Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* in Kachchh, Gujarat, India

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Recent ornithological literature (Grimmett *et al*. 1998, Kazmierczak 2000, Rasmussen & Anderton 2005) does not record the Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* from the Kachchh district of Gujarat. Ali (1945) did not come across it during his ornithological surveys of Kachchh in 1943 and 1944. Stoliczka (1872) however, listed it from Kachchh. Roberts (1992) mentions that *A. n. nisosimilis* is a regular winter visitor to Sind, which is adjacent to Kachchh. During the BNHS field studies on the avifauna of Kachchh (1990-1995) we did not come across the Eurasian Sparrowhawk (Hussain 1991, Javed & Rahmani 1993).

On 21.ii.2006, in the Lala Bustard Sanctuary area of Abdasa, Kachchh, the first author (JKT) came across a Eurasian Sparrowhawk feeding on a Spiny-tailed Lizard *Uromastyx hardwickii*. A photograph was taken by his colleagues (Avi and Inbal). This is the first photographic record of the species from Kachchh.

The identification was confirmed and other birdwatchers were contacted in Kachchh. The second (SNV) and third (AOL) authors confirmed having seen this species earlier in Kachchh. On 11.ii.1990, SNV had seen the Eurasian Sparrowhawk in the Tappar Dam area in Anjar taluka of Kachchh. On 19.xi.1994 AOL saw this species at Tera village in Abdasa taluka of Kachchh.

These records from Kachchh indicate that the Eurasian Sparrowhawk is a regular wintering bird to Kachchh desert.

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Prolonged breeding period of Greater Painted-Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*

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The Greater Painted-Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* is irregularly seen in marshy patches, behind our residence at Raipur (Chhattisgarh). It is more regular when rain water accumulates in these marshes and thick shrubby vegetation grows up.

Frequent sightings of the species made me suspicious about its possible breeding in the region. This was confirmed on 6.iii.1999, when a pair with three sub-adult chicks was seen in the vicinity of the drying muddy patches. This family, which stayed in the locality for three days, was photographed.

The pair was back (or was it another?) in July 2000, and was seen till the first week of September 2000, thereafter only female could be seen till first week of October. Then on 6.x.2000, a male was seen with one week-old chick. This chick always stayed close to the parent and mostly kept itself under the shrubby vegetation cover. By 11.x.2000 the chick was quite precocious. Whenever any intruder was noticed, both birds froze for up to ten minutes. This family was seen till 16.x.2000, when the marshes were drained for fish, which badly disturbed the vegetation cover. After this only the male was seen.

A pair re-appeared in May 2001 for few days and then left the locality, only to re-appear on 14.xi.2001. In the interlude most of the marshy area has been reclaimed for housing development, depriving the aquatic birds of their habitat. However the presence of adults in the remaining marshes is being recorded throughout the year in this locality.

The sighting of about a month-old chick in March and another chick in October suggests that the species has a prolonged or possibly repeated breeding here, even beyond the known normal period of July to September (Ali & Ripley 1989).

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