

Birds of Kaiga

A Field Guide For Birds Around Kaiga



एनपीसी आइएल
NPCIL

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Message from Site Director



Situated amidst the sylvan surroundings of the Western Ghats is the tiny hamlet of Kaiga, where four of India's most advanced nuclear power reactors operate silently, safely & reliably to meet the growing electricity demands of the country. These four reactors have generated more than 66300 million Units of electricity since the first synchronization to the southern grid.

These nuclear reactors with their exclusion boundary of about 15.2 sq.Km offer a safe haven for various fauna and flora. Kaiga Generating Station has been at the forefront of environmental protection and has voluntarily initiated various programs. Large scale afforestation in Chamarajanagar division, establishment of a 1500 Sq.m butterfly garden within the Kaiga site, study of Avi-Fauna by organizing Kaiga Bird Marathon are some of the pioneering efforts towards environmental protection undertaken by NPCIL, Kaiga. All the four units of Kaiga are also certified for IS/ISO 14001:2004 meaning that these reactors comply with the strict international environmental protection standards.

The scientific study of avi-fauna by Kaiga bird marathon has established that the number of avian species in and around Kaiga is increasing every year. The thriving bird population in the region, with Kaiga being home to more than 50 percent of the total bird species identified in the Western Ghats, has scientifically established that the environment around Kaiga still remains pristine and no harm has been done to the environment during the last 16 years of operation of these nuclear reactors.

The environmental stewardship committee of KGS which is responsible for organizing of Bird Marathon is bringing out this book on Birds of Kaiga which is a logical conclusion to the efforts of the last seven years and is truly commendable.

I hope that this book serves as a reference to all bird lovers and generates enthusiasm towards bird watching and environmental protection.

With best wishes

H N Bhat

Site Director, Kaiga Site

Plant-Site

Date: January 16, 2017

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Preface



This field guide is the fruitful outcome of the Kaiga Bird Marathon (KBM) - an innovative way for bird survey which at the same time caused awareness among the general public of Kaiga region and about the rich avifauna surrounding the Kaiga Generating Station. KBM was started in the year 2011 and has been well received by the general public as well as bird watching fraternity in Karnataka and its neighbouring states.

Kaiga Bird Marathon was devised by the Station Environmental Stewardship Programme (ESP), an employee volunteership programme for environmental protection and conservation under NPCIL leadership, so far has succeeded in documenting 276 species of birds- local, endemic and migratory - around Kaiga Generating Station. This amountsto more than 50 percent of species found in entire Western Ghats thus bringing hitherto an unknown part of Western Ghats into the conservation network. We are glad that NPCIL is perhaps the only Corporate doing such an activity in Karnataka State.

Nuclear Power Generation is a sustainable development activity and is harmonious with nature. The well protected, high security ~2Km of exclusion zone around a nuclear power plant is a safe haven for flora and fauna. Owing to its unique location, KGS looks like a plant in the middle of a national park. Besides birds, Exclusion zone of KGS also thrives with wild life like tiger, leopards and King-cobra etc. Therefor conservation of flora and fauna around KGS is a natural responsibility of station ESP which it has voluntarily taken up.

I thank members of ESP and other volunteers who have helped in realizing this idea by contributing photographs and information of the bird species. Hope this book will be very helpful for children, students and enthusiastic adults alike for developing the hobby of bird watching.

T. Premkumar

CE (E&US), KGS, Chairman, ESP

Plant-Site

Date: January 16, 2017



Photographed by : S.P. Kamat

Common Name : Indian Peafowl
Scientific Name : *Pavo cristatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Indian Pea Fowl does not need an introduction. This magnificent bird has religious and mythological importance in India. It is the national bird of India

The male peafowl is predominantly blue with a fan-like crest of spatula-tipped wire-like feathers and is best known for the long train made up of elongated upper-tail covert feathers which bear colourful eyespots. These stiff feathers are raised into a fan and quivered in a display during courtship. Females lack the train, and have a greenish lower neck and duller brown plumage.

The Indian peafowl lives mainly on the ground in open forest or on land under cultivation where they forage for berries, grains but also prey on snakes, lizards, and small rodents. Their loud calls make them easy to detect, and in forest areas often indicate the presence of a predator such as a tiger. Nearly seven different call variants have been identified in the peacocks apart from six alarm calls that are commonly produced by

both sexes. They forage on the ground in small groups and usually try to escape on foot through undergrowth and avoid flying, though they fly to cross a river or into tall trees to roost.

The Indian peafowl is a resident breeder across the Indian subcontinent and is found in the drier lowland areas of Sri Lanka. In South Asia, it is found mainly below an altitude of 1,800 meters and in rare cases seen at about 2,000 meters. It is found in moist and dry-deciduous forests, but can adapt to live in cultivated regions and around human habitations and is usually found where water is available. In many parts of northern India, they are protected by religious practices and will forage around villages and towns for scraps.

Peacocks are polygamous, and the breeding season is spread out but appears to be dependent on the rains. Nesting is started from the month of January to October.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Indian Roller**
Scientific Name : *Coracias benghalensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Indian roller is a stocky bird about 26–27 cm long and can only be confused within its range with the migratory European roller. The breast is brownish and not blue as in the European Roller. The crown and vent are blue. The primaries are deep purplish blue with a band of pale blue. The tail is sky blue with a terminal band of Prussian blue and the central feathers are dull green. The neck and throat are purplish lilac with white shaft streaks. The bare patch around the eye is ochre in colour. The three forward toes are united at the base. Rollers have a long and compressed bill with a curved upper edge and a hooked tip. The nostril is long and exposed and there are long rictal bristles at the base of the bill.

The Indian roller is distributed across Asia, from West Asia (Iraq), through the Indian Subcontinent (including Sri Lanka and the islands of Lakshadweep and Maldiv Islands) into Southeast Asia.

The main habitat is cultivation, thin forest and grassland. They are often seen perched on roadside electric wires.

The Indian roller has been chosen as the state bird by the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka and Telangana.

Food: Beetles, grasshoppers and crickets. The feeding behaviour of this roller and habitat usage are very similar to that of the black drongo. During summer, they may also feed late in the evening and make use of artificial lights and feed on insects attracted to them. They are attracted to swarms of winged termites.

Nesting season – chiefly March to July.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Malabar Pied-Hornbill**

Scientific Name : *Anthracoceros coronatus*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Irpage

Malabar Pied Hornbill is a large Hornbill having size 65cm in length can easily confuse with its eastern cousin Oriental Pied Hornbill. It has mainly black plumage, apart from its white belly, throat patch, tail sides and trailing edge to the wings. The bill is yellow with a large, mainly black casque. Females have white orbital skin, which the males lack. Juveniles have no casque

In India, it distributed in Western Ghats and central India and east to Bihar and Orissa.

Sociable, mainly frugivorous and also eats lizards, mice and baby birds.

Figs contribute 60-75% of its diet and also feed on fruits of *Strychnos nux-vomica*, which are toxic to many vertebrates

Nesting season – March to June, and is of the general pattern as in other hornbills.

KGS Exclusion zone is a safe haven for this Hornbill, often observed a flock of 40-50 perching on fig trees. Frequency of encountering this species in Plant-site and Township also increased for the last ten years



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Indian Great Hornbill**

Scientific Name : *Buceros bicornis*

Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon

Place : Hartuga

This Hornbill is the larger member of the Hornbill family, having size 95-130cm long, with a wing span of 152cm and a weight of 2.30-4Kg. Female is smaller than male. Its bill large, horn shaped yellow and black with concave topped casque, u-shaped when viewed from front. Face, back, underparts and wings black. Wings with two white bars. Neck, lower abdomen, tail-coverts and tail white. Tail with a black sub-terminal band. Feathers of neck and wing bands often tinged yellow from being smeared with exudation of tail gland.

Male shows red iris, whitish in females with smaller bill.

Resident and locally migratory from about Khandala near Mumbai to the extreme south to Western Ghats. Himalayas from Kumaon eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh and hills south of the Brahmaputra. Bangladesh.

Its habitat is evergreen and moist-deciduous forests from plains to 1500 m in the Western Ghats; 2000m in the Himalayas. It occasionally descends to the ground. They can be seen in pairs or small groups, large gatherings at abundantly fruiting trees like fig. They often roost communally in congregations of over 100. Flight is laboured and noisy, heard at considerable distances.

Foods chiefly wild figs, drupes and fruited animals such as lizards, snakes nestlings etc.

Nesting season – February to April. Nest in the hollow of a giant forest trees. The female hornbill builds a nest in the hollow of a large tree trunk, sealing the opening with a plaster made up mainly of feces. She remains imprisoned there, relying on the male to bring her food, until the chicks are half developed. During this period the female undergoes a complete moult. The young chicks have no feathers and appear very plump. The mother is fed by her mate through a slit in the seal.



Photographed by : Anil Vincent

Common Name : **Malabar Grey Hornbill**
Scientific Name : *Ocyeros griseus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

Unlike other Hornbills this brownish slaty grey Hornbill lack casque. It is endemic to the Western Ghats and associated hills of Southern India. They are found in dense forests, rubber, and arecanut and coffee plantations.

It is having size of 45 to 58cm in length and males have a reddish bill with a yellow tip, while females have a plain yellow bill with black at the base of the lower mandible.

Being large frugivores, they play as seed dispersal agents for many species of fruit bearing forest trees. They also eat insects, rodents and reptiles etc.

The breeding season is January to May. They nest in cavities of large trees. The nest holes were usually found in large trees with hollows caused by heart-rot, where a branch is broken off.

In a study conducted in Mudumalai area, it was observed that three species of trees. i.e. Lagerstroemia microcarpa, Terminalia Billerica and Terminalia crenulata were holding nearly 70% of the nests in that area.



Photographed by : Jithendra Singh

Common Name : **Indian Gray Hornbill**
Scientific Name : *Ocyeros birostris*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This medium-sized Hornbill having size of 61cm in length, is distributed throughout India except Malabar, parts of Rajasthan and Assam. It has grey feathers all over the body with a light grey or dull white belly, black-white curved bill surmounted by casque and long gradual tail. The casque is smaller in female. Juveniles lack the casque.

It commonly found among fig-laden banyan and peepal trees along roadsides or near villages, feeding in company with green pigeons and other frugivorous birds. Flight is typical of the hornbills—laboured, undulating and noisy.

Food is mainly fruit but also large insects, lizards, mice, and reptile and has even been reported once for lifting rose-ringed parakeet chicks from the nest. They are known to feed on the fruits of Yellow Oleander (*Thevetia peruviana*) which are known to be toxic to many vertebrates.

