



Kuch Din To Guzaaro Gujarat Mein



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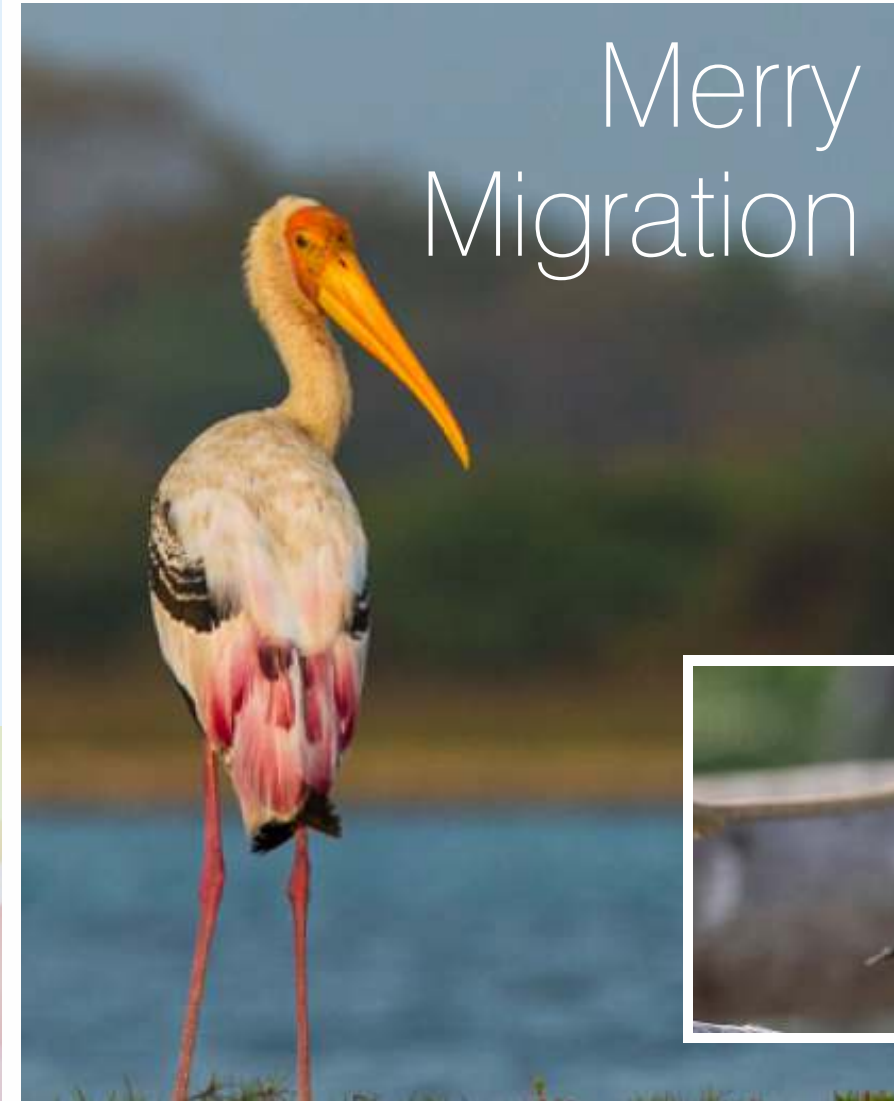
Designed by Sobhagya



Nesting in Paradise

Bird Watching in Gujarat





Merry Migration

Why is Gujarat such a haven for beautiful and rare birds? The secret is not hard to find when you look at the unrivalled diversity of eco-systems the State possesses. There are the moist forested hills of the Dang District to the salt-encrusted plains of Kutch district. Deciduous forests like Gir National Park, and the vast grasslands of Kutch and Bhavnagar districts, scrub-jungles, river-systems like the Narmada, Mahi, Sabarmati and Tapti, and a multitude of lakes and other wetlands. Not to mention a long coastline with two gulfs, many estuaries, beaches, mangrove forests, and offshore islands fringed by coral reefs. These dissimilar but bird-friendly ecosystems beckon both birds and bird watchers in abundance to Gujarat. Along with indigenous species, birds from as far away as Northern Europe migrate to Gujarat every year and make the wetlands and other suitable places their breeding ground. No wonder bird watchers of all kinds benefit from their visit to Gujarat's superb bird sanctuaries.





