

An Arctic Tern was photographed from Sassoon Dock (18.9139° N, 72.8238° E) and Elephanta Caves multiple times between 27 and 31 July 2024 as well, but was reported much later after our photographs got identified as this species. From available photographs, it appeared rather similar to our bird. Hence, this individual was probably present there for at least a few days but was overlooked by bird-watchers until we saw it on 06 August 2024. However, it was not seen there after 07 August. From 29 August 2024 until 07 September 2024, an Arctic Tern was seen quite regularly at Sassoon Dock in South Mumbai. This individual's head pattern [153–155] was slightly different from the bird that we saw at Elephanta Island as all photographs showed a broad white front contra our individual that had almost a fuller black cap. The bird was also comparatively lighter on its upper parts. Therefore, it is presumed that there were at least two Arctic Terns in Mumbai region. Birders who visited after 11 September 2024 did not see that tern.



153. Arctic Tern showing long tail-streamers and short bill on 02 September.



154. Arctic Tern showing broad white front on 02 September.



155. Arctic Tern showing short legs and well-defined dark tips to the retained primaries on 02 September.

Ali: Mayuresh Khatavkar

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## Rusty-tailed Flycatcher *Ficedula ruficauda* from Nangal, Punjab, India

On 13 April 2024, at about 1745 h, while birdwatching in the woodlands of the Nangal Wildlife Sanctuary (31.396°N, 76.364°E; 364 m asl) in Nangal, Rupnagar district, Punjab, India, PSA observed two *Muscicapa* flycatchers and a flock of Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*. One of the flycatchers was identified as an Asian Brown Flycatcher *M. dauurica*. The second one turned out to be a Rusty-tailed Flycatcher *Ficedula ruficauda*, based on its rufous rump to tail, plain underparts, and grey upperparts (Clement



156. Rusty-tailed Flycatcher at Nangal (Dorsal View).



157. Rusty-tailed Flycatcher at Nangal (Lateral View).

Both: Paramoor Singh Artaai

& Taylor 2006; Grimmett et al. 2011). It was catching insects while frequently flitting from one perch to another in the lower canopy [156–157]. The location was not visited again by the authors.

In comparison to the Rusty-tailed Flycatcher, the Slaty-blue Flycatcher *F. tricolor* female also has rufous in the tail, but it is slightly smaller, has a black bill, and may be seen in the area only in the winters as an altitudinal migrant. Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara* female has a paler rufous tail (in the race *whistleri*), but it has a broad white gorget across the lower throat and may be seen in the area only in the winters as an altitudinal migrant. Rusty-tailed Flycatcher's rufous upper tail coverts and tail may make it appear like a female *Phoenicurus* Redstart but can be differentiated by its entirely pale lower mandible (compared to entirely black bill in Redstarts), slightly smaller size, and upright stance. Behaviourally, the lack of characteristic tail shivering and jerky body movements typical of a Redstart clearly distinguishes this species and eliminates any confusion.

Ali & Ripley (1996) states this species "has been recorded in southeastern Punjab." However, this seemingly refers to an area in present-day Haryana, as Haryana used to be a part of Punjab. This record may correspond to the circle placed near Delhi in the distribution map by Grimmett et al. (2011). As per Clement & Taylor (2006), during winter migration, the Rusty-tailed Flycatcher passes "throughout Punjab and NW plains." But the authors do not mention Punjab for return passage. As per Rasmussen & Anderton (2012), Rusty-tailed Flycatcher breeds in the Himalaya from north-eastern Afghanistan to eastern Nepal, between 1800–1300 m asl, but found at lower elevations on passage. It further says that during fall migration, it travels through the western Himalayan foothills and the northwestern plains to the southern Western Ghats, where it spends the winter. During spring migration, it returns through the eastern Peninsula and then moves west along the base of the Himalaya. Though Punjab is not specifically mentioned, it is obvious that the Rusty-tailed Flycatcher passes through (some territory of) Punjab in both migration directions as it is part of the northwestern plains. The present observation is in a valley along the Sutlej River in the foothills of the Shivalik Range of the lower Himalaya.

No specific published record of Rusty-tailed Flycatcher was found from Punjab, India while searching through sources obtained from the Bibliography of South Asian Ornithology (Pittie 2024). There are also no records in the specimen database of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). We also found no records on Facebook and Instagram, eBird and iNaturalist. Therefore, the present observation is the first confirmed photographic record of Rusty-tailed Flycatcher from Punjab, India, seemingly on passage to its breeding grounds.

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## An African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus* from Kole Wetlands, Kerala, India and its potential origins

On 19 November 2023, during a survey at the Kanjani Kole wetlands (10.473°N, 76.121°E) as part of the Kerala Bird Race, a stork was observed flying at a short distance. Initially, it looked like a Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* due to its dark coloration. I was able to take several photographs [158–163], and upon closer inspection, it was noted that the bird lacked the typical white belly of the Black Stork. Further examination of the bill confirmed the bird to be an Openbill *Anastomus sp.*, and it was then thought to be a strangely coloured Asian Openbill *A. oscitans*, as it joined a flock of four other individuals of that species.



158. African Openbill along with Asian Openbill, see similar size and structure.



159. African Openbill showing thick pale bill showing the obvious gap of an adult. Bill base is also pale.



160. African Openbill showing a white patch around the shoulders and adjoining base of wings.