They indulge in various social activities, including bill-grappling and aerial jousting.

Nesting season – April to June and nest, like other hornbills they nest in tree hollows on tall trees.

There was a curious report of a pair nesting in a box kept for other birds, from Pune, Maharashtra



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Oriental Honey Buzzard**
AN: Crested Honey Buzzard

Scientific Name : *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

It is a medium sized bird of prey, measures 50 to 70cms in size. The best features to identify this bird are its pigeon like head and long neck. It frequently hunts honey combs, feeds on honey and other organisms such as larvae of wild bees, wasps, small mammals, lizards and birds.

Resident and winter migrant though out the subcontinent.

Nesting season – April to June except in south India where it is February.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Egyptian Vulture**
Scientific Name : *Neophron percnopterus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Egyptian Vulture, also called the White scavenger vulture or Pharaoh's chicken is widely distributed, found from southwestern Europe and northern Africa to India. It feeds mainly on carrion but occasionally will prey on small mammals, birds and reptiles. It also has the habit of coprophagy (consumption of feces of ungulate) which helps it to obtain carotenoid pigments responsible for their bright yellow and orange facial skin.

The breeding season is in spring.

Egyptian vulture populations have declined in most parts of its range. In Europe and most of the Middle East, populations in 2001 were half of those from 1980. In India, the decline has been rapid with a 35% decrease each year since 1999. In 1967–70, the area around Delhi was estimated to have 12,000–15,000 of these vultures, with an average density of about 5 pairs per 10 km². The exact cause of the decline is not known, but has been linked with the use of the NSAID Diclofenac, which has been known to cause death in Gyps vultures

The southern Indian temple at Thirukalukundram near Chengalpattu is famed for a pair of this bird that visits the temple. These birds were ceremonially fed by the temple priests and arrived before noon to feed on offerings made from rice, wheat, ghee, and sugar.



Photographed by : **Ganesh Hegde**

Common Name : **Himalayan Griffon**
Scientific Name : *Gyps himalayensis*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Rare Vagrant
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The species is found mainly in the higher regions of the Himalayas, the Pamirs, and Kazakhstan and on the Tibetan Plateau, with northwestern limits of the breeding range being in Afghanistan and southern limits in Bhutan. Juvenile birds may however disperse further south and vagrants have been recorded in Thailand, Burma, Singapore and Cambodia.

The Himalayan vulture perches on crags, favorite sites showing white marks from regular defecation. They tend to not range below an elevation of 1,215m. Himalayan vultures often bask in the sun on rocks. This vulture makes a rattling sound when descending on a carcass and can grunt or hiss at roosts or when feeding on carrion. On the Tibetan Plateau 64% of their diet is obtained from dead domestic yak. They disdain offal, which is readily eaten by other vultures, and instead typically eat only fleshy parts. Historically, Himalayan vultures regularly fed on human corpses

left out on Celestial burial grounds (Tibetan and Parsi Zoroastrian practice of sky burial).

Himalayan vultures are susceptible to toxicity induced by diclofenac, a drug whose residues in domestic animal carcasses has led to rapid declines in populations of other Gyps vultures across Asia. The Himalayan griffon vulture populations have however not shown signs of rapid decline although reductions in nesting birds have been noted in some parts of its range in Nepal.

A juvenile was spotted at Halaga Ulaga, during the Kaiga Bird Marathon on 10th January 2016. The first report of this species from North Karnataka.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Cotton Pygmy-goose**
Scientific Name : *Nettapus coromandelianus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

It is a small perching duck having size of 30-37cm, breeds in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, south-east Asia and south to Northern Australia.

Male has black neck collar, white wing bar, whitish head, neck and under parts. They have Glossy black above. Females are dull brown above and have a dark stripe through eyes.

This is an abundant species common in Asia. Found on all still freshwater lakes, rain filled ditches, inundated paddy fields and irrigation tanks etc.

Nesting season – July to September. Its nest is a natural hole in tree-trunk standing in or near water, sometimes lined with grass, rubbish and feathers.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Indian Spot billed - Duck

Scientific Name : *Anas poecilorhyncha*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kerwadi

These are mainly grey ducks with a paler head and neck and a black bill tipped bright yellow. The wings are whitish with black flight feathers below, and from above show a white-bordered green. The male has a red spot on the base of the bill, which is absent or inconspicuous in the smaller but otherwise similar female. The male does not have an eclipse plumage. Juveniles are browner and duller than adults. The legs and feet are bright orange.

This duck is resident in the southern part of its range from Pakistan and India to southern Japan, but the northern subspecies, the eastern spot-billed duck (*A. p. zonorhyncha*), is migratory, wintering in Southeast Asia. Some individuals of the nominate population may also move. A bird ringed at Bharatpur in Rajasthan on 5 December 1969 was recovered near Novosibirsk in August 1970. It is quite gregarious outside the breeding season and forms small flocks.

It is a bird of freshwater lakes and marshes in fairly open country and feeds by dabbling for plant food mainly in the evening or at night. The breeding season varies with rainfall and water condition but is July to September in northern India and November to December in southern India. It nests on the ground in vegetation near water, and lays 8-14 eggs.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Teal**
AN: Eurasian Teal
Scientific Name : *Anas creca*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Common Teal is a common and widespread duck which breeds in temperate Eurasia and migrates south in winter.

It is a highly gregarious duck outside the breeding season and can form large flocks. It is commonly found in sheltered wetlands and feeds on seeds and aquatic invertebrates.

The Eurasian teal usually feeds by dabbling, upending or grazing; it may submerge its head and on occasion even dive to reach food. In the breeding season it eats mainly aquatic invertebrates, such as crustaceans, insects and their larvae, molluscs and worms. In winter, it shifts to a largely granivorous diet, feeding on seeds of aquatic plants and grasses, including sedges and grains. Diurnal throughout the breeding season, in winter they are often crepuscular or even nocturnal feeders.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Eurasian Wigeon**
Scientific Name : *Anas penelope*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

Eurasian Wigeon is one of three species of wigeon in the dabbling duck genus *Anas*. It is common and widespread within its range.

This dabbling duck is 42–52cm long with a 71–80cm wingspan. The breeding male has grey flanks and back, with a black rear end, a dark green speculum and a brilliant white patch on upper wings, obvious in flight or at rest. It has a pink breast, white belly, and a chestnut head with a creamy crown. In non-breeding (eclipse) plumage, the drake looks more like the female. The female is light brown.

The Eurasian wigeon is a bird of open wetlands, such as wet grassland or marshes with some taller vegetation, and usually feeds by dabbling for plant food or grazing, which it does very readily. It nests on the ground, near water and under cover. It is highly gregarious outside of the breeding season and will form large flocks.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Gadwall**
Scientific Name : *Anas strepera*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The gadwall is a common and widespread dabbling duck in the family Anatidae.

The gadwall is 46–56cm long with a 78–90cm wingspan. The male is slightly larger than the female, weighing on average 990 g against her 850 g. The breeding male is patterned grey, with a black rear end, light chestnut wings, and a brilliant white speculum, obvious in flight or at rest. In non-breeding (eclipse) plumage, the drake looks more like the female, but retains the male wing pattern, and is usually greyer above and has less orange on the bill.

The female is light brown, with plumage much like a female mallard. It can be distinguished from that species by the dark orange-edged bill, smaller size, the white speculum, and white belly.

The gadwall is a bird of open wetlands, such as prairie or steppe lakes, wet grassland or marshes with dense fringing vegetation, and usually feeds by dabbling for plant food with head submerged. It nests on the ground, often some distance from water. It is not as gregarious as some dabbling ducks outside the breeding season and tends to form only small flocks. This is a fairly quiet species; the male has a hoarse whistling call, and the female has a mallard-like quack. The young birds are fed insects at first; adults also eat some molluscs and insects during the nesting season.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Garganey**
Scientific Name : *Anas querquedula*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The garganey (*Anas querquedula*) is a small dabbling duck. It breeds in much of Europe and western Asia, but is strictly migratory, with the entire population moving to southern Africa, India and Australasia in winter.

The adult male is unmistakable, with its brown head and breast with a broad white crescent over the eye. The rest of the plumage is grey, with loose grey scapular feathers. It has a grey bill and legs. In flight it shows a pale blue speculum with a white border. When swimming it will show prominent white edges on its tertials. Its crown (anatomy) is dark and face is reddish brown.

Some care is needed in separating the brown female from the similar common teal, but the stronger face markings and more frequent head-shaking when dabbling are good indicators.

These birds feed mainly by skimming rather than upending.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Lesser Whistling-Duck
Scientific Name : *Dendrocygna javanica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

This brown and long-necked duck having size 42cm is a largely resident species distributed widely across lowland wetlands of Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia. It is also known as Indian Whistling duck or Lesser whistling teal.

Unlike the geese and swans, whistling ducks have clear, often melodious whistling voices that are the basis for their group name.

It has a chestnut rump which differentiate it from its larger relative Fulvous Whistling duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*), which has a white rump.

It can generally be seen at small shallow water bodies surrounded by trees (for roosting) and containing abundant marshy vegetation. Rarely seen on the ocean just outside the surf line.

They feed mainly on water plants, ricegrains, water weed shoots, freshwater snails, small fishes, frogs and insects etc.

They breed during monsoon or rainy season and may vary locally depending on the food availability. The nest is often built on the ground covering vegetation, sometimes in tree hollows in low bushes and also using disused heron, stork or cormorant nests. Clutch size is 7-12 eggs which are incubated by both parents for 26-30 days; Youngfledges after 45-50 days. Both adults tend to the young and are very caring. Breeds in loose colonies.

There has a report from Sri Lanka of White Bellied sea eagle preying on Lesser Whistling duck



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Alpine Swift**
Scientific Name : *Tachymarptis melba*
Residential Status : Migratory / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

It is the fastest swift among the Swift family having size 20-23cm in length and a wing span of 57cm. It has the range from Southern Europe to India and farther to Southern Africa. Breeds in Europe in summer.

It is amazing that this species spend most of their lives in the air, catching insects, and drink on the wing and even sleeping while on air. It is having very short legs which they use for clinging on vertical surface and cliffs while roosting and rarely land on ground.

A study conducted by Felix Liechti and colleagues of Swiss Ornithological Institute in 2011 (by attaching light-weight sensor on the bodies of six birds) revealed that these birds can remain aloft for more than 200 days without touching down.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Asian Palm-Swift**
Scientific Name : *Cypsiurus balasiensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

Asian Palm Swift is small in size i.e. 13cm and mostly spend their lives in the air feeding on insects they catch while aloft. Pale Brown in colour, it has long back wings that resemble a boomerang. Sexes are alike but young birds have short tails. It is widely distributed in Asia.

