



Short Article

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Summer Occurency of Grey Nightjar *Camprinulgus Indicus Gotaka* from Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary, Gujarat, India

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Abstract: This study presents the first photographic record of the Grey Nightjar (*Caprimulgus indicus jotaka*) from Western India, documented at Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat. On 26 June 2021, two individuals were observed and photographed within the sanctuary's eastern range, characterized by thorny scrub and dry deciduous forest. Distinctive morphological features, including rufous-spotted wing coverts, whitish buff markings, and dark grey tail, confirmed the identification and distinguished the species from the Large-tailed Nightjar (*C. macrourus*). Previous distribution records of the Grey Nightjar are limited to the Himalayas, Northeast India, Bangladesh, and parts of South and Southeast India, with no confirmed occurrences from western regions. Notably, this observation also represents an important summer occurrence record, raising the possibility of breeding activity in Gujarat, although nesting could not be confirmed due to dense vegetation. Along with earlier acoustic evidence from South Gujarat (Vansda National Park, 2018), this record extends the known range of the species into western and south-western India, adding valuable insights into its distribution and ecology.

Classification: -

Species authority: Whistler, 1935

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Class: Aves

Phylum: Chordata

Order: Caprimulgiformes

Family: Caprimulgidae

Genus: *Caprimulgus*

Binomial name: *Caprimulgus indicus*

Gujarati name: Rakhodi Dashrathiya

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INTRODUCTION

The Grey Nightjar *C. indicus* belongs to group of the large-sized Indian Jungle and large-tailed nightjar, also rather resembling of Large-tailed, but it has dark grey tail, crown, rufous spotted dark grey wing coverts distinguished from silver-grey crown wing covert and (long tailed) large tailed Nightjar *C. macrourus*. Detached in three different race – 1. *C. J. Jokated* – It is found in Siberia, South-East through South China, Japan, Korea. In winter migration - South China, South Great Sundas, Philippines. 2. Race *Cumprinulgus jotaka hazarae* - found from North-East Pakistan (Gilgit), through Central Himalaya to North-East India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, West Bengal (del hoyo 2018). Also found in Orissa, in winter South-East (Ghat) India (Rasmussen, 2012).

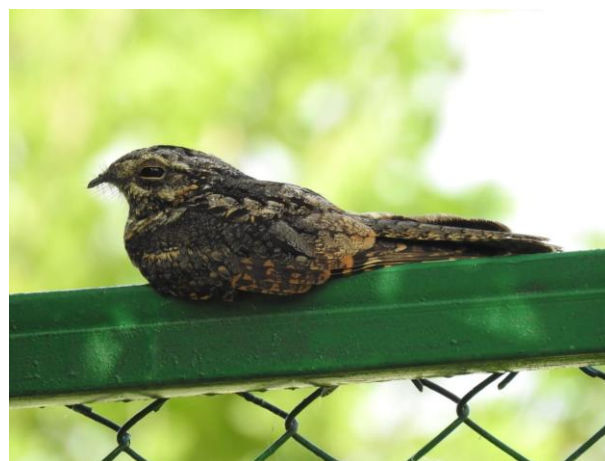


Fig: 1



Fig:2

On 26-6-2021, I was on my regular birding trip of Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary (20.53° N, 73.12° E), located 65 km West from Ahmedabad city, along Bagodara-Viramgam road. I entered Green park, adjacent with Eastern range of Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary. Thus, site is remarkable congregation habitat for faltering feathered. Has a large wide-spreaded *Salvadora*, *Percia*, *P. perocarpus*, *S. bispinosa*, *A. arabica*, *Melia azadirachta*, *C. beciua*, *C. sepiaria*, *P. juliflora*, *H. inprifolia*, thorny scrub mixed with sparse dry deciduous forest.

At 11:30, I observed bird like Nightjar perched on steel fencing. Second bird was observed at 11:45, perched on *P. pterocarpum* tree branch. Has a rufous spotted secondary and primary coverts and tail, distinguished from another large-sized Nightjar.

Fig. 1 - Has a black bill, whitish buff broad supercilium, whitish buff sub-moustachial strips, white patch at lower throat, whitish buff scapular strips, rufous spotted lesser, median, greater, secondary, primary coverts and tail tip.

Fig. 2 – Very similar to fig. 1. It has white fringed secondary feathers, also on rump, spotless dark grey tail.

Ali has does not mention in Hill birds of India, 1979, Birds of Eastern Himalayas, 1997, Ali & Ripley in Handbook of Birds of India and Pakistan, 2012. Rasmussen, 2012, gave its status from West to Eastern Himalaya, Bangladesh, West Bengal and Orissa, winter in South-East India but occurrence range does not cover West of Indian Peninsula. But in this article, bird was sighted in summer, and is very important for its distribution range, also quite interesting. Both species spent their winter and some summer part in Sanctuary, Gujarat. One previous record from South Gujarat near Vansada National park. **Raina et. al.** has recorded the bird by call on 17th June, 2018, but they were not clear about bird, was it Large-tailed nightjar or Grey nightjar? Author has sighted two birds of Grey nightjar in end of June, and in also end of the breeding range, that creates confusion about birds, both birds might be breeding in Sanctuary or not. But unfortunately, nest was not found due to heavily spreaded *P. juliflora* thorny scrub forest. Site is also important for nesting, providing excellent opportunity to every bird arriving for nesting and habitation.

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