Dalmatian Pelican

Beautiful
Birds.
Beautiful
Sanctuary.



White-napped Tit

Chhari Dhand



Chhari Dhand Conservation Reserve: The only Conservation Reserve in Gujarat, this wetland is known for variety of water birds

Are you looking for some unique bird watching location? Come to Chhari Dhand wetland in Kutch District. This virgin wetland has a hill as its backdrop, making the setting soothingly picturesque. Thankfully, there is no hustle and bustle of tourists as only keen bird watchers and nature lovers come to Chhari Dhand. The purity of the environment and serene atmosphere beckon birds of all flocks to this beautiful sanctuary.

Around 250 species of birds and 55 distinct species of animals are estimated to inhabit the saucer shaped Chhari Dhand. Dhand in Kutchi language means a saucer shaped natural depression. In the mud flats of the Banni area of Kutch many such depressions are concealed, where rainwater gets collected during a good monsoon. Chhari Dhand is the largest of these natural saucers, with an area of almost 10 square kilometres.

Bird watchers are likely to be surprised by the vast number of waterfowls and common cranes found at Chhari Dhand. More than 50,000 and 30,000 respectively of the two species, they are found in abundance during the winter months. Look around closely and you are likely to spot one of the more exotic and sometimes endangered birds. Dalmatian Pelican, Oriental Darter, Black necked Stork are some among those. They migrate to these wetlands from far off countries and continents. The special avian inhabitants of Chhari Dhand include many types of raptors and birds dependent on water such as Grey Hypocolius, White-napped Tit, McQueen's Bustard and the aforementioned Dalmatian Pelicans.

Look out for: Grey Hypocolius, White-napped Tit and Macqueen's Bustard

Be one of few to record: Dalmatian Pelican, Oriental Darter and Black Necked Stork

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 1 Day

Accommodation: Bhuj

Other attractions: Town attractions of Bhuj



Oriental Darter



Wood Pecker



Haubara Bustard

Close
quarters.
Clear
watch.

Hingolgadh Nature Education Sanctuary

Only 180 km from Ahmedabad is the green oasis of Hingolgadh. The hilly, rugged terrain has undulating grasslands and scrub forests. The area was a hunting reserve for the royal family; leopards have been spotted here right up to the year 1991.

Beyond bird watching, Hingolgadh offers a perfect venue for the study of nature. The presence of the grasslands and scrubs inhabited by interesting fauna, particularly the remarkably diverse avian species, makes it a delightful nature excursion of tourists of all kinds. The relative smallness of the sanctuary at only 600 ha. enables close observation of physical features such as hill-slopes, soil features, drainage lines and water flow. The impact of these on the wildlife will also become vivid to observers.

About 230 species of birds make Hingolgadh their home. Any time in the sanctuary, the atmosphere will be filled with the calls and chirping of these birds. Especially the metallic sounding calls of large groups of bulbuls. Lookout for hanging nests which indicate the presence of the weaver bird. If you hang around you can take your own unique photographs of the birds.

Look out for: Red-vented Bulbul, Twittering Green Bee-eater, Spotted Dove, Wood Pecker and any of the 230 bird species

Be one of few to record: Haubara Bustard and Spotted Dove

Seasons: During or just after rainy season, and during winter

Recommended time in the field: 3 Days

Accommodation: Limited lodging facilities within the sanctuary with prior permission and booking and Hotels in Rajkot - 80kms

Other attractions: Nature education camping site, Cacti House and Snake House



Spotted Dove

Diverse.
Different.



Black-headed Ibis



Black Necked Stork

Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary



Khijadiya is located just 12 km away from Jamnagar District headquarters. This sanctuary is veritable showpiece for bird watchers since its unique quality of having fresh water lakes on one side and salty marshlands on other side. A check dam and a fresh water area formed by rains are the cause of this unique diversity in a relatively small area of 6 square kilometres.

