK.

Zabuawala, M., 2023. Second sighting records of Green-crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus burkii* at Ratanmahal Sanctuary, Gujarat. *Flamingo Gujarat* 6 (3): 2-3. □

## First confirmed cross-border migration of the Laggar Falcon *Falco jugger* from Pakistan to India

**Manish Parmanand Sitlani:** 93-94, Vikasnagar, Old Padra Road, Vadodara 390020, Gujarat, India. [manisitlani@yahoo.com](mailto:manisitlani@yahoo.com)

**Ishaan Lalbhai:** Near Koteswar, Ahmedabad 380005, Gujarat, India. [poorva.lalbhai@gmail.com](mailto:poorva.lalbhai@gmail.com)

**Devvratsinh Mori:** Ecology, Evolution, and Climate Change Research Cluster, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad 380009, Gujarat, India. [devvratsinh.mori@ahduni.edu.in](mailto:devvratsinh.mori@ahduni.edu.in) [Corresponding Author]



Fig. 1

### Abstract

We report the first verified instance of international migration in Laggar Falcon (*Falco jugger*), a raptor species endemic to the Indian subcontinent. A ringed individual, rehabilitated initially and released in Karachi, Pakistan, was subsequently observed and identified at the outskirts of the Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary in Gujarat, India. This record, supported by photographic documentation and ring identification, reveals the species' capacity for long-distance, cross-border

movement. The observation has significant implications for understanding the spatial ecology and conservation of *F. jugger*, a species in decline across much of its range. This is the first confirmed evidence of Laggar Falcon migration.

### Introduction

Laggar Falcon is a medium-sized falcon endemic to the Indian subcontinent, with a distribution range spanning India, Pakistan, Nepal, and parts of Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is typically associated with dry open habitats such as arid grasslands, semi-desert scrublands, and cultivated agricultural landscapes (Naorji, 2006; Grimmett et al., 2011). Although often described as sedentary or resident with localised movements, the species' movement ecology remains poorly studied. [Fig 1].

Once considered widespread and relatively common, the Laggar Falcon has experienced significant population declines across much of its range. Further study is needed to confirm trends. Notably, breeding behaviour of the species has been documented in India (Mori et al., 2023; Rao & Adaki, 2018), which provides essential insights into its nesting ecology and regional breeding success. This decline is primarily attributed to a combination of factors, including habitat degradation due