Nesting is done generally in wet season but vary locally. The nest is glued to the underside of a palm leaf with its saliva.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Indian House Swift (Little Swift)**
Scientific Name : *Apus affinis / nipalensis*
Residential Status : Resident /Common
Place : Irpage

A small swift having size 15cm and a wing span of 33cm . They have smoky-dark plumage with white rump and white throat and short square tail. Sexes are alike. They fly gregariously and with great speed near human habitations and are fond of ancient forts, ruined, deserted and occupied buildings.

Food chiefly dipterous insects in air

Nesting season – February to September. They make nests as a colony using materials like feathers, straw and its saliva, forming the shape of a cup. Nests usually plaster in angle of walls and ceiling of buildings and arched gate ways of buildings.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Crested Treeswift**
Scientific Name : *Hemiprocne coronata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Crested Tree swift is a large slender bird at 23cm length. This species is dove grey above and white below. The long swept-back wings are a darker grey above. This tree swift has a crest and a long, deeply forked tail. The adult male has orange sides to its face. In overhead flight very like Asian Palm-Swift, but larger and with more deeply forked tail.

The crested tree swift is a common resident breeder from the Indian subcontinent. It is found in India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and China. These are birds of open woodland and deciduous forests.

Nesting season – December to July and possibly later, varying with locality.



Photographed by : Vijesh Vallikkunnu

Common Name : **Greater Painted-snipe**
Scientific Name : *Rostratula benghalensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The Greater painted Snipe is a species of wader sized 25 cm in length, distributed though out India.

The painted-snipe is a typical Rail, not related to the true snipes and differs from them in habits, flight and appearance, being far more colorful and having longer legs than the snipes. It is unusual in that the female is larger and more brightly colored than the male, with the sides of the head, neck and throat a rich chestnut brown, and a distinct black band across the breast; the male is paler and greyer. The hen is polyandrous and more dominant and often competing with other hens for the male. It may fight in defense of its mates.

Well vegetated jheels, marshes and paddy fields are its habitat. It feeds on paddy Grains, vegetable mater, insect's worms and mollusk.

Nesting season is practically all year.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Common Snipe**
Scientific Name : *Gallinago gallinago*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Common Snipe is a small, stocky wader, with straight slender bill about 5cm long. Dark brown above, streaked with black, rufous and buff; whitish below. They have a dark stripe through the eye, with light stripes above and below it. The wings are pointed. Sexes are alike.

The breeding habitat is marshes, bogs, tundra and wet meadows throughout northern Europe and northern Asia. It is migratory, with European birds wintering in southern and western Europe and Africa (south to the Equator), and Asian migrants moving to tropical southern Asia.

It is a well camouflaged bird, it is usually shy and conceals itself close to ground vegetation and flushes only when approached closely. When flushed, they utter a sharp note that sounds like scape and fly off in a series of aerial zig-zags to confuse predators. They forage in soft mud, probing or picking up food by sight. They mainly eat insects and earthworms, also some plant material.

Nesting season – May/June



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Pin-tailed Snipe**
Scientific Name : *Gallinago stenura*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

This 25–27cm long bird is similar to the longer-billed and longer-tailed common snipe and very difficult to separate from common snipe. Adults have short greenish-grey legs and a long straight dark bill. The body is mottled brown on top, with cream lines down their back. They are pale underneath with a streaked buff breast and white belly. They have a dark stripe through the eye, with light stripes above and below it. Sexes are similar, and immature differ only in minor plumage details.

The wings are less pointed than common snipe, and lack the white trailing edge of that species. The shorter tail and flatter flight path when flushed also made flight separation from Common snipe relatively easy.

Distribution: Winter visitor throughout the country including the Andamans and Nicobars, particularly to South India.

Food: Worms, insect's larvae, etc., obtained by probing into soft mud with the long slender bill.



Photographed by : **K. Sriram**

Common Name : **Great Cormorant**
Scientific Name : *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The great cormorant, known as the great black cormorant across the Northern Hemisphere, the black cormorant in Australia, the large cormorant in India and the black shag further south in New Zealand, is a widespread member of the cormorant family of seabirds.

Distributed throughout India up to over 3000m. Once a ringed bird from Kazakhstan was spotted in Punjab

Its size is that of Domestic Duck (80cm in length) and in non-breeding season plumage is total black and distinguished from other cormorants by its size only. Breeding birds have white on head and neck and a large white patch on either flank conspicuous in flight.

Inhabits large inland waters, sand banks, tidal lagoons, etc. Singly or in small flocks. Hunts fish by diving and chasing underwater.

Nesting season is from September to February, varies in different localities.

Using this cormorant, cormorant fishing is practiced in China, Japan, and elsewhere around the globe. In it, fishermen tie a line around the throats of cormorants, tight enough to prevent swallowing, and deploy them from small boats. The cormorants catch fish without being able to fully swallow them, and the fishermen are able to retrieve the fish simply by forcing open the cormorants' mouths, apparently engaging the regurgitation reflex.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Indian Cormorant (Indian Shag)**
Scientific Name : *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Indian cormorant or Indian shag is a member of the cormorant family. It is found mainly along the inland waters of the Indian Subcontinent but extending west to Sind and east to Thailand and Cambodia. It is a gregarious species that can be easily distinguished from the little cormorant by its blue eye, small head with a sloping forehead and a long narrow bill ending in a hooked tip. It is having size 63cm in length.

Resident throughout the subcontinent but not the Himalayas; Sri Lanka. Locally Migratory.

Large flocks generally found in rivers and jheels, etc. in the company of other cormorants.

Food is almost exclusively fish.

Nesting season – July to February.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Little Cormorant**
Scientific Name : *Phalacrocorax niger*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The little cormorant is about 51cm long and only slightly smaller than the Indian cormorant (*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*).

The little cormorant is found across India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and lowland Nepal. It is also found in parts of Burma, Thailand, Laos, and Indonesia. It is not found in the Himalayas, but vagrants have been seen in Ladakh. It inhabits wetlands, ranging from small village ponds to large lakes, and sometimes tidal estuaries.

Being an expert diver and submarine swimmer, It lives exclusively on fish which it chases and captures under water. Flocks occasionally hunt in concert like pelicans. When satiated perches upright on a rock or stake near water, drying itself with outstretched wings.

Nesting season – North India chiefly from July to September, South India November to February.



Photographed by : **K. Sriram**

Common Name : **Darter**
AN: Oriental Darter
Scientific Name : *Anhinga melanogaster*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

A black-cormorant like water bird with silvery grey streaks on the back, and velvety brown head and neck, chin and throat whitish; tail long, stiff, wedge-shaped. The slender, snake-like neck, narrow head and pointed dagger bill are distinct features. Both sexes are alike. Found singly or in loose parties on tanks and jheels.

It spears a fish underwater, bringing it above the surface, tossing and juggling it before swallowing the fish head first. The body remains submerged as it swims, and the slender neck alone is visible above the water, which accounts for the colloquial name of snakebird. Like the cormorants, it has wettable feathers and it is often found perched on a rock or branch with its wings held open to dry.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The breeding season is June to August (during the rainy season) in northern India, April–May in southwestern India and in winter in southeastern India (during the northeast monsoon)

In some parts of northeastern India, darters were used by tribals to capture fish from streams. A ring is tied around the neck to prevent them from swallowing the prey just as is done with cormorant fishing in parts of Southeast Asia.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Rufous-bellied (Hawk)
Eagle**

Scientific Name : *Lophotriorchis kienerii*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kerwadi

The rufous-bellied hawk-eagle is a bird of prey found in the forested regions of tropical Asia. Relatively small for eagles and contrastingly patterned like a falcon. Adult rufous-bellied hawk-eagles are distinctive in their pattern. They have a black hood with a short crest. Chestnut underparts and wing coverts contrast with the white on the throat and breast. The sexes are almost indistinguishable in plumage but females are slightly larger and have more black on the face. They perch in a very upright stance and the wingtip almost reaches the tail. They can appear similar to a booted eagle (*Aquila pennata*).

Discontinuously distributed in India. Eastern Himalayas from Nepal eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh, and NE hill states. Western Ghats from Goa southwards. Sri Lanka; Bangladesh.

They dive to capture prey that can include birds in the air and in the canopy of forest floor and even mammals. Birds the size of the junglefowl have been recorded as prey.

The breeding season of the eagles is in winter with the young fledging in spring



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Booted Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Hieraaetus pennatus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The booted eagle is a medium-sized bird of prey, comparable to the common buzzard in size though more eagle-like in shape. It is about 46cm in length and has a wingspan of 120cm. There are two relatively distinct plumage forms. Pale birds are mainly light grey with a darker head and flight feathers. The other form has mid-brown plumage with dark grey flight feathers.

This is a species often found in wooded areas, hilly countryside with some open areas. It hunts small mammals, reptiles and birds up to 5 times its own weight.

It breeds in southern Europe, North Africa and across Asia. It is migratory, wintering in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia



Photographed by : **K.Harish**

Common Name : **Black Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Latinaetus malaiensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The black eagle is a large raptor at about 70–80cm in length and 164–178cm in wingspan, with a weight of between 1000 and 1600grams. Adults have all-black plumage, with a yellow bill base (cere) and feet. The wings are long and pinched in at the innermost primaries giving a distinctive shape. The tail shows faint barring and upper tail covers are paler. When perched the wing tips reach till or exceed the tail tip. The wings are held in a shallow V (wings just above the horizontal plane) in flight. Seen on hot afternoons, scouring the treetops for a nest to maraud, this bird is easily spotted by its jet black colour, large size, and a 'characteristic' slow flight, sometimes just above the canopy. Both sexes are similar, but young birds have a buff head, under parts and under wing coverts.

Discontinuously distributed in India. Eastern Himalayas from Nepal eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh, and NE hill states. Western Ghats from Goa southwards. Sri Lanka; Pakistan.

The black eagle eats mammals, birds and eggs. It is a prolific nest-predator and is known for its slow flight just over the canopy. The curved claws and wide gape allow it to pick up eggs of birds from nests. They have the unique habit of carrying away an entire nest with nestlings to a feeding perch. Squirrels, macaques and many species of birds emit alarm calls when these birds are spotted soaring over the forest. The Indian giant squirrel has been noted as a prey of this species

Nesting season – November to March in South India, January to April in the north.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Short-toed (snake) Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Circaetus gallicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

Short-toed Snake Eagle is a brown, thick-set eagle with under parts below breast white, broadly barred with dark brown. Head large and owl like, having size 62–67cm long with a 170–185cm wingspan, unfeathered legs. Both sexes are alike.

