



Published by
www.researchtrend.net

Records of White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) from Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan

Vivek Sharma*, Neeraj Kumar Lawaniya, Divaker Yadav,
Ashish Kumar Jangid, Omveer Dhawal, Omveer Yadav,
Surendera Sharma and K.K. Sharma

Biodiversity Research Laboratory, Department of Zoology, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati
University, Ajmer 305 009 Rajasthan, India

*Corresponding author: vivekherps@gmail.com

| Received: 18 November 2015 | Accepted: 26 December 2015 |

ABSTRACT

Sighting record of White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) from Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary seems to be first record, and most north-western limits of distribution of concerning species from Rajasthan. It was the first confirmed photographic record from Aravalli foothills.

Key Words: *Chrysocolaptes festivus*, Aravalli foothills, Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan.

Birds are designated as the glorified reptiles; they showed their presence at nearly all habitats of the world. Birds are the pivotal components of various food chains and food webs thus having great importance as biological indicators of that particular habitat or ecosystem. Indian subcontinent is represented by the 1313 species of birds (Grimmett et al. 2011).

Forest habitat is one of the most endowed habitats in terms of floral and faunal diversity. That is the major factor that's why most of protected areas (National Parks, Sanctuaries and bio reserves) were constituted at forest areas. Rajasthan is having good numbers of protected areas including four National Parks. Todgarh Raoli wildlife sanctuary is one of them, is situated at south-western part of the Rajasthan province. This sanctuary is situated at Aravalli Mountain ranges and endowed with all the characteristics of habitat and also the floral and faunal components. Todgarh Raoli wildlife sanctuary is situated (73° 40' – 74° 10' E and 25° 20' – 26° 00' N) and it extends nearly of an area about 495 km². The sanctuary shares the boundaries of three districts: Rajasamand, Pali, and Ajmer. 142 bird's species have been reported from

the Todgarh Raoli wildlife sanctuary area (Koli 2014). This sanctuary was classified under tropical dry deciduous type of forest cover (Champion & Seth, 1968).

We present here the first photographic record of the White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) from the Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary (extends between 26°27' North latitude and 74°42' East longitude) and seems to be most north-western limits of distribution of concerning species from Rajasthan (Fig. 1 & 2). Woodpeckers belong to family Picidae and subfamily Picinae. Family Picidae represented by nearly 215 species composed in 30 genera around the world. Indian subcontinent is having presence of nearly 35 species of woodpeckers (Grimmett et al. 2011). *Chrysocolaptes festivus* is known with various vernacular name viz. White-naped woodpecker (Grimmett et al. 1999, 2011; Kazmierczak & Perlo 2006; Norman, 2014); Black-backed flame back and White-naped flame back (Manakandan et al. 2011); Black shouldered woodpecker (Salim 2012); Black-backed or black-rumped woodpecker (Norman 2014).



Figs 1 & 2: White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) (Female) from the Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary (Photos by Dr. Vivek Sharma)

During the random visits to the sanctuary during the period of 2013-2015 we documented the White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) three times at the sanctuary area. But we succeeded only once to photograph the individual species with key diagnostic features. Overall five individuals (one male and four females) were seen and they often played hide and seek under leaves during the observations. These were sighted on the scattered forest cover nearby the sanctuary boundary once and in the sanctuary area twice. The individuals were photographed for further identification process with the help of High Resolution Digital Cameras (Sony DX 50 and Canon D70) and the identification was confirmed by using various field guides and diagnostic keys Grimmett et al. (1999, 2011); Kazmierczak & Perlo (2006); Manakandan et al. (2011); Norman (2014) and Salim (2012). From these observations we confirmed the sightings of White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) from the Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary.

