# Report of my Trip to Gujarat, India, Global Bird Watwcher Conference 2010

November 24th, 2010 to December 1st, 2010 Jonathan MARTINEZ

#### *Introduction:*

In mid July 2010, , I found in my email inbox an invitation from the « TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED » to participate in the Global Birdwatcher Conference 2010 in India Jamnagar city Gujarat province. The email accompanying the invitation read as follows: « We are pleased to inform you that the Government of Gujarat will be sponsoring your Air Tickets by Economy class from your nearest International Airport to Ahmedabad / Jamnagar and back, as well as the local hospitality during your stay and a familiarization tour of Gujarat. »

«Too nice to be true», I kept telling myself, and a week passed before I decided to reply. I had very low expectations convinced that it was just another spam!

I landed Ahmedabad in the early morning of November 24th, after a first flight from Hong Kong to Mumbai (Bombay).

The 3 day conference held in Jamnagar city was a good opportunity to meet birdwatchers from all over the world. Every continent was represented, with one birdwatcher flying from as far as Argentina!

Interesting presentations and conversations on the local bird populations and habitats in the conference centers were followed by actual birdwatching in the different but very attractive reserves around Jamnagar. I visited along with the other attendees Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary on 25th and 26th and Nayara Marine Reserve on 27th.

When the conference ended I took advadvantage of being in Gujarat and extended my trip by 3 days to 01st of December, to visit the famous Gir National Park, supporting the last wild population of Asiatic Lions. Unfortunatly my only contact with a Lion was one roaring sound coming from in front of us (the guide and me) as we were unable to locate the felid. The Jeep safari that could have given me much more chance to see those lions definitly rebuffed me: a bit too strict and too far from the feeling I am searching in birding in such a wondefull place. Walking in this dense Jungle was simply fantastic, looking into Leopard and Lion footprints, with great birds everywhere. I flew back to Mumbai from Ahmedabad on December 1st and reached HongKong International Airport on December 2nd, early in the morning. The total number of species that I encountered amounted to: 180 species

### Province prospected: Gujarat

### *Major localities*:

- Jamnagar city
- Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary : Unique wetland of about 6 sq KM, including fresh water lake, large creeks, saltpans, marshes, mangroves and scrubs.
- Nayara Marine Reserve: Coral reef, and saline wetland
- Sasan city
- Gir National Park: Jungle

## Acknowledgement:

First of all, I would like to thank the « Government of Gujarat », « Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited « and the « Marine National Park, Forest Department of Government of Gujarat » to have invited me to these events.

Thanks to Uttej Rao of « JN Rao Travel consultancy services » for all his work on the organisation of this huge project, for his kindness and disponibility during the events, and to Utpal Rao for the great organisation of my Gir National Park trip. I also would like to thank the « Parmar farmhouse » owner for his hospitality even I was not living in his hotel, and for accompanying me in the reserve. I highly recommend his farm house for anyone wishing to spend some time in the region.

#### Contact:

GBWC 2010 website: http://www.gbwc2010.org/

JN Rao Travel consultancy services: http://www.jnraoindia.com

Parmar Farm House: http://www.girprideresort.com

All my photos of this trip can be seen at http://www.tragopan-asie.com

### Global list of birds species encoutered

- Grey Francolin (Francolinus pondicerianus)
- 2 on 28 /11 on the way to Sasan
- Indian Peafowl (Pavo cristatus)

Fairly common, seen in most of the locations

- Lesser Wistling-duck (Dendrocygna javanica)

A group of about 50 birds seen on 25/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Comb Duck (Sarkidiornis melanotos)

A pair seen on 26/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Gadwall (Anas strepera)
- 2 birds noted on 26 and 27/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary
- Indian Spot-billed Duck (Anas poecilorhyncha)

Noted on 26 and 27/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Garganey (Anas querquedula)

Few birds noted on 25 and 26/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Northern Shoveler (Anas clypeata)
- 10 birds noted on 25 and 26/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary
- Common Pochard (Aythia ferina)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Tufted Duck (Aythia fuligula)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 at Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Yellow-crowned Woodpecker (Dendrocops mahrattensis)