Found throughout in Indian Union; Pakistan. Absent in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

Food principally snakes and lizards, but also small or sickly rodents and birds.

Nesting season – December to May.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Tawny Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Aquila rapax*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

This is large eagle having size 67–75 cm in length and has a wingspan of 159–190 cm, often confuse with vulture in flight in height. It has tawny upperparts and blackish flight feathers and tail. The lower back is very pale. This species is smaller and paler than the Steppe eagle, although it does not share that species' pale throat.

Distributed throughout the drier portion of India upto about 1400m in the Himalayas, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

Largely a scavenger and pirate, feeding at carcasses or by robbing other hawks of prey they might have secured. Rarely also catches hares and small rodents, and sick or disabled birds.

Nesting season from November to April



Photographed by : S.N. Panchamukhi

Common Name : **White-bellied Sea-Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

This is large eagle having size 67–75 cm in length and has a wingspan of 159–190 cm, often confuse with vulture in flight in height. It has tawny upperparts and blackish flight feathers and tail. The lower back is very pale. This species is smaller and paler than the Steppe eagle, although it does not share that species' pale throat.

Distributed throughout the drier portion of India upto about 1400m in the Himalayas, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

Largely a scavenger and pirate, feeding at carcasses or by robbing other hawks of prey they

Might have secured. Rarely also catches hares and small rodents, and sick or disabled birds.

Nesting season from November to April



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Grey- headed Fish Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Icthyophaga ichthyaetus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A dark brown eagle with grey head and neck, has a body length of 61–75cm. Females are heavier than males at 2.3–2.7kg compared to 1.6kg. The wingspan measures between 155–170cm.

The grey headed fish eagle has a wide distribution that encompasses India and South-East Asia to Malaysia, Western Indonesia and Philippines. It is generally uncommon but can be spotted rarely in North-East India. It is found in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam. It is uncommon in North.

As the common name suggests the grey-headed fish eagle is a specialist piscivore, which preys upon live fish and scavenges dead fish and occasionally reptiles and terrestrial birds and small mammals

Nesting season – November to March

The grey-headed fish eagle is currently listed as Near-Threatened on the IUCN Red List.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Crested Serpent-Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Spilornis cheela*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

This medium-large, dark brown eagle is stocky, with rounded wings and a short tail. Its short black and white fan-shaped nuchal crest gives it a thick-necked appearance. Young birds show a lot of white on the head. The bare facial skin and feet are yellow. In overhead flight a white bar across the tail (which is seldom fanned out as in a true eagle) and two similar bars on each of the broad rounded wings, are suggestive clues. Both sexes are alike.

Distributed in the better-wooded parts throughout the Indian Union up to about 2000m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

They feed on snakes, frogs, lizards and rats etc. Rarely also takes jungle fowl and peafowl.

Nesting season – December to March.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Crested Hawk Eagle**
AN: Changeable Hawk Eagle
Scientific Name : *Nisaetus cirrhatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Crested hawk-eagle is a medium-large raptor at about 60–72cm in length with a 127–138cm wingspan, and a weight ranging from 1.2 to 1.9kg. It is a relatively slender forest eagle with some subspecies (especially *N. c. limnaetus* found in North-East) being dimorphic giving the name “changeable”. This and their complicated phylogeny further complicate precise identification.

Distributed throughout Indian subcontinent.

Normally brown above, they have white below with barring on the undersides of the flight feathers and tail; black longitudinal streaks occur on the throat and chocolate streaks occur on the breast. Some subspecies have a crest of four feathers, but this is all but absent in others. The sexes are quite similar in their plumage, but males are about 15% smaller than females. The under parts and head of juveniles are whitish or buff with few dark streaks.

Nesting season – December to April. Lays single egg.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : Indian Spotted Eagle
Scientific Name : *Aquila hastata*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Indian spotted eagle is about 60cm in length and has a wingspan of 150cm. It is broad-headed, with the widest mouth of all spotted eagles. This species has a lighter coloration overall compared to its relatives, with a darker iris that makes the eyes appear darker than the plumage. Adults can be told apart from the greater spotted eagle by its lighter color, darker eyes, and habitat preference. After about three or four months the young birds are glossy brown with the tips of the head and neck feathers being creamy and giving a spotted appearance. The upper tail coverts are light brown with white giving a barred appearance. The median coverts have large creamy spots. After about eighteen months the bird moults and becomes a darker shade and has less spots.

The Indian spotted eagle is native in Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and Nepal, where it prefers subtropical and tropical dry forests to plantations and arable land. It is vagrant in Pakistan. In India, it is distributed sparingly over the Gangetic plains, in the east up to Manipur, in Madhya Pradesh and southern Orissa, but in the south they have been known to be spotted in Kotagiri, Mudumalai, Nilgiris district in Tamil Nadu and Tumakuru in Karnataka.

The Indian spotted eagle was earlier considered as the resident of eastern subspecies of the lesser spotted eagle but has proven quite distinct and readily separable by morphological, behavioral, ecological and DNA sequence data.

Food: Frogs, reptiles, birds and food pirated from kite etc.

Nesting season – April to July



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Legge's Hawk Eagle**
Scientific Name : *Nisaetus kelaarti*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga

Legge's hawk-eagle is a medium-sized raptor. The typical adult has brown upper parts and pale under parts, with barring on the undersides of the flight feathers and tail. The breast and belly are heavily streaked. The wings are broad with a curved trailing edge, and are held in a shallow V in flight. Sexes are similar, but young birds are often whiter-headed.

Legge's hawk-eagle was formerly considered to be a subspecies of the mountain hawk-eagle, but it is smaller and has unstreaked buff under wing coverts. A 2008 study based on the geographic isolation and differences in call suggested that this be treated as a full species, *Nisaetus kelaarti*.

Distributed in Southern India and Sri Lanka.

Legge's hawk-eagles eat small mammals, birds and reptiles.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Intermediate Egret**
Scientific Name : *Mesophoyx intermedia*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This species, as its scientific name implies, is intermediate in size between the great egret and smaller white egrets like the little egret and cattle egret, though nearer to little than great. It is about 56–72cm long with a 105–115cm wingspan with all-white plumage, generally dark legs and a thick yellow bill. Breeding birds may have a reddish or black bill, greenish yellow gape skin, loose filamentous plumes on their breast and back, and dull yellow or pink on their upper legs (regional variations). The sexes are similar.

Resident throughout plains of the subcontinent. Sri Lanka. Also the Andaman and Nicobars.

Frequents jheels, marshes, estuaries, mangrove swamps. Etc. often in small flocks in non-breeding season.

Food – Fish, frogs etc

Nesting season – July to February depending on locality. Colonial, in mixed heronries.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Cattle Egret**
Scientific Name : *Bubulcus ibis (coromandus)*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The cattle egret is a stocky heron with an 88–96cm wingspan; it is 46–56cm long and It has a relatively short thick neck, a sturdy bill, and a hunched posture. In non-breeding pure white plumage distinguished from the little egret by colour of bill which is yellow, not black. The orange-buff head, neck, and back of the breeding plumage render it unmistakable. Both sexes are alike.

The cattle egret has two geographical races which are sometimes classified as full species, the western cattle egret, *B. ibis*, and eastern cattle egret, *B. coromandus*. The eastern subspecies *B. (i.) coromandus* breeds in Asia and Australasia, and the western nominate form occupies the rest of the species range, including the Americas. Some authorities recognize a third Seychelles subspecies, *B. i. seychellarum*, which was first described by Finn Salomonsen in 1934.

Gregarious. Mostly seen with grazing cattle, stalking energetically alongside the animals, running in and

out between their legs or riding upon their backs, and lunging out to seize insects disturbed by their movements amongst the grass.

The cattle egret feeds on a wide range of prey, particularly insects, especially grasshoppers, crickets, flies (adults and maggots) and moths, as well as spiders, frogs, and earthworms etc, acting as a bio-control agent. As it removes ticks and flies from cattle and consumes them, benefits both species, but it has been implicated in the spread of tick-borne animal diseases.

It was also observed that they gulp down Banyan capsules avidly in the fruiting season.

Distributed throughout Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar

Nesting season – chiefly June to August in North India; November to March in the south and in Sri Lanka, varying according to monsoon conditions.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Little Egret
Scientific Name : *Egretta garzetta*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A lanky snow white marsh bird differentiated from the very similar Cattle Egret in non-breeding plumage by its black bill and partly coloured black and yellow feet. A long drooping crest of two narrow plumes acquired in the breeding season; also dainty filamentous ornamental feathers (aigrettes) in both back and breast. Both sexes are alike.

The little egret's habitat varies widely, and includes the shores of lakes, rivers, canals, ponds, lagoons, marshes and flooded land, the bird preferring open locations to dense cover. On the coast it inhabits mangrove areas, swamps, mudflats, sandy beaches and reefs.

Widespread resident in India, unrecorded in Northwest and North-East.

They use a variety of methods to procure their food; they stalk their prey in shallow water, often running with raised wings or shuffling their feet to disturb small fish, or may stand still and wait to ambush

prey. They make use of opportunities provided by cormorants disturbing fish or humans attracting fish by throwing bread into water. On land they walk or run while chasing their prey, feed on creatures disturbed by grazing livestock and ticks on the livestock, and even scavenge. Their diet is mainly fish, but amphibians, small reptiles, mammals, as well as crustaceans, molluses, insects, spiders and worms.

Little egrets nest in colonies, often with other wading birds. On the coasts of western India these colonies may be in urban areas, and associated birds include cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*), black-crowned night herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) and black-headed ibises (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*). In Europe, associated species may be squacco herons (*Ardeola ralloides*), cattle egrets, black-crowned night herons and glossy ibises (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Nesting season – July/August in North India; November to February in the south.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Great Egret**
Scientific Name : *Casmerodius albus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The great egret is a large heron with all-white plumage. Standing up to 1m tall, this species can measure 80 to 104cm in length and have a wingspan of 131 to 170cm. It is thus only slightly smaller than the great blue or grey heron (*A. cinerea*). Apart from size, the great egret can be distinguished from other white egrets by its yellow bill and black legs and feet, though the bill may become darker and the lower legs lighter in the breeding season. In breeding plumage, delicate ornamental feathers are borne on the back. Males and females are identical in appearance; juveniles look like non-breeding adults. Differentiated from the intermediate egret by the gape, which extends well beyond the back of the eye in case of the great egret, but ends just behind the eye in case of the intermediate egret.

