

A NEW RECORD OF GREY BUSHCHAT (*Saxicola ferreus*) IN KOTA DISTRICT, RAJASTHAN, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The Grey bush chat (*Saxicola ferreus*) belongs to the family Muscicapidae. It is an uncommon migratory bird in Rajasthan. It is small size passerine bird. Grey bushchats are sexually dimorphic in nature, that is, their characteristics differ in males and females. Grey bushchats prey on spiders, grasshoppers and various insects. Kota district is located in Rajasthan's far south-east. Kota is located on the bank of the Chambal River. The birds were first seen at the Kota on 06th February 2022. This is the first record of Kota district, Rajasthan.

KEYWORDS: Grey bushchat, Kota, Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve

The Grey bushchat (*Saxicola ferreus*) is a species of passerine bird in the family Muscicapidae. The Grey bushchat has been listed as 'least concern' by Birdlife International. It is found in the Himalayas, southern China, Taiwan, Nepal and mainland Southeast Asia. Male is silvery grey overall with black face and white supercilium, throat, belly, and wing patches. Female dull brown overall, with a rufous tail and faded version of the male's head pattern. Bold but not very active, usually seen perching for long periods on posts and overhead wires. Song is bright and melodious, but often has a somewhat faltering quality, trailing off towards the end. Most common call is a harsh rising "bzeet!" (Powered by Merlin). There were several

records from other districts of Rajasthan such as Bharatpur, Alwar, Swai Madhopur and Sirohi (eBird). The species has been recorded a rare winter migrant in Rajasthan. Here, I would like to report a new record of the Grey bushchat from Kota district, Rajasthan. Forest Chouki, Seljar (MHTR) (24° 58' 23.59" N, 75° 40' 41.50" E) is 32km away from Kota. The forests fall under the category Dry Deciduous Forest as per the Champion and Seth's classification (1968). Birds were observed using the binoculars, and photographs were taken with a Nikon D7500 camera for further identification. Birds were identified by Ali and Ripley (2007) and Grimmett *et al.* (2011).



Figure 1: Location map of Forest Chouki Seljar, MHTR

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On 06th feb 2022, while going to Rawatbhata from Kota for bird watching, We were seen one song bird perched on a plant near forest chouki Seljar Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve (24° 58'23.59" N, 75°40'41.50" E). It was difficult to identify this bird as it was sitting in the opposite sunlight. At first sight it struck us as Pied bushchat because Pied bushchat is easily found in this area. On close observation, this bird was found to be a

Grey bushchat and further when photographs were taken identification was confirmed. Special thanks to Harshit Sharma for the photograph. It has been reported in other parts of Rajasthan also but there were no previous records of Grey bushchat from Kota district, Rajasthan. Hence, it is ascertained that this is first record of Grey bush chat (*Saxicola ferreus*) in Kota, Rajasthan.



Figure 2: Grey Bushchat perched on a Plant

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