A male seen on 30/11 at Gir national park

- Coppersmith Barbet (Megalaima haemacephala)

One adult seen on 30/11 at Gir national park

- Common Hoopoe (Upupa epops)

Noted in most of the locations

- Indian Roller (Coracias benghalensis)

Noted in most of the locations

- White-throated Kingfisher (Halcyon smyrnensis)

Noted in most of the locations

- Pied Kingfisher (Ceryle rudis)

Noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 25 and 26/11

- Green Bee-eater (Merops orientalis)

Noted in most of the locations

- Common Kingfisher (Alcedo atthis)

Noted in most of the locations

- Asian Koel (Eudynamis scolopacea)

Noted in Jamnagar, cars park of the conference center on 25 and 26/11, and in the plantation near Anil Farm, Gir National park on 28, 29 and 30/11

- Greater Cougal (Centropus sinensis)

Noted in most of the locations

- Rose-ringed Parakeet (Psittacula krameri)

Noted in Jamnagar, fairly common

- Plum-headed Parakeet (Psittacula cyanocephala)

2 birds on flight noted on 30/11 in Gir national park

- House Swift (Apus affinis)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Crested Treeswift (Hemiprocne coronata)

About 10 birds seen near Anil farm, Gir national park on 29 and 30/11

- Spotted Owlet (Athene brama)

1 adulte seen hunting at night on 25/11 on the cars park of the conference center in Jamnagar, and 1 bird seen on her tree hole on 29 and 30/11 in Gir National park

- Rock Pigeon (Columba livia)

Feral birds common in town and village in most of the location

- Laughing Dove (Streptopelia senegalensis)

Noted in most of the locations

- Eurasian Collared Dove (Streptopelia decaocto)

Noted in most of the locations

- Yellow-footed Green Pigeon (Treron phoenicoptera)

A group of about 30 birds seen along the road on 01/12 on the way back to Ahmedabad

- Sarus Crane (Grus antigone)

About 10 birds seen along the road on 24/11, on the way from Ahmedabad to Jamnagar

- Demoiselle Crane (Grus virgo)

About 200 birds seen on flight, near the Hotel in Jamnagar vinicity on 25 and 26/11

- Common crane (Grus grus)

Hundreds of birds seen in Jamnagar vinicity and Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25, 26 and 27/11

- Brown Crake (Amaurornis akool)

2 birds seen on 29 and 30/11, near Anil farm, Gir national park.

- White-breasted Waterhen (Amaurornis phoenicurus)

Noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11

- Purple Swamphen (Porphyrio porphyrio)

Few birds seen in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25 and 26/11

- Common Moorhen (Gallinula chloropus)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary and Jamnagar vinicity on 25, 26 and 27/11

- Common Coot (Fulica atra)

More than 1000 birds in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25 and 26/11

- Chesnut-bellied Sandgrouse (Pterocles orientalis)

2 birds seen on flight on 28/11 on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan

- Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) 1 bird seen in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11
- Whimbrel (Numenius phaeopus)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11 and Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Eurasian curlew (Numenius arquata)

1 bird seen in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11

- Common Redshank (Tringa totanus)

1 bird seen in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11

- Common Greenshank (Tringa nebularia)

1 bird seen in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11

- Green Sandpiper (Tringa ochropus)

Common, noted in many locations in suitable habitat

- Terek Sandpiper (Xenus cinereus)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Common Sandpiper (Actitis hypoleucos)

Common, noted in many locations in suitable habitat

- Sanderling (Calidris alba)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Little Stint (Calidris minuta)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Dunlin (Calidris alpina)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25 and 26/11 and Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Curlew Sandpiper (Calidris ferruginea)

About 50 birds seen on 25/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Ruff (Philomachus pugnax)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25/11

- Ruddy Turnstone (Arenaria interpres)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Pheasant-tailed Jacana (Hydrophasianus chirurgus)

3 birds noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 26/11

- Crab-plover (Dromas ardeola)