Resident throughout the subcontinent; Sri Lanka; Andamans (winter)

It has a slow flight, with its neck retracted. This is characteristic of herons and bitterns, and distinguishes them from storks, cranes, ibises, and spoonbills, which extend their necks in flight.

Found in jheels, marshes, rivers etc. Usually solitary. Behavior and feeding habits similar to Grey Heron's.

The great egret feeds in shallow water or drier habitats, feeding mainly on fish, frogs, small mammals, and occasionally small reptiles and insects, spearing them with its long, sharp bill most of the time by standing still and allowing the prey to come within its striking distance of its bill which it uses as a spear. It will often wait motionless for prey, or slowly stalk its victim



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Crested Goshawk**
Scientific Name : *Accipiter trivirgatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A short-winged hawk, dark brown above with forehead, crown and nuchal crest blackish grey, tail with four dark brown bars. White below streaked on breast and barred thereafter

With dark rufous brown. Throat and under tail coverts pure white. A conspicuous black mesial stripe from chin to breast. Both sexes are alike. Female larger in size. The larger size and a short crest, clearly visible in profile, are the best distinctions from its relative, the Besra.

The flight is a characteristic “slow flap, slow flap, straight glide”, similar to other *Accipiter* species such as the northern goshawk (*A. gentilis*) a winter visitor.

Distributed in North and NE India down to Godavari river and E.Ghats, Western Ghat and Sri Lanka. The species in W.Ghat is smaller in size.

Like its relatives, this secretive forest bird hunts birds, mammals and reptiles in woodland, relying on surprise as it flies from a perch to catch its prey unaware.

Nesting season – March to May



Photographed by : A.L.V.Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Little Grebe**
Scientific Name : *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), also known as dabchick, is drab coloured, plump and squat little water bird with silky white under parts, short pointed bill, and no tail. In breeding plumage head and neck dark brown and chestnut, upper plumage slightly paler.

Yellow swollen gape. Both sexes are alike

Distributed throughout India; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and up to about 2000m elevation.

The little grebe is an excellent swimmer and diver and pursues its fish and aquatic invertebrate prey underwater. It uses the vegetation skillfully as a hiding place.

Nesting season – April to October



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Greenshank**
Scientific Name : *Tringa nebularia*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The Common Greenshank is a wader in the large family Scolopacidae, the typical waders.

Common greenshanks are brown in breeding plumage, and grey-brown in winter. When in water, they can appear very similar to marsh sandpipers but are distinguished by the shape of the lower bill which gives it an upturned appearance to the bill. They have long greenish legs and a long bill with a grey base. They show a white wedge on the back in flight. They are somewhat larger than the related common redshank.

Wintervisiter throughout India, Andamans and Nicobars; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka. On passage inland; seen on the margin of both freshwater and marine water spreads.

Usually solitary or in small parties, often in the company of Redshank.

Like most waders, they feed on small invertebrates, but will also take small fish and amphibians.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Eurasian Marsh-Harrier**
AN: Western Marsh-Harrier

Scientific Name : *Circus aeruginosus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Eurasian Marsh-Harrier is a large harrier, a bird of prey from temperate and subtropical western Eurasia and adjacent Africa. It is also known as the Western Marsh-Harrier.

Male dark brown with pale rufous head, neck and breast dark rufous below. Silvery grey tail, wings silvery grey, black tipped. Female dark chocolate brown with creamy buff cap on head and buff at leading edge of wing at shoulder.

Winter visitor throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Like the other marsh harriers, it is strongly associated with wetland areas, especially those rich in common reed (*Phragmites australis*). It can also be met with in a variety of other open habitats, such as farmland and grassland, particularly where these border marshland. It is a territorial bird in the breeding season, and even in winter it seems less social than other harriers, which often gather in large flocks.

Unlike other harriers spends considerable time sitting on the ground or soaring aloft with wings held in a wide V above the body.

It feeds on small mammals, small birds, insects, reptiles, and frogs.

The start of the breeding season varies from mid-March to early May. Eurasian Marsh-Harrier males often pair with two and occasionally three females. Pair bonds usually last for a single breeding season, but some pairs remain together for several years.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Pallid Harrier**
Scientific Name : *Circus macrourus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The Pallid harrier is a migratory bird of prey of the harrier family.

This is a typical harrier, with long wings held in a shallow V in its low flight. It also resembles other harriers in having distinct male and female plumages. Adults measure 40–48cm long with a wingspan of 95–120cm . The male is whitish grey above and white below, with narrow black wingtips. It differs from the hen harrier in its smaller size, narrower wings, paler colour, and different wing tip pattern. The female is brown above with white upper tail coverts, hence females and the similar juveniles are often called “ringtails”.

Pallid harriers hunt small mammals, lizards and birds, surprising them as they drift low over fields and moors.

It breeds in southern parts of eastern Europe and central Asia (such as Iran) and winters mainly in India and southeast Asia.



Photographed by : A.L.V.Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Purple Heron**
Scientific Name : *Ardea purpurea*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The purple heron is a wide ranging species of wading bird in the heron family, Ardeidae and is 78–97cm in length with a standing height from 70 to 94cm and a 120–152cm wingspan. It is somewhat smaller than the grey heron, from which it can be distinguished by its darker reddish-brown plumage, and, in adults, its darker grey back. Adults have the forehead and the crown of the head black, with a dark stripe down the back of the neck that terminates in a slender, dangling crest.

Resident and locally migratory throughout Indian sub-continent, Andamans and Nicobars; Sri Lanka.

The purple heron inhabits marshes, lagoons and lakes surrounded by dense vegetation. It may frequent mangrove swamps on the coast but it usually chooses freshwater habitats, particularly locations with reed beds. It also visits mudflats, river banks, ditches and canals.

It feeds in shallow water, grabbing its prey with its powerful beak. It will often wait motionless for prey, or slowly stalk its victim. The diet consists mainly of fish, small mammals and amphibians, but nestling birds, snakes, lizards, crustaceans, water snails, insects and spiders are also eaten.

Nesting season – June to March depending on locality.



Photographed by : Mahantesh Oshimath

Common Name : Grey Heron
Scientific Name : *Ardea cineria*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Grey Heron is a large bird, standing up to 100 cm tall and measuring 84–102cm long with a 155–195cm wingspan. The plumage is largely ashy-grey above, and greyish-white below with some black on the flanks. Adults have the head and neck white with a broad black supercilium that terminates in the slender, dangling crest, and bluish-black streaks on the front of the neck. The scapular feathers are elongated and the feathers at the base of the neck are also somewhat elongated. Immature birds lack the dark stripe on the head and are generally duller in appearance than adults, with a grey head and neck, and a small, dark grey crest. The pinkish-yellow beak is long, straight and powerful, and is brighter in colour in breeding adults. The iris is yellow and the legs are brown and very long.

Distributed throughout the Indian union up to 1400m in the Kashmir Valley; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and migratory. An

individual ringed at Amritsar in March was picked up dead the following month at Balkash Lake in Russia.

Fish, amphibians, small mammals and insects are taken in shallow water with the heron's long bill. It has also been observed catching and killing juvenile birds such as ducklings, and occasionally takes birds up to the size of a water rail. It may stand motionless in the shallows, or on a rock or sandbank beside the water, waiting for prey to come within striking distance. Alternatively, it moves slowly and stealthily through the water with its body less upright than when at rest and its neck curved in an "S". It is able to straighten its neck and strike with its bill with great rapidity.

Nesting season – mainly July to September in North India; November to March in the south and in Sri Lanka.



Photographed by : **Jitendra Singh**

Common Name : **Indian Pond-Heron**

Scientific Name : *Ardeola grayii*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Indian pond heron or paddy bird is a small heron. They appear stocky with a short neck, short thick bill and buff-brown back. In summer, adults have long neck feathers. Its appearance is transformed from their dull colours when they take to flight, when the white of the wings makes them very prominent.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and up to about 1000m elevation.

The Indian pond heron's feeding habitat is marshy wetlands. They usually feed at the edge of ponds but make extensive use of floating vegetation such as water hyacinth to access deeper water. They have also been observed to fly and capture fishes leaping out of water. Sometimes, they fly low over water to drive frogs and fishes towards the shore before settling along the shoreline.

The primary food of these birds includes crustaceans, aquatic insects, fishes, tadpoles and sometimes outside wetlands, these herons feed on insects (including crickets, dragonflies, bees) and amphibians.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black-crowned night heron**
Scientific Name : *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

They have a black crown and back with the remainder of the body white or grey, red eyes, and short yellow legs. They have pale grey wings and white under parts. Two or three long white plumes, erected in greeting and courtship displays, extend from the back of the head. The sexes are similar in appearance although the males are slightly larger.

Largely crepuscular and nocturnal.

Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and locally migrant

Nesting season – between April and September in North India; December to February in the South.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Little Heron**
AN: Striated Heron
Scientific Name : *Butorides striata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Little Heron also known as mangrove heron, striated heron or green-backed heron, is a small heron, widespread and generally common .

Adults have a blue-grey back and wings, white underparts, a black cap, a dark line extends from the bill to under the eye and short yellow legs. Juveniles are browner above and streaked below.

These birds stand still at the water's edge and wait to ambush prey, but are easier to see than many small heron species. They mainly eat small fish, frogs and aquatic insects. They sometimes use bait, dropping a feather or leaf carefully on the water surface and picking fish that come to investigate.



Photographed by : C.P. Singh

Common Name : Eurasian Hoopoe
Scientific Name : *Upupa epops*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A fawn coloured bird with black and white zebra markings on back, wings and tail. Conspicuous fan-shaped crest, and long, slender, gently curved bill. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pairs, usually on the ground in lightly-wooded country

Distribution: Practically throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and also locally migratory.

The hoopoe is widespread in Europe, Asia, and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar. Most European and north Asian birds migrate to the tropics in winter. In contrast, the African populations are sedentary all year. Hoopoes have been known to breed north of their European range, and in southern England during warm, dry summers that provide plenty of grasshoppers and similar insects, although as of the early 1980s northern European populations were reported to be in the decline, possibly due to changes in climate.

Nine subspecies of hoopoe are recognized by Kristin (in the 2001 Handbook of the Birds of the World). They vary mostly in size and the depth of colour in the plumage.

Nesting season – In India principally February to May



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black-headed Ibis**
AN: Oriental White Ibis
Scientific Name : *Threskiornis melanocephalus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The black-headed ibis or Oriental white ibis is a species of wading bird of the ibis family. Adults are typically 75cm long and white-plumaged, with some greyer areas on the wings. The bald head, the neck and legs are black. The thick down curved bill is dusky yellow. In breeding plumage some slaty grey on scapulars and in wings and ornamental plumes at base of the neck. Sexes are similar, but juveniles have whiter necks and a black bill.

