



## Short Article

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Important Sighting of Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila Pomarina* from Thol Birds Sanctuary, Gujarat, India

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**Abstract:** This study reports an important sighting of the Lesser Spotted Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, from Thol Birds Sanctuary. The observation was made on 27 March 2026 in the eastern range of Bhimasan within the sanctuary. The bird was identified through distinct morphological features, including a hooked black bill, yellow cere, and white-spotted wing coverts. This record represents the 14th photographed sighting of the species in Gujarat and western India, highlighting its status as a rare winter visitor to the region. The study also discusses the species' taxonomy, habitat, migratory behavior, and previous records, emphasizing the ecological significance of Thol Birds Sanctuary for avian conservation.

**Keyword:** Lesser Spotted Eagle, Thol Birds Sanctuary, Winter visitor, Avian conservation, Wetland habitat, Gujarat bird records

## Classification:

**Species authority:** - C. L. Brehm, 1831

**Domain:** Eukaryote

**Genus:** - *Aquila*

**Family:** - Accipitridae

**Order:** - Falconiformes

**Class:** - Aves

**Phylum:** - Chordata

**Kingdom:** - Animalia

**Scientific name:** - *Aquila pomarina*

**Common name:** - Lesser Spotted Eagle

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## INTRODUCTION

The Lesser spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* are medium sized Eagle, smaller than Indian spotted and Greater spotted, but larger than Steppe and Indian Tawny Eagle, belonging to *Aquila* Genus and Accipitridae Family. Resident and breed in South-East, East, Central Europe, Turkey, South Caspian Sea area – **Banny**. During winter migration, Saharan Africa, South of Sudan to Eastern Angola, North-East Namibia, North Botswana and North-East South Africa – **Banny & del hoyo**.

The Lesser spotted Eagle *A. pomarina* and Indian spotted Eagle *A. hastata*, both races are different and separate species *A. clanga* - **Perry S. J., Clark W. S. & Prakash V.** are clear about taxonomy status of Lesser spotted and Indian spotted – **IBIS 144/4 pg-665-675**. They clear that the Lesser spotted and Indian spotted Eagle, both are different and separate species, some interesting handful records are available from Nal Sarovar, Wild Ass and Thol Birds Sanctuary. During this observation, RT has sighted 13 species of the Lesser spotted Eagle were recorded. On 24<sup>th</sup> Jan, 06 at Malika wetland, Dist. – Surendranagar, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 07, Vekariya wetland, Dist. - Ahmedabad, 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, 14, Kamijala wetland, Dist. - Ahmedabad, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb, 15, Sarad wetland,

Dist. - Surendranagar, 27<sup>th</sup> Jan, 19, Chhavli wetland, Dist. - Surendranagar, 11<sup>th</sup> Oct, 21, Chhavli wetland, Dist. - Surendranagar, 27<sup>th</sup> Oct, 21, Little Rann of Kachchh, Dist. - Surendranagar, 15<sup>th</sup> Dec, 21, Thol Sanctuary, Dist. - Gandhinagar, 21<sup>st</sup> Dec, 21, Little Rann of Kachchh, Dist. - Surendranagar, 27<sup>th</sup> Nov, 22, Bhaskarpura wetland, Dist. - Surendranagar, 18<sup>th</sup> Dec, 22, Vekariya village wetland, Dist. - Ahmedabad and 27<sup>th</sup> Dec, 22, Kamijala wetland, Dist. – Ahmedabad – ASVS, Vol. 6 - 2024.

On 27-3-26, I visited Thol Birds Sanctuary, located (23.1375° N, 72.4060° E), 31 km North-West from Ahmedabad city, 20 km South of Kadi Taluka, elongated Ahmedabad-Thol and Sanand-Kadi road. Site is largest human-made water body with muddy lagoon, declared as Sanctuary in Nov. 1988, and Ramsar site on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, due to high conversation value, covered by *C. decidua*, *melia azadirachta*, *Salvadora pesic*, *F. bengaiensis*, *poro perosopis spicigera*, *S. nigrum*, *H. integrifolia*, *C. Capparis*, *Acacia arabica* and thorny scrub mixed dry deciduous forest.

At roughly 11:00 AM, at Eastern range of bhimasan, sighted and photographed Eagle like bird perched in grassy patch, identified by my long-time observation on Waders, was Lesser spotted Eagle *A.*

pomarina. Has a Hooked black bill, cere and cutting edge of bill yellow extend up to eye ring, white spotted greater and lesser coverts, long primary extend upto tail tip.



Birds are found in hunts, quarters open areas and soars for small animals. Somewhat gregarious on migration – **Rasmussen**. Present observation was also carried out surrounding suggested by Rasmussen. This was 14<sup>th</sup> photographed record for Gujarat and Western India. All are found in mashes. 14<sup>th</sup> photographic record with this image show that birds are winter visitor, but nobody took interest in this bird. Ali doesn't mention in *The Birds of Gujarat, Part I – J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Society 1954* and *Part II – J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Society 1955*. Also, doesn't mention in *The Book of Indian birds, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. 2002*. Dharammkumarsinhji, 1955, not came across the species in Saurashtra. Naoroji 2006, had not recorded in Gujarat. Grimmett 2011 & Rasmussen 2012, doesn't showed Gujarat in distribution map.

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