

Record of Siberian Rubythroat from the Palamau Region, Jharkhand



Siberian Rubythroat
in Palamau region of
Jharkhand, India.
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Palamau District, located in the western part of the Chotanagpur Plateau, has historically lacked proper documentation of its avian diversity (Rawat 2013), primarily due to prolonged socio-political disturbances, especially the Naxalite insurgency, since the 1980s (Iqbal & Ilyas 2023). Nevertheless, the Chotanagpur region, with its mosaic of forests, grasslands, and plateau landscapes, represents an ecologically diverse zone that holds significant potential for avian biodiversity studies. Despite its importance, the region remains poorly explored ornithologically, thereby warranting systematic surveys to document its full avifaunal richness (Islam & Rahmani 2004; Chowdhury 2020). Moreover, certain areas may harbour high avian diversity

owing to their habitat heterogeneity and ecological significance, yet they continue to be underrepresented in biodiversity assessments because of limited field surveys and a lack of systematic documentation (Islam & Rahmani 2004).

On 15 March 2025, during the early spring season, a Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope* was photographed by the second author in the Palamau region (24.1500° N, 84.2948° E; 298 m) at approximately 0700 h, near a small water pond on the ground. The individual was observed for about ten minutes at the same location, allowing for clear photographic documentation. Subsequently, the bird

disappeared and was not sighted again in the area. Morphologically, it exhibited a prominent white supercilium, a vivid red throat bordered by contrasting black and white, and light brown upperparts. These features clearly distinguish it from the Himalayan Rubythroat *Calliope pectoralis pectoralis*, which lacks the white sub-moustachial stripe and has grey, rather than brown, upperparts, and from the Chinese Rubythroat *Calliope pectoralis tschebaiewi*, which is grey above and characterised by distinct white tips and bases on the tail-features not observed in the individual recorded.

The Siberian Rubythroat breeds across the central Ural Mountains and Siberia, extending eastward to Anadyr, Kamchatka, the Commander Islands, and south to northern Mongolia, North Korea, northern Japan, the Kuril Islands, and parts of central China including northeastern Qinghai, southwestern Gansu, and northern Sichuan. As a long-distance migrant, it winters across southern and southeastern Asia, including Taiwan and the Philippines (Collar 2020). During migration, the species moves through Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan; western populations are believed to initially move eastward to avoid major mountain ranges before turning south. In the eastern Himalayan foothills, the Siberian Rubythroat occurs as a passage migrant and winter visitor from September to April and may be observed at elevations up to 4,000 m (Ali & Ripley 1987; Grimmett et al. 2011; Collar 2020). Furthermore, in Jharkhand, this species has previously been sighted in Hazaribagh, c. 188 km from Palamau (Tiga 2024), c. 180 km from Ranchi (Kumar 2024), and from

East Singhbhum, c. 370 km (Pati 2024), and is reported as a winter migrant in the east Singhbhum region (Grimmett et al. 2011; SolB 2023). However, to date, there are no records of its occurrence in the Palamau region. Therefore, this observation on 15 March 2025 represents the first documented record of Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope* for Palamau District, underscoring the need for further systematic avian surveys in this under-explored landscape.

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