

First photographic record of Chinese Rubythroat from Kalagarh Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand

Chinese Rubythroat *Calliope tschebaiewi* are found throughout China (Northwestern Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, northwestern Yunnan), extreme eastern Kashmir, southern, eastern, northeastern Tibetan Plateau, Myanmar and non-breeding in the foothills of eastern Nepal to northeastern India, and northeastern Bangladesh (del Hoyo et al. 2020).

The male Chinese Rubythroat is grey on top with a black chest, a white belly and a brilliant red neck. Also, the white panels and margins on the black tail, the white 'moustache' stripe and the white eyebrows are clearly visible. A duller, colder grey-brown colour with a white belly and throat characterizes the female. It resembles the Himalayan Rubythroat. It breeds in open alpine and subalpine regions with scattered rocks and brush, the ideal environment is often higher than the Himalayan lowland brush during the winter. The song is composed of a series of loud, rich warbles



Chinese Rubythroat (Male). © Rajiv Bisht.



Chinese Rubythroat (Male) taking a dip in river Mandala. © Rajiv Bisht.

that are less diverse and on an average shorter than those of the Himalayan Rubythroat (Grimmett et al. 2016).

The Corbett National Park (CNP), which also contains the Kalagarh Tiger Reserve

(KTR), is located in the Pauri Garhwal District of Uttarakhand. KTR is the new name for the CNP's northern region. On 5 November 2022, we went birdwatching in the Pauri Garhwal District's Rathuwadhab Village (KTR).

At around 1525 h, we heard a bird singing. A Rubythroat was perched on some rocks adjacent to the Mandaal River bed as we drew nearer to the singing bird. The bird dove into the river a few times. *Lantana camara* and *Ziziphus nummularia* are the dominant plants in the region. The breast band of the bird was black and it had a stunning red throat. Its upper sections were brownish-grey, and it featured a noticeable white supercilium and moustachial stripe. A few photographs were taken of the bird, which seemed a little different from the typical Himalayan Rubythroat that is rather abundant in that region and we confirmed the identification from Grimmett et al. (2016). We again visited the same place on the 18 December 2022 and noticed one female near the same river bed. Chinese Rubythroat was last noticed in Forest Research Institute in 2020 (eBird 2023). This is the second record from the state and the first record from Pauri Garhwal District.

References

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