Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina cyanota*-a first record for Rajasthan, India

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While surveying the area close to Sitamata temple in the Sitamata Wildlife Sanctuary (Chittorgarh and Udaipur districts, Rajasthan) on 27.vi.2006, GSB was surprised to see an Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina cyanota*, a peninsular race of *Zoothera citrina*, not found in Rajasthan. Unfortunately, the distinctive bird was not seen again during subsequent visits to the area in winter. However, on 01.vii.2007 one Orange-headed Thrush was seen flying from a mohwa tree *Madhuca indica* and entering the thick canopy of saadar / asan trees *Terminalia tomentosa*. After a few minutes' search the bird was located and photographed.

A while later three more birds were found foraging in leaf litter close to the temple in a grove of mohwa, saadar, bahera *T. bellerica*, mango *Mangifera indica* and tendu *Diospyros melanoxylon*. One of the birds was heard singing (a very faint whistling). Later four more birds were seen near the temple.

12 races of *Zoothera citrina* are recognised worldwide and variation in these is largely clinal but marked in some races (Clement & Hathway 2000). However, Collar (2005) recognizes only 11 subspecies. The peninsular *cyanota* has white face, throat, and ear coverts with broad dark streaks below and behind eye and crown olive tinged (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

Z. c. cyanota is resident and a local migrant in much of peninsular India and has been reported from Gujarat (Navasari and Dangs districts), Madhya Pradesh (Satpura Range, but apparently not in the Vindhya Range), Orissa (Sambhalpur, Mahendragiri, Jeypore districts), Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala (Ali & Ripley 1998). Although largely resident in most of its central Indian range, numbers of *cyanota* increase from April to August in Bandavgarh National Park, north-eastern Madhya Pradesh (Clement & Hathway 2000). It is quite likely that some birds arrive in Sitamata in summer and during the monsoon months. In the absence of sightings in other seasons it can be presumed that they leave the area after the monsoon.

Although the nominate race *citrina* is quite regularly sighted at Bharatpur during winter the peninsular race *cyanota* has never been recorded before in Rajasthan. Thus the Sitamata birds constitute the first record for Rajasthan.

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Fig. 1. Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina cyanota*

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