The fabulously diverse ecosystem offer diverse viewing pleasure to bird watchers. Along with marine and fresh water habitats, there are also marshy lands, mangroves, Prosopsis areas, mudflats, salt pans, creeks, forest scrub, sandy beaches, and even farmlands bordering the area. Together, these ecosystems provide a haven for more than 220 species of resident and migratory birds. Bird watchers can train their binoculars and cameras at endangered species such as Dalmatian Pelican, Asian Open Bill Stork, Black Necked Stork, Darter, Black-headed Ibis, Eurasian spoonbill, and Indian Skimmer. On lucky days avian enthusiasts can spot these rare birds in large numbers.

There are watchtowers, trails, and paddleboats to ease your avian encounters. It would be much appreciated if you are mindful of the conservation process and its realities while enjoying your delightful bird watching experience.

Look out for: Black-headed Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill and Indian Skimmer

Be one of few to record: Dalmatian Pelican, Asian Open Bill Stork and Black Necked Stork

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 1 Day

Accommodation: Jamnagar

Other attractions: Narara Marine National Park, Lakhota Talav, Bet Dwaraka, Ranmal Lake



Asian
Open Bill Stork



Pelican

Flocks
from
faraway
lands



Lesser Flamingo

Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary



Nalsarovar is best for a one-day picnic from Ahmedabad. But in just 64 km, you will be transported to a water wonderland where everything is dream-like and exotic bird varieties offer eye-catching selfie opportunities. More than that Nalsarovar is a true bird watcher's paradise with countless species of birds thronging the place. Spread over 120 square kilometers, the lake and the extensive reed beds and marshes are an ideal habitat for aquatic plants and animals.

The peculiar habitat attracts hundreds of species of birds. A large variety of birds like plovers, sandpipers and stints are seen all seasons. Interestingly, the sanctuary has 360-odd islets. Most of them lie exposed when the water level is low. That is not the case when the lake gets filled with water that drains from the adjoining Surendranagar and Ahmedabad districts during the monsoon rains. Then the water turns clearer with reduced brackishness.

At this time, resident birds such as cormorants, grebes and open bill storks are joined by large flocks of migratory birds. They arrive en masse to the sanctuary. Flamingoes, pelicans, ducks, demoiselle cranes, common cranes, and several waders occupy the area. Obviously, for the bird watchers too, this is the best time to visit.

Look out for: Sandpipers, Flamingoes and Pelicans

Be one of few to record: An exotic Flamingo in a beautiful angle

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 1 Day

Accommodation: The city of Ahmedabad is only 64 km away

Other attractions: Explore some of the 360-odd islets in the sanctuary



● Ahmedabad
Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary



Sandpiper

Thriving
in the
Desert



Great Indian Bustard



Eurasian Curlew

Narayan Sarovar Wildlife Sanctuary



Threatened mammal species, reptiles and birds reside at Narayan Sarovar. The Chinkara or the Indian gazelle is the main animal inhabitant here. Many rare species of animals, since they have well adapted to the harsh desert climate, can be seen only at Narayan Sarovar.

Most of the sanctuary is desert thorn forest and scrub forest, with seasonal wetlands and dry savannah-type vegetation. Rare plant species are to be seen here, including 252 flowering species. Chinkara, the endangered species, is the only gazelle in the world with horns on both males and females. Wild cats to Persian Lynx to desert foxes and the endangered Indian wolf from the mammal dwellers, along with spotted deer and wild boar. The honey badger, recognized as the 'most fearless animal' is found at Narayan Sarovar.

Of course, Narayan Sarovar is an abode to no less than 184 distinct species of birds. The three species of bustards, the Great Indian, the Houbara, and the Lesser Florican thrive here. Black Partridge, 19 different species of prey, and many species of waterfowl make their home here, leaving unforgettable impressions and experiences to bird watchers.



