

# Long-billed Vulture *Gyps indicus* breeding in Satpura Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, India

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**S**atpura Tiger Reserve, Hosangabad district, Madhya Pradesh (22°15'–22°45'N 77°50'–78°30'E, 1,352 m a.s.l.) lies in the Satpura Range (Mahadeo Hills) in central India. Bori Wildlife Sancturay and Pachmarhi Wildlife Sanctuary are a part of Satpura Tiger Reserve. The forest types are tropical dry deciduous, tropical moist deciduous and sub-tropical forest. The biodiversity is stunning with over 1,300 species of plants, 50 species of mammals, 30 species of reptiles and 254 species of birds.

I have seen four species of vultures here, White-backed Vulture *Gyps bengalensis*, Long-billed Vulture *G. indicus*, King Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus* and Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* in different areas of Satpura Tiger Reserve. A flock of White-backed Vultures and three King Vultures were spotted near the Jaharghat beat, while 34 Egyptian Vultures were seen in Churna village. From January–June 2006 I observed a breeding colony of 48 Long-billed Vultures on ledge of steep and high rocky cliffs in Kamti range forest, close to Kukara village.

## Nesting site

Nests were spotted on a steep-sided cliff (22°31'54"N 78°15'43"E). They were constructed about 200 m above the ground and about 100 m from the top of the cliff. The Nagduvari River passes between two hills here. The nests were quite inaccessible to humans. No efforts were made to approach the nests. Observations were made from a distance of 80 m from the base of the cliff. A total of 11 nests were counted between January and February 2006. The rocks around the nests were coated with white excrement.

## Observations

27.i.2006: 11 nests spotted on the cliff.

25.ii.2006: Each of the nests had a chick in it.

15.iii.2006: 11 juveniles were observed perched on ledges and later flying around the hilltops. No adults sighted.

18.iv.2006: 48 vultures, juveniles and adults spotted flying around the hilltops.

05.vi.2006: 30 vultures were spotted in the morning (08:00–10:00hrs) and 33 in the evening (17:00–18:45hrs).

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