

Morbi, for an extended time period. The behaviour of *albicilla* is similar to *parva* and *subrubra*. However the tail fanning behaviour of a *subrubra* (Ganpule 2012) was not observed in the other two.

Discussion

Looking at the above records from Gujarat, it is quite possible that the Taiga Flycatcher may have been overlooked in the past for the more common and similar looking Red-breasted Flycatcher. Even now, it is easily misidentified, as seen above.

Kannan & Santharam (2013) expressed doubts regarding the reported range extension based on a single sighting (Ganpule 2013). Certainly single sightings cannot be range extensions, but for similar looking birds that tend to get overlooked, single sightings could be an indicator of them being more widespread than previously thought. The fact does remain that the Taiga Flycatcher was only recently elevated to full species status, and hence previous sightings may have been reported as Red-breasted Flycatcher, without specifying whether they were *parva* or *albicilla*. Thus in cases where there have been taxonomic updates, it would be advisable to reassess the status and distribution.

Conclusion

The Taiga Flycatcher is a passage, as well as winter, migrant to Gujarat. Wintering birds have been noted in the Morbi area. It is quite possible that Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary and Gir National Park are areas where Taiga Flycatchers winter, since they were noted in the same area twice. Further surveys are needed to

confirm this. It seems to be widely distributed with sightings from the Saurashtra region and southern Gujarat, and it is probably common in the Gir and Girnar areas, either as a passage migrant or winter visitor, as five individuals were seen in a single day. Thus its status can be described as 'uncommon winter visitor' and 'passage migrant'. A detailed survey in suitable areas will be helpful to understand its status and distribution in Gujarat.

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Recent sighting of Amur Falcons *Falco amurensis* near Sohildev Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh

Rajat Bhargava, Nikhil Shinde, Asad R. Rahmani & Rupak De

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Recent instances of large-scale, localised hunting of Amur Falcons *Falco amurensis* in parts of north-eastern India, particularly Nagaland through which the species undertakes fall migration every year, have been a serious conservation issue (Dalvi & Sreenivasan 2012). According to Rasmussen & Anderson (2012) the Amur Falcon is a 'fall passage migrant' through central and eastern Himalayas, southern Assam hills (Cachar, Eastern Meghalaya, Manipur), and the Peninsula.

The Bombay Natural History Society has been given a one year project by Sarus Sanraskshan Samiti and Uttar Pradesh

Forest Department to document and study the avifaunal diversity of Sohildev (or Sohelwa) Wildlife Sanctuary located at Tulsipur Tehsil of Balrampur District, and Bhinga Tehsil of Saravasti District along the Indo-Nepal border. While on way for our first winter transect to the Poorvi (East) Sohelwa range from Bhinga on 09 November 2013, we recorded at 1620 hrs more than 150 Amur Falcon, about 10 km before the Poorvi Sohelwa forest rest house (27°48'N, 82°02'E).

We first sighted the falcons from the road, perched c. 300 m away on electric wires passing over a harvested paddy field

Photo: Rajat Bhargava



187. Amur Falcons *Falco amurensis* on electric wires of paddy fields.

[187]. While we counted more than 100 falcons perched on the wires, we could also see about 40–50 falcons flying overhead. As we moved towards the falcons, most birds flew away and finally settled on the electric wires. We did not go much nearer fearing that the birds may desert the ‘roost’ and since it was getting dark we moved to the forest rest house in Poorvi Suhelwa. During the following week we went around the same place in the evening but did not encounter any falcons suggesting that the birds were there for a short period, probably a night halt.

First record of the Chinese Thrush *Turdus mupinensis* from the Indian Subcontinent

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During a recent visit to Namdapha National Park (27°64'N, 95°92'E), Arunachal Pradesh, India, RR was walking along a trail at c. 500 m in tropical evergreen forest between Haldibari and Hornbill camp, on 17 November 2013, accompanied by Dattakiran Joshi, Sangeeta Joshi and a guide, Asam Moshang, when an unidentified bird was seen and photographed, at about 1400 hr.

The bird was noted flying for a short distance and then perching on the ground, foraging among the leaves. It was shy and kept a distance of 60–70 m from the observers. For most of the time it kept on the main path, perching on elevated objects such as fallen logs, or on the ground when a log was not available. The bird's brown colour against the sand and leaves on the ground, as well as pockets of light shining through the forest thickets, made it exceedingly difficult to obtain a good photograph. The bird was observed with 8x42 binoculars, and several photographs were taken with a Canon EOS 7D camera and 400 mm zoom lens. The bird moved in front of the observers

The sighting of Amur Falcon near Soheldev WLS is the first record of this species from Uttar Pradesh (Rahmani *et al.* 2011).

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for about one kilometer before disappearing into the adjoining forest. It was seen again the following afternoon in the same area but no further photographs were possible.

There were no other birds close enough to assess its size by direct comparison, but it was thought to be between an Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* and a Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* in size. The photographs [188, 189, 190, 191] show that the bird was a thrush *Turdus/Zoothera*, with a greyish-brown crown, back, and tail. The face is fairly pale with two dark vertical stripes, the first extending down from the side of the crown through the dark eye to the lower edge of the ear-coverts, and the second along the rear edge of the ear-coverts. The wing shows two distinct pale wing-bars: a short one on the median coverts and a longer one on the greater coverts, and also a suggestion on the tertials of dark outer webs and brighter, olive inner webs. The underparts are not very clear in the relevant photographs (Figs. 3,4) but there are numerous large, round dark spots visible on the breast, and others can be made out