About 25 birds noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Black-winged Stilt (Himantopus himantopus)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25 and 26/11 and Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Pied avocet (Recurvirostra avosetta)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Grey Plover (Pluvilais squatarola)

1 bird seen on 25/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary and also noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Little ringed Plover (Charadrius dubius)

Common, noted in many locations in suitable habitat

- Greater Sand Plover (Charadrius leschenaultii)

Noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Heuglin's Gull (Larus heuglini)

Noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 25 and 26/11 and Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Pallas's Gull (Larus ichthyaetus)

3 birds noted in Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 26/11

- Brown-headed Gull (Larus brunnicephalus)

About 10 birds noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11

- Black-headed Gull (Larus ridibundus)

Noted in many locations

- Slender-billed Gull (Larus genei)

About 5 birds noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11 and also noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Gull-billed Tern (Gelochelidon nilotica)

Noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11, Khijadiya birds sanctuary on 26/11 and Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- River Tern (Sterna aurantia)

Few birds noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11 and 2 birds noted near Gir national park on 29/11

- Lesser Crested Tern (Sterna bengalensis)

3 birds noted in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Common Tern (Sterna hirundo)

Noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11

- Little / Saunders's Tern (Sterna albifrons/saundersi)

Few birds seen on 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary.

- Whiskered Tern (Chlidonias hybridus)

Many birds seen in Jamnagar vinicity on 26/11

- Osprey (Pandion haliaetus)

1 bird seen on 29/11 near Gir national park

- Black-shouldered Kite (Elanus caeruleus)

Noted in many locations

- Black Kite (Milvus migrans)

Common near town and village, a hugge group of about 50 birds eating some food given by local people in Sasan on 28/11

- Brahminy Kite (Haliastur indus)

2 birds on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity.

- Eurasian Marsh Harrier (Circus aeruginosus)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Pallid Harrier (Circus macrourus)

1 male on 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary and 1stCY in Nayara marine reserve on 27/11

- Shikra (Accipiter badius)

Noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity and 29/11 in Gir national park

- Besra (Accipiter virgatus)

Noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Oriental Honey-buzzard (Pternis ptilorhyncus)
- 2 birds seen on 28/11 on the way to Sasan and 1 bird seen exploring bushes on 29/11 near Anil farm, Gir national park.
- Booted eagle (Hieraaetus pennatus)

1 bird seen on 25/11 in Jamnagar, 1 bird seen on 26/11 in Khijadiya bird sanctuary and 1 bird seen on 29/11 near Gir national park

- Common Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus)

Noted in many locations

- Red-necked falcon (Falco chicquera)

1 bird seen on 25/11, on the way from Jamnagar to Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis)
- 2 birds seen on 25/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary
- Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus)

1bird seen on 25/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Darter (Anhinga melanogaster)
- 4 bird seen on 25/11 and about 10 on 26/11, in Khijadiya birds sanctuary
- Red-necked falcon (Falco chicquera)

1 bird seen on 25/11, on the way from Jamnagar to Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Little Cormorant (Phalacrocorax niger)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Indian Cormorant (Phalacrocorax fuscicollis)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Little Cormorant (Phalacrocorax niger)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Little Egret (Egretta garzetta)

Common

- Western Reef Heron (Egretta gularis)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary, on 27/11 in Nayara marine reserve and on 29/11 near Gir national park

- Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Purple Heron (Ardea purpurea)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Great Egret (Casmerodius albus)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Intermediate Egret (Mesophoyx intermedia)

Noted on 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Cattle Egret (Bulbucus ibis)

Common

- Little Cormorant (Phalacrocorax niger)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Indian Pond Heron (Ardeola grayii)

Common

- Black-crowned Night Heron(Nycticorax nycticorax) Noted on 29 and 30/11 near Anil Hotel, Gir national park
- Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus ruber)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary and on 27/11 in Nayara marine reserve

- Lesser Flamingo (Phoenicopterus minor)

Noted on 27/11 in Nayara marine reserve

- Glossy Ibis (Plegadis falcinellus)

4 birds seen on 25/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Black-headed Ibis (Threskiornis melanocephalus)

About 10 birds seen on 24/11, on the way from Ahmedabad to Jamnagar, noted in many other location

- Black Ibis (Pseudibis papillosa)

Noted in most of the locations

- Eurasian Spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia)

Noted on 25/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Great White Pelican (Pelecanus onocrolatus)

About 50 birds noted on 25/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary, alos noted in Nayara marine reserve.

