

First record of Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* from Nagpur, central India

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The Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* is a winter vagrant with records from Shimla, central Uttaranchal, central Nepal, western Assam, western Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and South Andaman (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005). The distribution map in Grimmett *et al.* (2000) does not show any sighting records from central India. There are no published records of this species from peninsular India, Madhya Pradesh, or the Vidarbha region (D'Abreu 1923).

In the evening of 20 April 2008 I heard a bird call in my backyard in Nagpur city (Maharashtra, India), and realised that it was different from those he heard regularly. But I did not pay much attention to it. For some days I kept hearing that call in the late evenings, after sunset, and then one day I spotted the bird at around 1700 hrs. It was hopping on the moist ground and feeding under a curry leaf *Murraya koenigii* tree. At this time the low light conditions did not allow photography, and the bird itself was quite flighty in my presence, flying away whenever I approached it. The bird did however drink water from a saucer I had put out for birds.

It had blue upperparts, a black mask, and a black stripe down the side of its breast. Its under parts were white. It had a habit of shivering its short tail, and made a sound like "chuk...chukk...chukkk..." I identified it with the help of the Grimmett *et al.* (2000) as a Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*.

The Siberian Blue Robin interacted with a male Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulicatus* while the latter foraged nearby. It would follow the Indian Robin and shared its feeding area, though they sometimes dodged each other.

The Siberian Blue Robin was also sighted in the early morning, but never during the hot daytime.

I saw the Siberian Blue Robin daily till the first week of May 2008 in my backyard. By 29 April the bird had become accustomed to my presence, and I was able to sit on a stool and take photographs while it hopped barely three meters away.

Most intriguing was its occurrence till the first week of May.

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Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* in Nagpur.

Photos: Parag Deshmukh