Narayan Sarovar Wildlife Sanctuary

Bhuj



Red Wattlebird

Look out for: All three species of Indian Bustard

Be one of few to record: Eurasian Curlew and Red Wattlebird

Seasons: Most of the year except peak summer

Recommended time in the field: 2 Days

Accommodation: Available near Narayan Sarovar and Bhuj, 155 km away

Other attractions: Koteswar Temple and the famous Gurdwara at Lakhpat



Spoonbill

Egyptian Vultures

Meet
Tallest
Expectations

Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary



A surprisingly varied species of beautiful and rare birds can be sighted at this 7 km man-made lake sanctuary. It is a shallow water body surrounded by marshes on the edge and scrubby forest embarking on the sides.

This is a sanctuary loved by birds because of the abundance of food it can gather from the agricultural land surrounding the lake. The shallow water reservoir dotted with reed beds not only give a unique ambience but an ideal dwelling to many types of birds and insects. Huge flocks of birds draw large geometrical patterns on the sky and when they are grounded they form a milling winged mob teeming at the seams.

Saras Crane and other birds with long necks and elongated necks prey on fishes and small insects in the water and the marshes. The area sometimes is echoed with the orchestra provided by thousands of birds making their own unique calls and sounds, but all seem to synchronize with ease, instead of being a noise.

Geese, flamingoes, pelicans, egrets, herons, spoonbills, ducks, whistling teals and many other migratory birds nest and breed in the lap of nature's exuberance, creating magical experiences for all kinds of birders and keen avian photographers.

Look out for: Flamingoes, Pelicans, Egrets, Herons, Spoonbills and Whistling Teals

Be one of few to record: Egyptian Vultures and Saras Crane (world's tallest flying bird)

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 1 Day

Accommodation: Ahmedabad (30 km)

Other attractions: Driving down to Thol from Ahmedabad is in itself attractive with scope for spotting birds as you near the sanctuary



Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary
● Ahmedabad

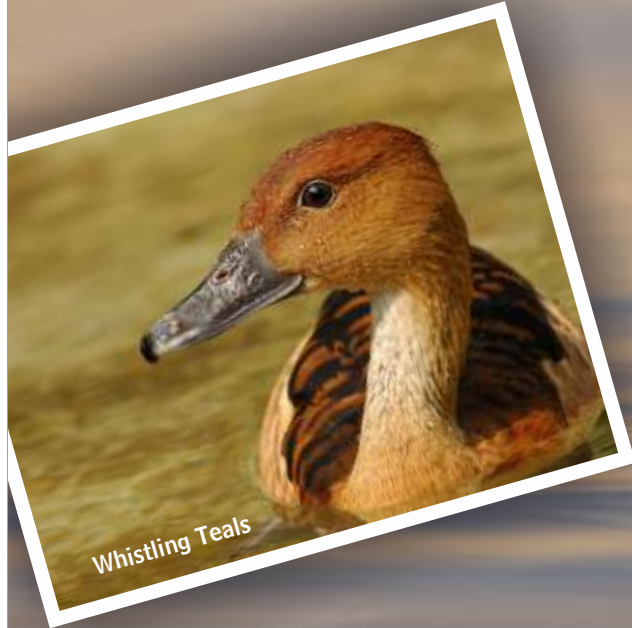


Saras Crane

Grebes



Bird Oasis in the City



Whistling Teals

Porbandar Bird Sanctuary



Right in the middle of the city of Porbandar is the tiny (1 km) bird sanctuary. But don't be fooled by its size. During season, thousands of birds of all shapes and sizes are found enjoying in the sanctuary. The tree and wetland suburb allows an oasis of peace for humans too.

While water birds splash around, the high-flyers create marvelous airborne exercises. Flamingos, Grebes, Pelicans, Ducks and geese, Avocets, Coots, Cormorants, Herons, Egrets, Bittern, Storks, Ibis, Spoonbill, Cranes, Whistling Teals, Gulls, Terns, Jacanas, Ruff, Red shanks, Indian roller and many other varieties of winged creatures are seen at the Porbandar Bird Sanctuary.