- Dalmatian Pelican (Pelecanus crispus)

Noted on 27/11 in Nayara marine reserve.

- Painted Stork (Mycteria leucocephala)

Noted in most of the location

- Asian Openbill (Anastomus oscitans)

About 10 birds noted on 24/11 on the way from Ahmedabad to Jamnagar, also noted noted on 27/11 near Nayara marine reserve

- Black-necked Stork (Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus)

1 bird seen on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya bird sanctuary

- Rufous-tailed Shrike (Lanius isabellinus)

1 bird seen on 26/11 in Khijadiya birds sanctuary

- Bay-backed Shrike (Lanius vittatus)

Few birds noted on 28/11 on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan, and 1 bird noted on 29 an 30/11 in Gir national park.

- Long-tailed Shrike (Lanius schach)

Noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity and on 29 and 30 in Gir natinoal park

- Southern Grey Shrike (Lanius meridionalis)

1 bird of the ssp "lathora" seen on 28/11 on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan

- Rufous Treepie (Dendrocittaa vagabunda)

1 bird seen on 28/11 and a other one on 30/11 in Gir national park.

- House Crow (Corvus splendens)

Common

- Large-billed Crow (Corvus macrorhynchos)

Noted on a dead cow carcass on 29/11 in Gir national park and on many other locations

- Small Minivet (Pericrocotus cinnamomeus)

3 birds seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park.

- White-browed Fantail (Rhipidura aureola)

Few birds seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park

- Black Drongo (Dicrurus macrocercus) Fairly common, noted in most of the locations
- Common Iora (Aegithina tiphia) 1 bird seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park
- Common Woodshrike (Tephrodornis pondicerianus)

1 bird seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park

- Red-throated Flycatcher (Ficedula parva)

Common, noted in many locations in suitable habitat.

- Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (Cyornis tickelliae)

Few birds seen daily in Gir National Park (28, 29 and 30/11)

- Bluethroat (Luscinia svecica)
- 3 birds seen on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity.
- Indian Robin (Saxicoloides fulicata)
- 1 bird seen on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity, 1 on 28/11 on the way to Sasan, and daily noted in Gir National Park (28,29 and 30/11)
- Black Redstart (Phoenicurus ochruros)

1 male seen on 29/11 in Gir National Park

- Common Stonechat (Saxicola torquata)

Daily noted

- Variable Wheatear (Oenanthe picata)
- 1 bird seen on 28/11 on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan
- Desert Wheatear (Oenanthe deserti)
- 2 birds seen on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve.
- Isabelline Wheatear (Oenanthe isabellina)
- 1 bird seen on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve
- Brahminy Starling (Sturnus pagodarum)
- 2 birds seen on 29 and 30/11 near Anil Hotel, Gir National Park.
- Rosy Starling (Sturnus roseus)

Common, noted in many locations

- Common Myna (Acrodotheres tristis)

Common, noted in many locations

- Bank Myna (Acrodotheres ginginianus)

Common, noted in many locations

- Great Tit (Parus major)

Noted in many locations

- Dusky Crag Martin (Hirundo concolor)

Few birds noted on 25 and 26/11 in Jamanagar vinicity

- Barn Swallow (Hirundo rustica)

Common, noted in many locations

- Wire-tailed Swallow (Hirundo smithii)
- 5 birds seen on 25/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Red-rumped Swallow (Hirundo daurica) Noted in many locations
- Streak-throated Swallow (Hirundo fluvicola)

3 birds noted on 29/11 near Gir National Park.