Widespread resident; unrecorded in parts of East India NW India

It occurs in marshy wetlands inland and on the coast, where it feeds on various fish, frogs and other water creatures, as well as on insects. It walks about actively on marshy land probing with its bill into soft mud and often feeds in shallow water with its head momentarily submerged.

Like storks and Spoonbills, it lacks a true voice-producing mechanism and is silent except for peculiar ventriloquial grunts uttered when nesting.

Nesting season – June to August in North India; In the south November to February.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Black ibis**
AN: Red Naped Ibis
Scientific Name : *Pseudibis papillosa*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Black Ibis is a large black bird with long legs and a long down-curved bill. The wing feathers and tail are black with blue-green gloss while the neck and body are brown and without gloss. A white patch on the shoulders stands out and the top of the featherless head is a patch of bright red warty skin. The iris is orange red. Both sexes are identical and young birds are browner and initially lack the bare head and crown. The bills and legs are grey but turn reddish[4] during the breeding season. The toes have a fringing membrane and are slightly webbed at the base.

The Black Ibis is widely distributed in the plains of the Indian Subcontinent. The habitat this bird is found at is lakes, marshes, riverbeds and on irrigated farmlands. It is gregarious and generally forages on margins of wetlands in small numbers. It is a common breeding resident in Haryana and Punjab and the Gangetic plain. It extends into southern India but is not found in the forested regions or the arid zone of the extreme southeast of the peninsula or Sri Lanka.

The Black Ibis is omnivorous, feeding on carrion, insects, frogs, and other small vertebrates as well as grain. They forage mainly in dry open land and stubbly fields, sometimes joining egrets and other birds on land being tilled to feed on disturbed insects and exposed beetle grub.

The breeding season is variable but most often between March and October and tending to precede the monsoons. When pair-bonding, females beg for food from the males at foraging grounds. The nests are usually at a height of 6-12m above ground, on banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*) or peepal (*Ficus religiosa*) trees, often close to human habitation. In recent times they have also taken to nesting in power pylons in parts of Rajasthan.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Common Iora**
Scientific Name : *Aegintha tithia*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

A black and yellow tit like bird with two white wing bars. The common iora is sexually dimorphic; males in the breeding season have a black cap and back adding to a black wing and tail at all seasons. Females have greenish wings and an olive tail. The undersides of both are yellow and the two white bars on the wings of the male are particularly prominent in their breeding plumage. The males in breeding plumage have a very variable distribution of the black on the upperparts and can be confused with Marshall's iora, however, the latter always has white tips to the tail. The nominate subspecies is found along the Himalayas and males of this population are very similar to females or have only a small amount of black on the crown. In northwestern India, septentrionalis is brighter yellow than others and in the northern plains of India humei males in breeding plumage have a black cap and olive on the upper mantle. In southwestern India and Sri Lanka multicolor has the breeding males with a jet black cap

and mantle. The forms in the rest of southern India are intermediate between multicolor and humei with more grey-green on the rump

The birds keep in touch by sweet long-drawn musical whistles and short chirrups.

Food: Insects, their eggs and larvae.

Nesting season – chiefly May to September with local variations.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Western Reef Egret**
Scientific Name : *Egretta gularis*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Western Reef Egret also called the Western Reef Heron, is a medium-sized heron found in southern Europe, Africa and parts of Asia.

Resident mainly in West and South East coastal distribution and occurs in two plumage forms, a slaty-grey plumage and a white form which can look very similar to the little egret although the bill tends to be paler and larger. It has been spotted in the Lakshadweep Islands and Sri Lanka where breeding was once recorded at Chilaw. Breeding colonies are known from the east coast of India around Pulicat Lake. They occasionally stray further inland.

These birds stalk their prey in shallow water, often running or stirring the water with their feet or flicking their wings to disturb prey; they may also stand still and wait to ambush prey. They eat fish, crustaceans, and molluscs. In coastal areas, they regularly feed on mudskippers.

In India the breeding season is during the monsoon rains from April to August and end of May in the former breeding colony at Chilaw in Sri Lanka.



Photographed by : H.G. Prashanthakumar

Common Name : **Pheasant Tailed Jacana**
Scientific Name : *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

This is the only jacana to have a different breeding plumage. The pheasant-tailed jacana is conspicuous and unmistakable. It is around 39–58cm in length, about 25cm of which is comprised by the pheasant-like tail, and are identifiable by their wide feet and claws which enable them to walk on floating vegetation in shallow lakes, their preferred habitat. The pheasant-tailed jacana is capable of swimming, although it usually walks on the vegetation. The females are more colourful than the males and are polyandrous.

Distributed throughout Indian Union normally up to 2000m in Kashmir; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Food: vegetable matters , aquatic insects and molluscs

These jacanas breed on floating vegetation from March to July. In southern India, it breeds in the monsoon season, June–September.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Bronze Winged Jacana**
Scientific Name : *Metopidius indicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The bronze-winged jacana is a leggy swamp bird somewhat like a moorhen, with glossy black head, neck and breast, metallic greenish bronze back and wings, and chestnut-red stub tail. A broad white stripe behind eye to nape. Enormously elongated spider-like toes. Immature birds chiefly whitish, rufous and brown. Both sexes are alike. Singly or gregariously, on tanks with floating vegetation.

Distributed in entire India (except W. Rajasthan), Pakistan; Bangladesh; Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

The bronze-winged jacana feeds on insects and other invertebrates picked from the floating vegetation or the water's surface

Nesting season – June to September (SW monsoon)



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Kestrel**
Scientific Name : *Falco tinnunculus / objurgatus*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

A small slender falcon, brick red above with grey head; light buff below with brown spearhead spots. In flight the pointed black wings and rounded grey tail with broad black terminal band are useful clues to identification. Female rufous above, including head, cross-banded with blackish. Usually spotted singly in open country, perched on stake or hovering.

Winter visitor from Himalayas and beyond throughout the Indian Union, Bangladesh Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar; two races. A third race, *objurgatus*, smaller and darker, resident in South India and Sri Lanka.

When hunting, the common kestrel characteristically hovers about 10–20m above the ground, searching for prey, either by flying into the wind or by soaring using ridge lift. Like most birds of prey, common kestrels have keen eyesight enabling them to spot small prey from a distance. Once prey is sighted, the bird makes a short, steep dive toward the target.

Food: Field mice, lizards, locusts and other large insects.

Nesting season – April-June in Himalayas, South India- from February to April.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Brahminy Kite**
Scientific Name : *Haliastur indus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A distinguished-looking raptor, bright rusty red above with white head, neck and breast down to abdomen. Immature birds chocolate-brown. Both sexes are alike.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union up to about 2000m in the Himalayas; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Keeps invariably to the neighbourhood of rivers, jheels, inundated paddy fields, and fishing villages and harbours on the seacoast. Spreads inland during monsoon for land crabs and frogs in water logged country. Largely a scavenger in sea ports, picking up scraps and garbagecast overboard ships.

Food: Offal, fish, frogs, small snakes, bats etc. Winged-termites emerging from rain-sodden ground are hawked in the air.

Nesting season – principally December to April.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black Kite**
Scientific Name : *Milvus migrans*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A large brown hawk, distinguished from all similar birds by its forked tail, particularly in overhead flight. Both sexes are alike. Singly or gregariously, scavenging in town and villages. Like crow a confirmed commensally of man and usually found in the neighborhood of human habitations.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union to about 2500m in the Himalayas. Nepal; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Two races a resident and a winter migrant. The winter migrant is with a white patch on underside of wings.

Food: Offal and garbage, earthworm, winged termites, lizards, mice, disabled or young bird, and almost anything else that can be procured.

The breeding season of black kites in India begins in winter (mainly January and February) the young birds fledging before the monsoons.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black-winged Kite**
AN: Black Shouldered Kite
Scientific Name : *Elanus caeruleus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

A pretty hawk, Ashy grey above, white below, with a black line above the eyes and black patches on shoulders, conspicuous at rest as well as in flight. When closed wing tips extended beyond the short, square, white tail.

Rather crepuscular but also active in daytime, inhabits well-wooded country and cultivation; also thin deciduous forest and grassland. Avoids dense jungle as well as arid plains. Keeps to a favoured locality, perched on the same pole or tree-top from day to day, whence to keep a lookout and pounce upon crawling prey. Cocks tail from time to time, jerking it up and down between the drooping wings. Also hovers in mid-air to scan the ground, and parachutes down in steps with motionless wings raised vertically above the body till when only a few feet above closes them and drops on the quarry, bearing it away in its claws.

Widespread resident in Indian Union from the base of the Himalayas; Nepal; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Although found mainly on the plains they have been seen at higher altitudes in Sikkim (3,650m) the Nilgiris (Doddabetta, 2,670m) and Nagaland (2,020 m)

Their prey includes grasshoppers, crickets and other large insects, lizards and rodents. Injured birds, small snakes and frogs have also been reported.

Nesting season – practically throughout the year.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Red-wattled Lapwing**
Scientific Name : *Vanellus indicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

Red-wattled lapwings are large waders, about 35cm long. The wings and back are light brown with a purple sheen, but head and chest and front part of neck are black. Prominently white patch runs between these two colours, from belly and tail, flanking the neck to the sides of crown. Short tail is tipped black. A red fleshy wattle in front of each eye, black-tipped red bill, and the long legs are yellow. In flight, prominent white wing bars formed by the white on the secondary coverts. It has characteristic loud alarm calls which are variously rendered as did he do it or pity to do it. Both sexes are alike.

It breeds from West Asia (Iraq, SW Iran, the Arabian/Persian Gulf) eastwards across South Asia (Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the entire Indian subcontinent up to Kanyakumari and up to 1800m in Kashmir/Nepal), with another sub-species further east in Southeast Asia. The breeding season is mainly March to August.

Nests are difficult to find since the eggs are cryptically coloured and usually matches the ground pattern. There were documented curious reports of their nesting behavior such as; nesting on roof tops in residential areas and nesting on the stones between the rails of a railway track, the adult leaving the nest when trains passed. Both the male and female incubate the eggs and divert predators using distraction displays or flash their wings to deter any herbivores that threaten the nest.

The diet of the lapwing includes a range of insects, snails and other invertebrates, mostly picked from the ground. They may also feed on some grains. They feed mainly during the day but they may also feed at night. They may sometimes make use of the legs to disturb insect prey.



