

## Short Article

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# Vagrant wintering records of Chinese Egret *Egretta Eulophotes* from Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary, Gujarat, India. (First photographic record for North-West India)

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**Abstract:** The Chinese Egret (*Egretta eulophotes*) is a vulnerable species, with its breeding range restricted to coastal regions of East Asia and wintering distribution across Southeast Asia. This paper reports the first photographic record of the species from Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat, India, marking the first confirmed sighting for north-western India and mainland Indian territories outside the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. On 4 January 2021, an egret resembling the Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) was observed and photographed at the sanctuary. Diagnostic features, including greyish wing coverts, greenish facial skin and toes, and a longer black bill, confirmed its identification as the Chinese Egret. Nal Sarovar, a Ramsar site and significant wintering ground for migratory waterfowl, provided suitable habitat conditions for the species. This observation expands the known wintering range of *Egretta eulophotes* and contributes valuable information to its distributional records in the Indian subcontinent.

### Classification

**Species authority:** - Amoy, 1860

**Domain:** Eukaryote

**Genus:** - *Egretta*

**Family:** - Ardeidae

**Order:** - Pelecaniformes

**Class:** - Aves

**Phylum:** - Chordata

**Kingdom:** - Animalia

**Scientific name:** - *Egretta eulophotes*

**Gujarati name:** - China no Baglo

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## INTRODUCTION

The Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* is breed in Costal area of South and East China, North-South lorein Island-**Robson**. It is vulnerable species listed in **Red data of Bird Life International, 2015**. Is found Sumatra (from Amur river) – Borneo, Sulavesi, New Genia, North Australia, West Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore-**Del Ohyo & Robson**. Four Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* were reported at in South Andaman in tsunami – Inudated wetland on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2015- **Birding Asia** vol.23 2013.

Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary is spreaded over roughly 300 sq. km. with Bhaskarpura-Vadla and surrounding adjusted wetland and cultivation field. Located 65 km. (22.82° N, 72.05° E) West from Ahmedabad city and 60 km. from Surendranagar city. Site has remarkable diversity of ecosystem, provide excellent habitat to every wintering waterbirds. Has more than 200 Islands. Spectacular natural lake with Shallow water body and muddy flat, provide to ideal wintering ground for thousands and thousands migratory water fowl are arrive from Central Asia, Siberia, Europe and West Central Himalaya.

On 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, I was birding, by walking between Shahpur and central gate of sanctuary along Viramgam -

Bagodara Road. At 10 hrs, I came across bird like Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* perched in grassy patch. I shot some images. Bird has greyish wing coverts and greenish facial skin and toes, yellowish in Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*, diagnostic differences between two Egret distinguish and consider as a Chinese Egret and considered as a different and separate species. Then after consult with authentic literature on Heron and Birds of South-East Asia and Birds of the World. Recognize as a Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes*.





Bird has crown, neck, breast, belly and vent white. Greyish wing coverts and upper breast, longer and pointed black bill, greenish facial skin, longer black legs with greenish toes and tibia, extend beyond tail tip.

Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* is do not appear to have been previously reported from Gujarat and India (except Andaman and Nicobar Islands). It is a first record for Indian territories. Bird is not mention by **Krys, Grimmer & Rasmussen** in their work.

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