Species Description: This flameback is a species associated with open forest and scrub with some trees. Length is nearly 29cm (12 ½ in), *Chrysocolaptes festivus festivus* (Boddaert) is a medium sized woodpeckers rather like the golden backed on a casual glimpse. It is having a long and straight bill. Nasal ridges were strongly developed, commencing at base of bill and about half-way between commissure and culmen. Nostrils are long and expended. Feet exceptionally strong with the hallux well developed claws long and strong. Outer tail feathers slightly exceeding coverts in light. Males were having crimson crest. Sides of hind neck white, running down to unit in a prominent white V on middle of upper back lower back and tail black. Upperparts of wings are golden olive. Below, cheeks, chin, throat and fore neck fulvous white with five narrow longitudinal black streaks. Rest of under parts buffy white, the feathers edged with black forming a bold scaly pattern on breast. 5 striped pattern on the white cheeks and throat (V. Black streaked with white in golden back wood pecker is diagnostic. Female having nearly similar characteristics to male but crown and crest are golden yellow instead of crimson. Young (immature) crown and crest flame coloured in male, black spotted with white in females. Iris is creamy orange to crimson (brown in young birds); circum orbital skin pale flesh colour. Bill colour ranges from slaty or brownish black. Legs and feet were greenish plumbeous, claws are horny and brown. Mainly feeds on chiefly ants and grubs of wood boring beetles (Grimmett et al. 1999, 2011; Kazmierczak & Perlo 2006; Manakandan et al. 2011; Norman, 2014; Salim, 2012). Breeds during the November to march which varying according to habitat and elevation. Nest site selections as like the typical wood packer hole

chiselled out in a tree stem between 2 and 7 meters from the ground. Holes usually distinctive pear or horse collar shaped rather than circular as in most wood peckers, measuring c. 11*8 cm in diameter and 25-30 cm deep.

Previous Known Distribution and Habitat: It is resident and widely but sparsely distributed in Indian Subcontinent. Practically all peninsular India with the exception of Sindh, western Rajasthan, Kutch and most of Saurashtra in the west, and Assam and Bangladesh in the east, thus roughly between longitudes 72° and 88° E and south of latitude 28° N. Inhabited into the deciduous forest at low country and foothills with scrub and scattered trees.

New Habitat Description:

This flameback is a species associated with open forest and scrub with some trees. Todgarh Raoli wildlife sanctuary situated at south-western part of the Rajasthan province. The forests of the Todgarh Raoli wildlife sanctuary is tropical dry deciduous type, dominated by *Anogeissus acuminata*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Boswellia serrata*, *Butea monosperma*, *Acacia senegal*, *Acacia nilotica*, *Acacia catechu*, *Lannea coromandelica*, *Euphorbia nivulia*, *mitragyna parvifolia*, *Ziziphus nummularia*, and *Dendrocalamus strictus* (Champion & Seth, 1968). This sanctuary is situated at Aravalli Mountain ranges in between the 73° 40' – 74° 10' E and 25° 20' – 26° 00' N geographical areas and covers nearly area about 495 km². The sanctuary shares the boundaries of three districts: Rajasamand, Pali, and Ajmer.

From these observations we confirmed the sightings of White-naped Woodpecker (*Chrysocolaptes festivus*) from the Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary.

REFERENCES

- Champion HG and Seth SK. 1968. A revised study of the forest types of India. New Delhi, India: Government of India: 404.
- Grimmett R, Inskipp C, Inskipp T. 1999. Pocket guide to the Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press: 50-51.
- Grimmett R., Inskipp C, Inskipp T. 2011. Birds of Indian Subcontinent. Oxford University Press, 2nd edition: 262-263.
- Kazmierczak K and Perlo BV. 2000. A field guide to the birds of India (Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives). Om Book Services: 176-178.
- Koli VK. 2014. Diversity and status of avifauna in Todgarh-Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan, India, J Asia-Pacific Biodiv (7): 401 – 407.
- Manakandan R, Daniel JC, Bhopale N, 2011. Birds of the Indian subcontinent (A field guide).

- Bombay Natural History Society, Oxford University Press: 202-203.
- Norman A. 2014. Birds of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka. Collins field guide, William Collins Publisher: 168-169.
- Salim A. 2012. The book of Indian Birds. Bombay Natural History Society, Oxford University Press: 201.