Photographed by : Gopal Barkur

Common Name : **Yellow Wattled Lapwing**
Scientific Name : *Vanellus malabaricus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The Yellow-wattled Lapwing is a lapwing that is endemic to the Indian Subcontinent. It is found mainly on the dry plains of peninsular India and has a sharp call and is capable of fast flight. Although they do not migrate, they are known to make seasonal movements in response to rains. They are dull grey brown with a black cap, yellow legs and a triangular wattle at the base of the beak. Like other lapwings and plovers, they are ground birds and their nest is a mere collection of tiny pebbles within which their well camouflaged eggs are laid. The chicks are nidifugous, leaving the nest shortly after hatching and following their parents to forage for food.

It tends to be seen in drier habitats than the red-wattled lapwing, *Vanellus indicus*. They are found in most parts of India, parts of Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. They make short distance movements in response to rain but the exact pattern is not known.

These lapwings breed in the dry season with peak breeding in March to May ahead of the monsoons. They lay four eggs in a ground scrape. A nest in a clump of grass has been noted as exceptional. Parents visit water and wet their breast feathers (“belly soaking”; they may stay for as much as 10 minutes to soak water, which may then be used to cool the eggs or chicks. The chicks are nidifugous, leaving the nest shortly after hatching and following their parents to forage for food. Chicks squat flat on the ground and freeze when parents emit an alarm call.

The food of the yellow-wattled lapwing is beetles, termites and other invertebrates, which are picked from the ground.



Photographed by : **Pompayya Malimath**

Common Name : **Grey-headed Lapwing**
Scientific Name : *Vanellus cinereus*
Residential Status : Winter Visitor / Rare vagrant
Place : Kerwadi

The Grey-headed Lapwing is a lapwing species which breeds in northeast China and Japan. The mainland population winters in northern Southeast Asia from northeastern India to Cambodia.

The grey-headed lapwing is 34–37cm long. It has a grey head and neck, darker grey breast band and white belly. The back is brown, the rump is white and the tail is black. This is a striking species in flight, with black primaries, white under wings and upper wing secondaries, and brown upper wing coverts.

Adults of both sexes are similarly plumaged, but males are slightly larger than females. Young birds have the white areas of plumage tinged with grey, a less distinct breast band, and pale fringes to the upper part and wing covert feathers

It was a rare vagrant in South India few years ago, but its spotting increased for the last couple of years. It was spotted at Kerwadi area on 4 March, 2012 during Kaiga Bird Marathon. Previous sighting of this species from North Karnataka (unconfirmed report), was from Mundukod in 1983.

This species nests from April to July in wet grassland, rice fields and marshland edges. It winters in similar habitat and is then gregarious. It feeds in shallow water on insects, worms and molluscs.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Moorhen**
Scientific Name : *Gallinula chloropus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The Common Moorhen is a distinctive species, with dark plumage apart from the white under tail, yellow legs and a red frontal shield. The young are browner and lack the red shield. The frontal shield of the adult has a rounded top and fairly parallel sides; the tailward margin of the red unfeathered area is a smooth waving line.

This is a common breeding bird in marsh environments and well-vegetated lakes.

This species will consume a wide variety of vegetable material and small aquatic creatures. They forage beside or in the water, sometimes walking on lily pads or upending in the water to feed. They are often secretive, but can become tame in some areas. Despite loss of habitat in parts of its range, the common moorhen remains plentiful and widespread.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union up to 2000m elevation and higher; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar; Two races-indica of the mainland and Orientalis of the Andamans.

Nesting season – June to September



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Grey Headed Swamphen**
AN: Purple Moorhen
Scientific Name : *Porphyrio poliocephalus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

Grey-headed swamphen (*Porphyrio poliocephalus*) is a species of swamphen occurring from the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent to southern China and northern Thailand. It used to be considered a subspecies of the purple swamphen, but was elevated to full species status in 2015

The sexes are alike, but the female may become dark blue during breeding season.

The male has an elaborate courtship display, holding water weeds in his bill and bowing to the female like a boy offering a rose to a girl he loves and make loud chuckles.

Nesting season – onset of South West Monsoon.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Osprey**
Scientific Name : *Pandion haliaetu*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The osprey also called sea hawk, river hawk, and fish hawk — is a diurnal, fish-eating bird of prey with a cosmopolitan range. It is a large raptor, reaching more than 60cm in length and 180cm across the wings, with a brown-and-white head, and white underparts. Across the upper breast is a broad brown band, or necklace which is diagnostic both when the bird is at rest and on the wing. Both sexes are alike, but the adult male can be distinguished from the female by its slimmer body and narrower wings. The breast band of the male is also weaker than that of the female, or is non-existent, and the under wing coverts of the male are more uniformly pale.

The osprey is the second most widely distributed raptor species, after the peregrine falcon. It has a worldwide distribution and is found in temperate and tropical regions of all continents. European breeders winter in Africa. American and Canadian breeders winter in South America. Australasian ospreys tend not to migrate.

Studies of Swedish ospreys showed that females tend to migrate to Africa earlier than the males. More stopovers are made during their autumn migration. The variation of timing and duration in autumn was more variable than in spring. Although migrating predominantly in the day, they sometimes fly in the dark hours particularly in crossings over water and cover on average 260–280km per day with a maximum of 431km per day. European birds may also winter in South Asia, an osprey ringed in Norway has been recovered in western India (Jamnagar, Gujarat).

It's alleged breeding in the Himalayas, and elsewhere within Indian limits has not been proven.



Photographed by : **Suresh Patil**

Common Name : **Kentish Plover**
Scientific Name : *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The Kentish plover is a small wader, is 15–17cm long. It is smaller, paler, longer-legged and thinner-billed than ringed plover or semipalmated plover. Its breast band is never complete, and usually just appears as dark lateral patches on the sides of the breast. The Kentish plover's upperparts are greyish brown and the underparts white in all plumages. The breast markings are black in summer adults, otherwise brown. Breeding males of some races have a black forehead bar and a black mask through the eye. The legs are black. In flight, the flight feathers are blackish with a strong white wing bar.

This bird has multiple geographical races. The most distinctive are the two that breed in the Americas, collectively called the snowy plover.

The nominate race breeds in Pakistan (Baluchistan) and is a winter visitor along the Indian sea coast and the Nicobars. A resident race in south India and Sri Lanka.

Food: Insects and crustacea

Nesting season – March to August, chiefly May and June in Gujarat. April to August in south India.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Little Ringed Plover**
Scientific Name : *Charadrius dubius*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

Adults have a grey-brown back and wings, a white belly and a white breast with one black neckband. They have a brown cap, a white forehead, a black mask around the eyes with white above and a short dark bill. The legs are flesh-coloured and the toes are all webbed. Both sexes are alike.

This species differs from the larger ringed plover in leg colour, the head pattern, and the presence of a clear yellow eye-ring.

Essentially a bird of mudflats, shingle banks and sandpits by rivers, estuaries and tanks.

Distributed throughout the subcontinent up to about 1500m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Smaller race *jerdoni* resident; larger *curonicus* winter visitor to the Indian Union and Sri Lanka.

Food: Insects, sand-hoppers , tiny crabs etc.

Nesting season – chiefly March to May but varies with locality



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Pacific golden plover**
Scientific Name : *Pluvialis fulva*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Pacific golden plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) is a medium-sized plover. The 23–26cm long breeding adult is spotted gold and black on the crown, and back on the wings. Its face and neck are black with a white border, and it has a black breast and a dark rump. The legs are black. In winter, the black is lost and the plover then has a yellowish face and breast, and white underparts.

It is migratory and winters in south Asia and Australasia. They return to the same wintering territory each year, which allowed scientists in Hawaii to attach tiny light level geolocator devices to the birds and then retrieve them the following year in the same location. This research revealed that these birds make the 4800 km non-stop flight between Alaska and Hawaii in 3–4 days.

Winter visitor to the seaboard of Indian subcontinent; Also Andamans and Nicobars, Lakshadweep, Sri Lanka. As a rare passage migrant inland. Seen on seashore between tide marks.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Little Pratincole**
Scientific Name : *Glareola lactea*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A sandy grey riverside bird with pointed swallow-like wings and squarish (slightly forked) tail. Underparts rufous-tinged sooty brown, belly white. A black band from eye to bill. When flying overhead the whitish underparts, black wing lining, and short black-tipped white tail are leading pointers. Gregarious habit. Both sexes are alike. Small flocks or large loose concentrations on broad rivers and streams with dry shingle beds; also at large jheels and coastal swamps.

Distribution: Resident, nomadic, and local migrant. Practically all India; Nepal; Pakistan; Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Occasionally up to 1800m on Himalayan rivers.

The most unusual feature of the pratincoles is that although classed as waders they typically hunt their insect prey on the wing like swallows, although they can also feed on the ground by running in short spurts, stopping abruptly to pick up a morsel in typical plover style.

Nesting Colonial Season – February to April. Laying 2-4 eggs in a ground scrape



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Redshank**
Scientific Name : *Tringa totanus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

Common Redshank is a large sandpiper, greyish brown above, white below, finely streaked with brown on breast. In flight, white lower back and rump prominent; also the broad white semi-circular band along the trailing edge (hind border) of wing, and the long slender red legs projecting behind. Tail white, barred with brown. In summer (breeding plumage) upperparts somewhat streaked and spotted with black and fulvous, and breast more heavily streaked with brown. Both sexes are alike.

The common redshank is a widespread breeding bird across temperate Eurasia. It is a migratory species, wintering on coasts around the Mediterranean, on the Atlantic coast of Europe from Ireland and Great Britain southwards, and in South Asia. In India it breeds in Kashmir and Ladakh.

They are wary and noisy birds which will alert everything else with their loud piping call. Like most waders, they feed on small invertebrates. Redshanks will nest in any wetland, from damp meadows to salt marsh, often at high densities.

Nesting season – within Indian limits – May to July



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Marsh Sandpiper**
Scientific Name : *Tringa stagnatilis*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Marsh Sandpiper is a small wader. It is a rather small shank, and breeds in open grassy steppe and taiga wetlands from easternmost Europe to central Asia.

It resembles a small elegant greenshank, with a long fine bill and very long yellowish legs. Like the greenshank, it is greyish brown in breeding plumage, paler in winter, and has a white wedge up its back that is visible in flight. However, it is more closely related to the common redshank and the wood sandpiper. Together, they form a group of smallish shanks which tend to have red or reddish legs, and in breeding plumage are generally a subdued, light brown above with some darker mottling, with a pattern of somewhat diffuse small brownish spots on the breast and neck. The length is 22–26cm, wingspan is 55–59cm.

