

Short Article

Volume-05|Issue-02|2025

Wintering records of Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* from Gujarat, India.

Rajni Trivedi

20/C Mangaldeep apartment, Jodhpur gam road, satellite, Ahmedabad-380015

Article History

Received: 05.03.2025

Accepted: 25.03.2025

Published: 10.04.2025

Citation

Trivedi, R. (2025). Wintering records of Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* from Gujarat, India. *Indiana Journal of Agriculture and Life Sciences*, 5(2), 24-26.

Abstract: There are five races of the harrier are arriving during winter migration in Gujarat. The races Marsh, pallid and Montagu's harrier are known as winter visitor, another two races - Pied and Hen harrier are recognized as winter vagrant. Only two authentic wintering records of Hen harrier are available from Gujarat. One record near Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary on 4th April, 2018, central Gujarat and second record from Olpad on 1st January, 2019, Dist. – Surat, South Gujarat.

Species authority: - *Cyaneus* Linnaeus, 1766

Domain: Eukaryote

Genus: - *Circus*

Family: - Acciptridae

Order: - Falconiformes

Class: - Aves

Phylum: - Chordata

Kingdom: - Animalia

Scientific name: - *Circus cyaneus*

Gujarati name: - Uttari patai

Keywords: Wintering records of Hen, *Circus cyaneus*, *Circus cyaneus* from Gujarat, Hen Harrier

Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0).

INTRODUCTION

The Hen harrier *C. cyaneus* is medium sized, slim and statured raptor resembles of Montagu's, Pallid harrier, but it is larger in size than Montagu's and Pallid harrier has a rounded grey head, dark grey wing covert, pale grey upper breast, lower white, rounded primary projection extend up to two-third of the tail, it is detached from Pied and Montagu's harrier and created different and separate species. **Resident and Breed** – Western Europe – Portugal, Spain through Central and Eastern Europe. During winter migration, it is found in Afghanistan, North-West Pakistan through Central and Eastern Himalaya – Ali, 1997, 2012. Also found in Rajasthan and Gujarat – Rasmussen.

Observation

I carried out extensive observation on Hen harrier *C. cyaneus* in – Kachchh, Chhari Dund, Bunny and Nakhtrana grassland and Salt flat, Little Rann of Kachchh, Dist. - Surendranagar, Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Black Buck National Park - Bhavanagar. All the sites are providing excellent opportunity with natural resources and habitation to Raptor, Waterfowl and Passerine birds arrive for wintering. Observation areas are spreaded over more than roughly 2,000 sq. kms.



Figur: 1

Figur. 1 – Male bird was sighted near Rav Moti (Taluka-Rapar), when I was retriped from Dholavira. Bird was perched in waterbody might be for preying. Has a hooked black bill, pale Iris, pupil and orbital ring are black, white forehead, greyish head and nape contrast with dark white ear-coverts, dark grey or blackish grey wing covert, pale grey upper breast and throat, lower belly white, mentle and shorter rounded primary coverts were extend upto two-third of tail.



Figur: 2

Figur. 2 – Bird was female sighted at Naliya grassland, Taluka- Abadhasa. Has a hooked black bill, pale brown head and nape contrast with dark brown ear coverts, pale Iris, black pupil and orbital ring, pale brown collar ring, Blackish - brown mentle and wing coverts, rounded primary coverts shorter extend up to two-third of black bended brownish tail.



Figur: 3

Figur. 3: - Bird was observed at Shahpur near cultivation field, North-East range of Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary. Perched on Neem trees branch. Has a hooked bill, grey head and nape, black streaked upper breast contrast with white belly, head is grey, pale ear coverts contrast with dark brown nape and wing coverts, pale Iris, black pupil, lower breast, vent and under lower tail white, yellow legs, rounded primary coverts extend up to two-third of tail.