Plan a winter interlude at this sanctuary and be among the feathered flocks, spending a leisurely day with spectacular shows by the birds.



Porbandar
Bird Sanctuary
Porbandar

Look out for: Flamingos, Grebes, Pelicans and Herons

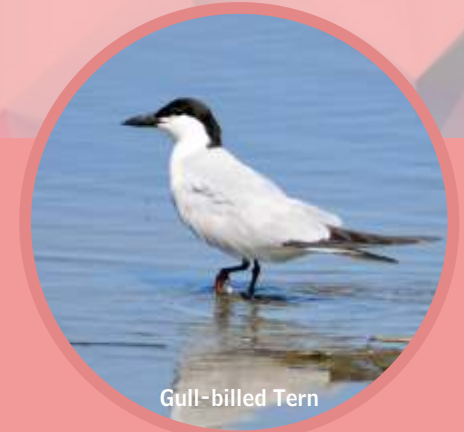
Be one of few to record: Whistling Teals and Gull-billed Tern

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 1 Day

Accommodation: In Porbandar City and at Junagadh

Other attractions: Kirti Mandir



Gull-billed Tern

Royal Avian Reserve



Partridge



Yellow Throated Sparrow

Rampara Wildlife Sanctuary



A former shooting reserve owned by the erstwhile princely state of Wankaner, Rampara Wildlife Sanctuary is today a full-fledged 'Reserve Forest'. The area is marked with fringes of hillocks around the bordering periphery of the arid shrubby plain land district with grass.

The grassland interspersed with woods is the natural habitat of the big antelope. These animals roam as groups or solo, with their stunning slender body and thick coat of short fur. These are vivacious animals that like to gallop around and remain playful with their acrobatic jumps and graceful leaps. Wolf, jackal, hyena, and the common fox form the major mammal community other than the antelope. During the winter months a leisurely safari through the area can put you face to face with bluebull staring at you in inquisitive wonder.

Over 130 species of birds are found in Rampara. These include Partridge, Common peafowl, ring dove, large gray babbler, purple sunbird, yellow throated sparrow, which are indigenous varieties of birds inhabiting this area. Bird watchers will get delightfully more than what they bargained for from Rampara.



Rajkot
Rampara Wildlife Sanctuary

Look out for: Partridge, Ring Dove, Large Gray Babbler, Purple Sunbird and Yellow Throated Sparrow

Be one of few to record: Lesser Florican

Seasons: Winter

Recommended time in the field: 2 Days

Accommodation: Rajkot

Other attractions: Watson Museum, Kaba Gandhi No Delo, Rotary Dolls Museum and Fun World



Large Gray Babbler



Dense
and
delightful

Grey Hornbill



Pampadour Pigeon

Vansda National Park



This 24km National Park was once the private property of the King of Vansda. The tall trees making a thick canopy making the ground dark even during mid-day is a unique aspect of these forests unlike the other forests in Gujarat. The generous rainfall has aided the growth of teak and bamboo growth creating the cool shadows. Vansda Park in fact is a fertile ground for over 450 species of plants of which 443 are flowering plants.

Wild animals such as tiger, wild dog, otter, sloth bear and sambar used to abound in Vansda but sadly they are almost completely absent now. Instead, leopard, hyena, chital, chausinga, jungle cat, common palm civet, mongoose, macaque, barking deer, wild boar, langur, porcupine, flying squirrel, flying fox, pangolin, rusty-spotted cast are all found in Vansda now.

However, the main draw at Vansda is its birds. This bird watchers paradise showcases 115 species of birds, including the racket-tailed drongo, paradise flycatcher, pompadour pigeon, grey hornbill, jungle babbler, yellow back sunbird, leaf birds, thrushes, peafowls, as well as the globally threatened forest spotted owl, and birds found only in the Western Ghats, like the Indian great black woodpecker, Malabar trogon, shama, emerald dove.



