

In Harvey *et al.* (2006), and other books and studies of the birds of the 'Delhi area', such as Frome (1948a,b), Hutson (1954), or Ganguli (1975), the areas considered were typically within a 50 km radius around New Delhi (in earlier works), or 100 km in more recent ones (areas that can be covered in a day trip from the heart of Delhi). This would about cover the 'Delhi Metropolitan Area' plus a bit more of the rural countryside (in Uttar Pradesh, and the Haryana districts of Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat, and Rewari), but would fall very far short of the boundaries of NCR.

Hence, the pre-1920s sightings reported by Usha Ganguli remain the only reported sightings from the National Capital Territory (Delhi State), while there are several more records from the National Capital Region (NCR).

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## On Red-necked Falcon *Falco chicquera* building its own nest, in Mori (2018)

In a recent note published by Mori (2018), I was surprised to read about a pair of Red-necked Falcons *Falco chicquera* that were "observed bringing nesting material to the nest" while nesting on a 70 m electricity pylon near the Chotila village in Surendranagar, Gujarat. Falcons in general, and this species in particular, are not known to build their own nests.

Details of Red-necked Falcons using the nests of other birds are available. The nest of a Red-necked Falcon pair that I studied in Bengaluru during 1978–1979, belonged to a Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* (Subramanya 1979, 1983). Naoraji (2011) mentioned that two nests used by the species close to Jasdan town, in the Saurashtra peninsula of Gujarat, belonged to a House Crow *C. splendens*, and a Shikra *Accipiter badius*, respectively. In the Kafue Flats floodplains of Zambia, 18 nests of Red-necked Falcons *F. c. ruficollis* that Osborne (1981) observed, consisted of old nests constructed by Pied Crows *C. albus* in *Acacia albida*; seven additional nests were in the natural depressions of frond bases, on the leeward side of *Borassus* palms, where no nest construction was needed; two were in nests constructed by African Fish Eagles *Haliaeetus vocifer*; and one was in a natural bowl of an *A. albida*. In subsequent years, the falcons re-laid in their old nests four times, changing to a new

crow's nest twice, from a crow's nest to a depression in palm site once, and from a depression in palm site to a crow's nest once.

Records of falcons occupying the nests of other birds that have similar nesting site requirements exist (Bent 1938: 21–22, 96, 102). Brown & Amadon (1968) clearly indicated the lack of a nest-building instinct among falcons. Further, Naoraji (2006) stated that *F. chicquera* does not build its own nest, while Rasmussen & Anderton (2012) reaffirmed these observations by stating that the species breeds in old crow or kite nests. Kemp *et al.* (2018) state the same for Red-necked Falcon, and del Hoyo *et al.* (2018) do so for the African *ruficollis*, which is accorded species status in their taxonomy.

Thus, using the nests of other birds appears to be a general 'rule' among Red-necked Falcons. I think that the nest in the photographs in Mori (2018), is that of either a kite, or an eagle; it is too large a structure, requiring more effort than the species in question would expend. Also, in the two years that Subramanya (1983) observed the nests of the species in Bengaluru, the nesting pair did not bring a single twig, or any nest material to the nest.

In light of these observations, it would be interesting to obtain additional information on the nest-building activity of the pair of Red-necked Falcons observed by Mori (2018). Also, it would be useful to know if he photographed the birds in the act of bringing nest material, or made further observations on this hitherto unrecorded nest-building behaviour of this species.

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