



20. A view of Chatri Talav where the Eurasian Bittern was sighted

Sighting of the Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* at Amravati, Maharashtra, India

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On 04 January 2014, while observing and photographing birds at Chatri Talav (21.099°N, 77.948°E), a lake located on the outskirts of Amravati town, Maharashtra [20], I heard a loud call, which was traced to a bird slightly larger than an Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii*, flying low over water about seven meters away. Three quick photographs were taken of the bird, as it landed within a stand of *Ipomoea* (*Ipomoea* species) growing on the periphery of the lake, and disappeared in it [21]. Based on the photographs, it was later identified as an Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* [22].

The Eurasian Bittern is known to be a winter visitor to India, in small numbers, and has been recorded across northern India. Further, it is known to straggle through the rest of India, affecting wetlands with dense reed-beds and bulrushes (Ali & Ripley 2001; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). Its status is considered as *scarce to rare* (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). Prasad (2006) contains records from western Maharashtra, and cites 'LP's' [=Leon Pereira] record of one bird from 'Melghat, Amravati district', on 29 October 2001. It was also sighted at Wadali Lake in February during 2006–2008 (Pachlore & Chandrakar 2011). The present sighting happens to be the third one for Amravati, and hence, is considered significant for the region.

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Photos: Rahul Gupta

21. A view of the *Ipomoea* clumps where the Eurasian Bittern disappeared

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22. Eurasian Bittern sighted in Amravati