Surat
Vansda National Park

Look out for: Racket-Tailed Drongo, Paradise Flycatcher, Pompadour Pigeon, Grey Hornbill, Jungle Babbler and Yellow Back Sunbird

Be one of few to record: Indian Pitta

Seasons: Pre-monsoon to winter

Recommended time in the field: 2 Days

Accommodation: Waghai 4km, Ahwa 28km and Saputara 60km

Other attractions: Waghai Botanical Garden, Gira Falls and Shiv Ghat



Indian Pitta

Astonishing Avians



Glossy Ibis



Eurasian Marsh Harrier

Wild Ass Sanctuary



This 24km national park Conservation of another precious ecosystem can be discovered at the Wild Ass Sanctuary of Little Rann. The unique white desert terrain and landscape are irresistible to tourists. Safaris by jeeps and bird watching trips during winter add to the excitement.

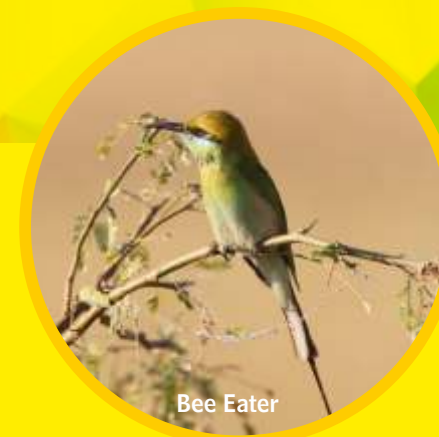
Being the world's only natural habitat for wild ass, the sanctuary of course draws people to watch these magnificent creatures. However, over 4000 km sanctuary harbours a large variety of bird population. The Rann was a shallow part of the Gulf of Kutch earlier. It is formed through the process of siltation of marine estuary. During monsoon, the discharge of river and rain waters together with sea water blown up due to south west winds, the Rann becomes a vast shallow sheet of water which dries up by October, November.

Especially when the terrain becomes a wetland, birds of many flocks fly down from faraway lands to breed and nest in the peculiar landscape.



Wild Ass Sanctuary

Bhuj



Bee Eater

Look out for: Flamingos, Pelicans, Spoonbills, Glossy Ibis and Painted Storks etc

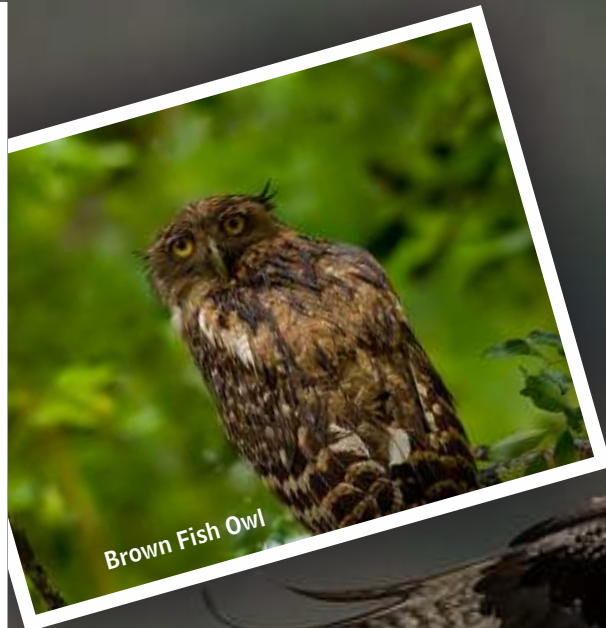
Be one of few to record: Houbara Bustard, Eurasian Marsh Harrier and Bee Eater

Seasons: Pre-monsoon to winter

Recommended time in the field: 2 Days

Accommodation: Bajana, Dasada, Patadi and Viramgam (45km)

Other attractions: Handicraft villages. Shankeshwar Jain temples - 100 kms



Brown Fish Owl

Bonelli's Eagle



Western India's
Lion among
Bird Sanctuaries

Gir National Park



Gir National Park, a place located in Junagadh district of Gujarat at a distance of 347 km from Ahmedabad. It is a unique park and one of its kind. The forest covers total of 1412 km² of area. The park was used as a hunting ground of lions by the Britishers during their reign and by the Nawabs of Junagadh until 1960 when the Government of India had to put a ban on hunting due to huge decrease in the number of Asiatic Lions.