- Red-whiskered Bulbul (Pycnonotus jocosus)

Noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- White-eared Bulbul (Pycnonotus leucotis)

Few birds noted on 25 and 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicty and Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary.

- Red-vented Bulbul (Pycnonotus cafer)

Fairly common, noted in most of the locations

- Grey-breasted Prinia (Prinia hodgsonii)

1 bird noted on 30/11 in Gir National Park

- Ashy Prinia (Prinia socialis)

2 birds noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Plain Prinia (Prinia inornata)

Common, noted in many locations

- Gracefull Prinia (Prinia gracilis)

Few birds noted on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve

- Oriental White-eye (Zosterops palpebrosus)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya Birds sanctuary

- Common Tailorbird (Orthotomus sutorius)

Common, noted in many locations

- Paddyfield Warbler (Acrocephalus agricola)

Noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity and Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary

- Blyth's Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus dumetorum)

Common, noted in many locations

- Clamorous Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus stentoreus)

Noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary and on 28/11 in Anil Farm, Gir National park

- Sykes's Warbler (Hippolais rama)

2 birds noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity, and 1 bird on 30/11 in Gir National Park

- Hume's Warbler (Phylloscopus humei)

1 bird heard on 28/11 in Anil Farm, Gir National Park

- Greenish Warbler (Phylloscopus trochiloides)

Few birds heard and seen on 28/11 in Anil Farm, Gir National Park

- Tawny-bellied Babbler (Dumetia hyperythra)

A group of about 10 birds seen on 29/11 in Gir National Park

- Common Babbler (Turdoides caudatus)

Fairly common, noted in Jamnagar vinicity on 25, 26 and 27/11

- Large Grey Babbler (Turdoides malcolmi)

1 bird briefly seen on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity and few birds noted on 28, 29 and 30/11 in Gir National Park.

- Indian Bushlark (Mirafra erythroptera 1 bird seen on 28/11, on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan
- Ashy-crowned Sparrow lark (Eremopterix grisea) About 5 birds seen on 29 and 30/11 in Gir National Park
- Greater Short-toed Lark (Calandrella brachydactyla)
- 2 birds seen on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve
- Sand Lark (Calandrella raytal)

A group of about 10 birds seen on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve.

- House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) Common, noted in most of the locations

- Chestnut-shouldered Petronia (Petronia xanthocollis) Small groups seen on 29 and 30/11 in Gir National Park

- Forest Wagtail (Dendronanthus indicus)
- 1 bird seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park
- White Wagtail (Motacilla alba)
- 3 of the ssp"dukhunensis" seen in Jamnagar hotel on 26/11
- Citrine Wagtail (Motacilla citreola)
- 1 bird seen on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity, and 2 birds seen on 29/11 near Anil Farm, Gir National Park
- Yellow Wagtail (Motacilla flava)

Noted in many location, huge group of more 100 birds seen on 29 and 30/11 near Anil farm, Gir National Park

- Grey Wagtail (Motacilla cinerea)
- 1 bird seen on 28/11 near Anil Farm, Gir National Park
- Tawny Pipit (Anthus campestris)
- 2 birds seen on 30/11 in Gir National Park
- Blyth's Pipit (Anthus godlewskii)

Few birds seen on 26/11 in Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary

- Red-throated Pipit (Anthus cervinus)

Few birds noted on 25 and 26/11 in Khijadiya Birds Sanctuary and also noted on 27/11 in Nayara Marine Reserve

- Baya Weaver (Ploceus philippinius)
- 1 bird seen on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity
- Indian Silverbill (Lonchura malabarica)
- 2 birds seen on 25/11 in Jamnagar
- Scaly-breasted Munia (Lonchura punctulata)

Few birds noted on 26/11 in Jamnagar vinicity

- Common Rosefinch (Carpodacus erythrinus)
- 2 males seen on 29/11, near Gir National Park
- Grey-necked Bunting (Emberiza buchanani)

1 male seen on 28/11 on the way from Jamnagar to Sasan

**Total** : 180 sp