

## Short Article

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# Important records of Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus Arundinaceus* from Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary, District – Ahmedabad, Central Gujarat, India

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**Abstract:** While the Great Reed Warbler is a well-known long-distance migrant that breeds across Europe and Asia, it's considered a very rare sight in India. This study changes that by documenting five separate sightings of this bird between 2013 and 2024 in the wetlands of central Gujarat, including the Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary.

We describe the key physical details—like its rufous-colored head and longer wings—that help distinguish it from its common lookalike, the Clamorous Reed Warbler. These records are significant because they not only confirm the presence of two different subspecies but also officially extend the known wintering range of the Great Reed Warbler into a region where it had never been reported before. Our findings suggest this species may be a regular but overlooked winter visitor to Gujarat, filling an important gap in our understanding of its journey through South Asia.

Classification: -

Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758

Domain: Eukaryote

Genus: *Acrocephalus*

Family: Muscicapidae

Sub-family: Sylviinae

Kingdom: Animalia

Class: Aves

Phylum: Chordata

Order: Passiformes

Binomial name: *A. A. arundinaceus*

**Keywords:** Records of Great Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus*, *Arundinaceus*, Nal Sarovar, Birds Sanctuary, Central Gujarat

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The Great Reed Warbler *A. Phaqs arundinaceus* is very long-range breeding migratory warbler, found in largest reed bed of Europe, Central Asia and Sub-Sahara, Africa. Detached in two different race, **A. arundinaceus**, found in continental Europe, North-West Africa, Turkey, and the Levant, East to Volga River (Russia), West Caspian Sea, race **A. a. zarudnyi**, found in North-West Iran, Caspian Sea, Central Asia, Mongolia, North-West, Tajakistan, China North-West – **K. peter & P. David**. Some vagrant records available from India and Pakistan, one adult bird was ringed and trapped on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1977, race *Acerochaphapholus arundin acus zarudngi* by Southampton University, Ladakh, another record from Kalat – North Baluchistan in October – Ripley, 1982. Ali & Ripley, 2001 captured and re-ringed race **A. a. zarudnyi** on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1990, Sentukur, Bagbay, 16 kms West, South-West from Kolkata. **Ali and Ripley, 2001**, IB Vol. 9II.

The Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary is located (22.8179° N, 72.0453° E) 65 km West from Ahmedabad city and (22.7251° N, 71.6370° E) 55 km East from Surendranagar City. Has *I. carnea*, *Typha angustata*, *I. aquatica* and *Cyperus* sp. Main immigrant vegetation, spreaded over more than 300 sq. km. with surrounding adjusted wetland, dotted by more than 300 islands with

spectacular natural lake, muddy lagoon, shallow water body, create great attraction for every water fowls.



Figure. 1 (A)



**Figure. 1 (B)**

**Figure. 1 (A):** On 13-02-13, I was birding at Kayla village wetland elongated Bagodara – Viramgam road, located 1 km. North-East from Sanctuary. At 3:30 PM, I heard a loud call that came out from thorny scrubs, different than Clamorous Reed Warbler. It was frequently foraging in thorny scrubs. Around 4:45 PM, bird came out from scrubs perched on *P. juliflora*'s thorny scrub tree branch. Has a rufous brown flying feather on crown, horned black slender bill, lower mandible pale at base rufous brown toned nape, wing coverts and white tipped primary projection (**Figure. 2**) extend beyond one-third of the tail, white throat, yellowish on flank, greyish in central of the breast, obviously distinguished from Greyish brown crown, upper parts – Clamorous Reed Warbler *A. stentoreus* and consider as a Great reed warbler *A. orientalis*.



**Figure. 2**

Rufous toned crown, nape, wing coverts and tail, pale fringed round-tipped long primary projection extend up to one-third of the tail, square ended shorter tail.



**Figure. 3**

Very similar to Figure. 1 & 2. Plumage is rufous brown.



**Figure. 4**

Rufous toned crown, nape, ear coverts, wing coverts and tail. Pale fringed round tipped primary projection extend upto one-third of the tail, black legs, shorter black broad-based bill, lower mandible pale.



**Figure. 5**

Rufous brown upper parts, pale supercilium extend beyond eye, throat white, breast, belly, undertail pale.

**In present observation, 4 birds were found from *A. a. arundinaceus* genus and one from *A. a. zarudny* genus. All the records are given below in Table**

Figure	Date	Site	Latitude & Longitude	Sex
1	13-02-13	Kayla	22.8441° N, 72.0604° E	Adult
2	16-12-19	Vadla	22.9314° N, 71.9816° E	Adult
3	20-11-21	Sharad	22.4330° N, 71.2954° E	Adult
4	29-01-23	Kayla	22.8441° N, 72.0604° E	Adult
5	20-11-24	Vekaria	21.3151° N, 70.9131° E	Adult

## DISCUSSION

The Great Reed Warbler *A. arundinaceus* are extremely resembling of Clamorous Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus*, group of the reed warbler. It is very difficult to identify in field, both birds have mostly upper mandible horned black, black legs, but Great reed Warbler has rufous toned crown and upper parts, but Clamorous has greyish brown or brown upper parts. Greater has pale or brownish fringed wing coverts and round tipped tail, longer primary projection extend up to one-third of tail, Clamorous has shorter primary extend up to upper tail base. This diagnostic difference obviously distinguished from Clamorous Reed warbler. **Grimmett (2011), Ali & Ripley (2012), Kry's (2012)** gave its vagrant status in West, North-West and East India, but not showed Gujarat. Also bird was not mentioned in Checklist of birds of Gujarat in 2014 & 2020 published by BCSG. All the 5 records are very important for wintering distribution range of Great reed warbler. Maybe, all the 5 records show that birds are might be winter visitors but overlooked.

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