However, the park is not only known for its Asiatic lions, but also for its plentiful avifauna population which has more than 310 species of birds. Most of which are resident birds and others migrating from many parts of the world. You can find birds from Malabar whistling thrush to painted storks. Famous ornithologist Lt. Dr. Salim Ali once said that if there were no lions here; Gir would be well-known as one of the best bird sanctuaries in western India.

Gir is home to birds like crested serpent eagle, endangered Bonelli's eagle, crested hawk-eagle, brown fish owl, Indian eagle-owl, rock bush-quail, Indian peafowl, brown-capped pygmy woodpecker, black-headed oriole, crested treeswift, Indian pitta and many more.



Gir National Park
Junagadh ●

Look out for: Malabar Whistling Thrush and Bonelli's Eagle

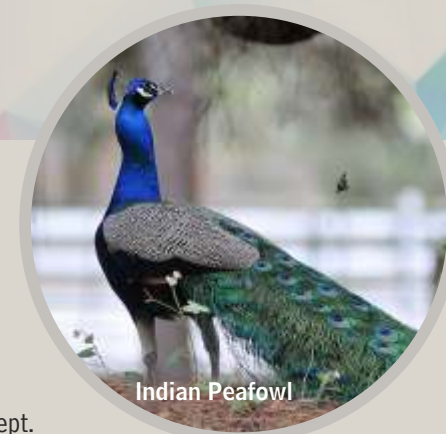
Be one of few to record: Painted Storks and Brown Fish Owl

Seasons: November to January

Recommended time in the field: 2 to 3 days

Accommodation: Private Hotels in Sasan Gir

Other attractions: Crocodile breeding farm, Maldhari habitas known as NESS, Ayurved Garden by Forest Dept.



Indian Peafowl

Wheatears

The One and Only Grassland National Park



Eurasian Marsh Harrier



Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar



Velavadar Bird Sanctuary is situated in Bhavnagar district of Gujarat at a distance of 144 km from Ahmedabad. It is considered as a unique grassland ecosystem and probably the only tropical grassland in India reckoned as a National Park.

The grassland will not only give you a glimpse of Blackbuck, but also the world's largest harrier roost – Montagu's Harrier, Pallid Harrier and Marsh Harrier can be viewed in abundance. It is a perfect site for birdwatchers to see tropical Indian grassland birds like Stolizka's Bushchat (winter), Rufous-tailed Lark, and many other birds.

You are very likely to sight many of the various migratory avian lives like extremely rare Lesser Florican, Harriers, larks, bushchats, wheatears, sandgrouse, Francolins, endangered species of vultures, types of sandgrouse, types of larks, types of harriers, falcon and various other species of birds.



Bhavnagar
Blackbuck Sanctuary
Velavadar

Look out for: Stolizka's Bushchat (winter), Rufous-tailed Lark and Wheatears

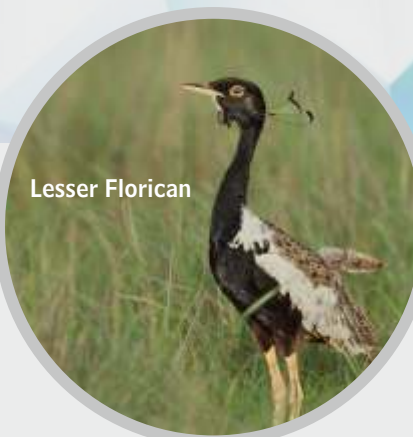
Be one of few to record: Lesser Florican, Harriers, Larks, Bushchats, Sandgrouse and Francolins

Seasons: Nov-end to Jan.

Recommended time in the field: 2 to 3 days

Accommodation: Resort at Velavadar. Hotels in Ahmedabad - 145km

Other attractions: Lothal (72 kms), Valabhipur (jain temples) 30 kms.



Lesser Florican



Different Sanctuaries with
Different Colors