Table 1: All the observation are showed

Observation	Date	Observer	Sex	Site	Latitude-Longitude
1	12-01-11	Author	Male	Ravmoti, taluka – Rapar, Dist. Kachchh	23.65° N, 70.59° E
2	24-01-17	Author	Female	Jakhoo, Dist. - Kachchh	23.22° N, 68.71° E
3	04-04-18	S. Kinni	Probably juvenile	Near Nal Sarovar, taluka – Viramgam, Dist. Ahmedabad	22.81° N, 72.04° E
4	01-01-19	P. Sahran & N. J. Sharan	Probably female	Olpad, Dist. Surat	21.34° N, 72.75° E
5	27-12-22	Author	Male	Shahpur, Eastern range of NSBS, Taluka – Viramgam, Dist. - Ahmedabad	22.87° N, 72.01° E

DISCUSSION

The bird Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* in India effects cultivated field, grassland, also hill slopes upto 2500-3000 meters. It prefers wet boggy ground and frequents paddyfield, grassy neighborhood of mashes, lakes. All birds were sighted near agricultural field, wetland and grassy patch, current sightings are similar with the explanation by Naoroji. Now only 5 records are available from Gujarat. Two birds were from Kachchh by Author, two birds were found near Nal Sarovar, one by Kinni and another by author. One bird was found from Olpad, dist. – Surat, North Gujarat. But gap between two wintering years, so that bird is still vagrant. Ali has not mentioned in 1945, 1954, 1955 and 2012. Dharamkumarsinhji (1955) did not mentioned any

records in Bhavnagar district, Saurashtra region. Naoroji has mentioned as a vagrant with question mark - 2006. Vagrant Saurashtra region - Kry’s (2012), but Grimmett was not clear about winter occurency in Saurashtra region. Rasmussen gave its status about winter visitor in Saurashtra region, but last large laft from 2012 to 2024, not a single bird was observed (Black Buck National Park, Velavadar and surrounding area) by author or any other observer in Saurashtra region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thanks to Mohamad Dadu (Chhari Dund), Kasam Sidani (Nal Sarovar Birds Sanctuary) and Bhachaya omar (Jakhoo Kachchh) for assistancy.

REFERENCES

1. Ali, S. (1945). *The birds of Kutch*. Oxford University Press.
2. Ali, S. (1954). The birds of Gujarat. Part I. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*, 52, 374–458.
3. Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D. (1978). *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka: Divers to hawks* (Vol. 1, 2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
4. Ali, S., & Ripley, S. D. (1983). *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan* (Compact ed.). Oxford University Press.
5. Ali, S. *Field guide to the birds of Eastern Himalayas*.
6. del Hoyo, J., & Collar, N. J. *Illustrated checklist of the birds of the world* (Vol. 1).
7. Dharamkumarsinhji, R. S. (1955). *Birds of Saurashtra, India, with additional notes on the birds of Kutch and Gujarat*. Published by the author.
8. Forsman, D. (2006). *The raptors of Europe and the Middle East*. Christopher Helm.
9. Forsman, D. (2016). *The flight identification of raptors of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East*. Christopher Helm, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
10. Grimmett, R., & Inskipp, T. (2011). *Birds of Southern India*.
11. Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T. (1998). *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent* (1st ed.). Christopher Helm.
12. Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C., & Inskipp, T. (2011). *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent* (2nd ed.). Christopher Helm & Oxford University Press.
13. James, F., & David, C. (2007). *Raptors of the world: A field guide*.
14. Kryś, K. (2012). *Birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives*. OM Field Guides.
15. Naoroji, R. (2006). *Birds of prey of the Indian Subcontinent* (1st ed.). Om Books International.
16. Rasmussen, P. C., & Anderton, J. C. (2012). *Birds of South Asia: The Ripley guide*.
17. Orta, J., Kirwan, G. M., Boesman, P., Marks, J. S., Garcia, E. F. J., & Sharpe, C. J. (2018). Hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*). *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions. Retrieved September 4, 2018, from <https://www.hbw.com/node/53029>
18. Svensson, L., Mullarney, K., & Zetterström, D. (2010). *Collins bird guide: The most complete guide to the birds of Britain and Europe* (2nd ed.). Collins.