

Probably Breeding Records of Eurasian/Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* from Pariyej Bird Sanctuary, Kheda Gujarat, Western India with Notes on Identification of Juvenile

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Distribution: The race of Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* is widely distributed race from central and south Europe, north west and south Africa, middle East, Russian East, North-East China, Japan (del hoyo), also north, south-west Afghanistan, Baluchistan north (Rasmussen).

Winter: Central south Europe Mediterranean basin East to south-East Asia, Sudan west, sub Saharan, Africa (delhoyo, robson). Most part of India from North-East, North-west central India, south India through Gujarat.

Habit: It is larger Shy and Skulling bird always live alone, generally most visible in day light hours in breeding male may have more than one female in reed Svensson.

Some wintering record available from Gujarat. Bird was observed at Nal Sarovar bird Sanctuary by Kasam Sidani at 7th April 2009. More photographic record by [RT]. 8th February 2011 kayla dam near Nal Sarovar bird Sanctuary on another record from Saurashtra. Rughani B had observed at Porbanda, Gosabara-2014. Bagda G had observed in Junagadh. Pomal K had Gosabara, Porbandar 18th January 2015. Vora U had sited at Tarakpur (Anand) 5th February 2017. Shah D had photographed Timbi lake Vadodara 13th December 2017.

On 17th March 2020, I was on my birding trip of Pariyej Wetland, district, Kheda (22°31N to 22°33N and 72°36E to 72°38 E) Site is 61 km. South-east from Ahmedabad city, 28 km, south west from Kheda city. Site is covered by heavily Spreaded *P. juliflora*. It is one of the largest wetland in central Gujarat and spreaded over 4 - 5 sq.km. It is shallow water body depth maximum 2 or 3 meters. Wetland was declared as potential Ramsar site in 2006, by MOEF (New Delhi). It is also largest breeding site of Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinna-momeus*, Yellow bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*, Black bittern *Jupiter flavicollis*. Site is attractive wetland for wintering waterfowl.

I enter on 17th of March, 2020 with eagerness now about wild World of wetland, after some time, I came near vegetation of reedbed. I observed bird like heron perched on *T. elephantina* Roxb plant, I shoot some images, easily identified that bird was not juvenile of Pond heron and not a Night heron, it was very much like juvenile of Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*. Then after I consort with many reference book, Photo graphed bird was juvenile of Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*.

Bird has thick bill, Upper mandible black, lower mandible black on base and tip, yellowish in middle, wings covered and mantle brown with small white spot, dark brown crown, ear-coverts brown, some black spot on wing age, pale brown throat and breast with dark brown streaked, central streak black, legs thick and yellowish green.





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