



Unusual nesting location of Red-vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) at Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary

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The Red-vented Bulbul, *Pycnonotus cafer* is an Asian passerine bird and one of the globally successful invasive Sp. (Thibault *et al.* 2018). Red-vented Bulbul belongs to Pycnonotidae family which is known for its adaptation to new conditions. The Red-vented Bulbul is further divided in to eight subspecies and also classified as one of the 100 invasive species on the earth (Nowakowski and Dulisz, 2019). Red-vented Bulbul is a local and habitual breeder (during summer, May-August) in the Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary which is one of the popular hotspots of Gujarat for bird sighting. Nest building and nest location play a very crucial role in the lifecycle of any bird. The nest site and the location are influenced by several factors such as the risk of predators, availability of vegetation, nesting material and food. Nesting ecology and behaviour of Red-vented Bulbul were well studied by two major groups in India Chisty *et al.* (2020) and Rao *et al.* (2013). Chisty and co-workers (2020) observed 38 nests and confirmed that Red-vented bulbul generally selects 1-9 m height for the building of a nest. Nest building was exceptionally observed at 12 m height in the urban areas due to the unavailability of proper location. Rao and co-worker (2013) observed a total of 28 nests in two breeding seasons and confirmed that Red-vented bulbul does not prefer low height such as <1 m.

In the present study, an unusual nest altitude of the Red-vented Bulbul was observed at Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary. Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary is situated between 23.25 to 23.50N and 72.500 to 72.75E (Desai *et al.* 2018). Thol Lake is man-made and initially prepared for the irrigation purposes, further declared as sanctuary due to reach in avifauna and floristic diversity (Vyas and Patel, 2015). The observation was done by



Image 1: Location of Red-vented Bulbul nest at Thol Lake Sanctuary



Nikon A211 binocular and further photographic evidence collected by the Canon 90D with 55-250 mm lens. Video graphic evidence was collected by the Cannon 35X point shoot camera. All the observations (number of observation 10) were done from the minimum 10 ft. distance to avoid human interference to the breeding pair and their chicks. The location of the study site was 23°8.334N, 72°23.578E. As shown in Image 1 and Video file 1 <https://youtu.be/mNm8q2AuBWk> nesting was observed under 2ft. height.

The red round in Image 1 represents the location of a nest. Image 2 represents the nest with four chicks. This is the unique and first report of the nesting at such a low altitude to the best of the author's knowledge and literature survey.



Image 2: Successful breeding and developed chicks in the nest

Every species have a specific shape and site location according to need. Nesting sites may vary due to habitat loss and urbanization (Chisty et al. (2020). But, changing in location or altitude is very rare in the sanctuary areas as such areas fulfil all the necessary requirements for the successful breeding of habitual birds. Further, detailed observation of such

location and nesting ecology need to be studied to observe changes in the local ecosystem and bird behaviour.

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