It is a migratory species, with majority of birds wintering in Africa, and India with fewer migrating to Southeast Asia and Australia. They prefer to winter on fresh water wetlands such as swamps and lakes and are usually seen singly or in small groups.

These birds forage by probing in shallow water or on wet mud. They mainly eat insects, and similar small prey.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Sandpiper**
Scientific Name : *Actitis hypoleucos*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Common Sandpiper is a small Palearctic wader and is one of our earliest immigrants (August) and also one of the last to leave (May).

The adult is 18–20cm long with a 32–35cm wingspan. It has greyish-brown upperparts, white underparts, short dark-yellowish legs and feet, and a bill with a pale base and dark tip. In winter plumage, they are duller and have more conspicuous barring on the wings, though this is still only visible at close range.

It is a gregarious bird and is seen in large flocks, and has the distinctive stiff-winged flight, low over the water, of active waders. The common sandpiper breeds across most of temperate and subtropical Europe and Asia, and migrates to Africa, southern Asia and Australia in winter.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The common sandpiper forages by sight on the ground or in shallow water, picking up small food items such as insects, crustaceans and other invertebrates; it may even catch insects in flight.

Nesting season – in Indian limits (Kashmir, Garhwal, Kumaon, etc) May/June.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Green Sandpiper**
Scientific Name : *Tringa ochropus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The green sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) is a small wader (shorebird) of the Old World.

This species is a somewhat plump wader with a dark greenish-brown back and wings, greyish head and breast and otherwise white underparts. The back is spotted white to varying extents, being maximal in the breeding adult, and less in winter and young birds. The legs and short bill are both dark green.

It is conspicuous and characteristically patterned in flight, with the wings dark above and below and a brilliant white rump.

This is not a gregarious species, although sometimes small numbers congregate in suitable feeding areas. Green sandpiper is very much a bird of freshwater, and is often found in sites too restricted for other waders, which tend to like a clear all-round view.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Wood Sandpiper**
Scientific Name : *Tringa glareola*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Wood Sandpiper is a small wader, resembles a longer-legged and more delicate Green Sandpiper with a short fine bill, brown back and longer yellowish legs.

The wood sandpiper breeds in subarctic wetlands from the Scottish Highlands across Europe and Asia. They migrate to Africa, Southern Asia, particularly India, and Australia.

Winter visitor throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

This bird is usually found on freshwater during migration and wintering. They forage by probing in shallow water or on wet mud, and mainly eat insects, larvae, worms and molluscs

Nesting season – in Europe and N. Asia , May-June



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Shikra**
Scientific Name : *Accipiter badius*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Shikra is a small bird of prey, 26–30cm long and like most other Accipiter hawks, this species has short rounded wings and a narrow and somewhat long tail. Adults are whitish on the underside with fine rufous bars while the upperparts are grey. The lower belly is less barred and the thighs are whitish. Males have a red iris while the females have a less red (yellowish orange) iris and brownish upperparts apart from heavier barring on the underparts. The females are slightly larger. The mesial stripe on the throat is dark but narrow.

The shikra is found in a range of habitats including forests, farmland and urban areas. They are usually seen singly or in pairs. The flight is typical with flaps and glides. During the breeding season pairs will soar on thermals and stoop at each other. Their flight usually draws alarms among smaller birds and squirrels. They feed on rodents, squirrels, small birds, small reptiles and insects. Small birds usually dive

through foliage to avoid a shikra and a Small Blue Kingfisher has been observed diving into water to escape. Babblers have been observed to rally together to drive away a shikra. They will descend to the ground to feast on emerging winged termites, hunt at dusk for small bats and in rare instances they may even resort to feed on carrion. In one instance a male was found feeding on a dead chick at the nest.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union, up to about 1300m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The breeding season in India is in summer from March to June.



Photographed by : K. V. Rajeev

Common Name : **Besra**
Scientific Name : *Accipiter virgatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The Besra is a widespread resident breeder in dense forests throughout southern Asia, ranging from the Indian subcontinent eastwards across Southeast Asia and into East Asia. It nests in trees, building a new nest each year. It lays 2 to 5 eggs.

This bird is a medium-sized raptor (29 to 36cm) with short broad wings and a long tail, both adaptations to fast maneuvering. The normal flight of this species is a characteristic “flap–flap–glide”, and the barred under wings are a distinction from the shikra, *A. badius*.

This species is like a darker version of the widespread shikra, but all plumages have a dark vertical throat stripe. The adult male besra has dark blue-grey upperparts, and is white, barred reddish below. The larger female is browner above than the male. The juvenile is dark brown above and white, barred with brown below. It has a barred tail.

Food: Largely small birds but takes squirrels, mice, bats, lizards and insects.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Stone Chat**
Scientific Name : *Saxicola torquatus*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Irpage

The African stonechat or common stonechat (*Saxicola torquatus*) is a species of the Old World flycatcher family (Muscicapidae), inhabiting sub-Saharan Africa and adjacent regions.

Male with black head, orange brown breast, and prominent white patches on sides of neck, shoulders, and above root or tail, female like that of Pied Bushchat but dark-streaked on upperparts. Separated pairs, in open country, about cultivation and reedy marshes.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Myanmar. Plains and hills. Not in Sri Lanka. There are about 15 subspecies in its range. Of the four races occurring, only two are breeding within India, in Himalayas between 700 and 3000m.

Food: Insects

Nesting season – In the Himalayas April to July.



Photographed by : **T. Premkumar**

Common Name : **Asian Openbill**
Scientific Name : *Anastomus oscitans*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Asian openbill stork is predominantly greyish (non-breeding season) or white (breeding season) with glossy black wings and tail that have a green or purple sheen. The name is derived from the distinctive gap formed between the recurved lower and arched upper mandible of the beak in adult birds. Young birds do not have this gap. The cutting edges of the mandible have a fine brush like structure that is thought to give them better grip on the shells of snails. The mantle is black and the bill is horn-grey.

The usual foraging habitats are inland wetlands and are only rarely seen along river banks and tidal flats. Birds may move widely in response to habitat conditions. Young birds also disperse widely after fledging. Individuals ringed at Bharatpur in India have been recovered 800km east and a bird ringed in Thailand has been recovered 1500km west in Bangladesh. The species is very rare in the Sind and Punjab regions of Pakistan, but widespread and common in India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand

The Asian openbill feeds mainly on large molluscs, especially Pila species, and they separate the shell from the body of the snail using the tip of the beak. The tip of the lower mandible of the beak is often twisted to the right. This tip is inserted into the opening of the snail and the body is extracted with the bill still under water.

The breeding season is after the rains, during July to September in northern India and November to March in southern India and Sri Lanka. They may skip breeding in drought years. Nesting colonies are sometimes in highly disturbed areas such as inside villages. Males may sometimes form polygynous associations, typically with two females which may lay their eggs in the same nest.



Photographed by : **T. Premkumar**

Common Name : **Woolly-necked Stork**
Scientific Name : *Ciconia episcopus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The woolly-necked stork is a medium-sized stork at 75–92cm tall. The iris is deep crimson or wine-red. The stork is glistening black overall with a black “skull cap”, a downy white neck which gives it its name. The lower belly and under-tail coverts are white, standing out from the rest of the dark coloured plumage. Feathers on the fore-neck are iridescent with a coppery-purple tinge. These feathers are elongated and can be erected during displays. The tail is deeply forked and is white, usually covered by the black long under tail coverts. It has long red legs and a heavy, blackish bill, though some specimens have largely dark-red bills with only the basal one-third being black. Sexes are alike.

It is a widespread tropical species which breeds in Asia, from India to Indonesia, and in tropical Africa. It is a resident breeder in wetlands with trees.

Food : Fish, frogs, reptiles, crabs, molluscs and large insects etc.

Nesting season – Practically all year, varying locally.



Photographed by : **Mahantesh Oshimath**

Common Name : Lesser Adjutant
Scientific Name : *Leptoptilos javanicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

A large stork with an upright stance, a bare head and neck without a pendant pouch, it has a length of 87–93cm outstretched from bill-to-tail measurement, and stands about 110–120cm tall. The only confusable species is the greater adjutant, but this species is generally smaller and has a straight upper bill edge (culmen), measuring 25.8–30.8cm in length, with a paler base and appears slightly trimmer and less hunch-backed. The skullcap is paler and the upper plumage is uniformly dark, appearing almost all black. The nearly naked head and neck have a few scattered hair-like feathers. During the breeding season, the face is reddish and the neck is orange.

The lesser adjutant is often found in large rivers and lakes inside well wooded regions, in freshwater wetlands in agricultural areas, and coastal wetlands including mudflats and mangroves. It is found in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh (A colony with about 6 nests and 20 individuals was discovered near Thakurgaon in 2011), Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam,

Malaysia, Laos, Singapore, Indonesia and Cambodia. The largest population is in Cambodia. In India they are mainly distributed in the eastern states of Assam, West Bengal and Bihar. It may occur as a vagrant on the southern edge of Bhutan. They are rare in southern India. In Sri Lanka, they are found in lowland largely within protected areas, though they also use forested wetlands and crop fields.

This bird was spotted in Kerwadi and Halaga Ulaga during Kaiga Bird Marathon conducted in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Prior to this there was a report of its appearance at Kadra in the month of February 2009. It is also reported from the upperland Haliyal near Dandely.

The breeding season is February to May in southern India and November to January in north-eastern India, beginning as early as July. The nest is a large platform of sticks placed on a tall tree. The nest diameter is more than a meter and up to a meter deep.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Laughing Dove**
AN: Little Brown Dove
Scientific Name : *Streptopelia (streptopelia) senegalensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Laughing Dove is a small pigeon that is a resident breeder in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle-East, east to the Indian Subcontinent.

The laughing dove is a long-tailed, slim pigeon, typically 25 cm (9.8 in) in length. It is pinkish brown on the underside with a lilac tinged head and neck. The head and underparts are pinkish, shading to buff on the lower abdomen. A chequered rufous and grey patch is found on the sides of the neck and are made up of split feathers. The upper parts are brownish with a bluish-grey band along the wing. The back is uniform and dull brown in the Indian population.

It is a common and widespread species in scrub, dry farmland and habitation over a good deal of its range, often becoming very tame. The species is found in much of Sub-Saharan Africa, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. It is also found in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, the UAE and Turkey (these populations may be derived from

human introductions). They are mostly sedentary but some populations may make movements. Birds ringed in Gujarat have been recovered 200km north in Pakistan and exhausted birds have been recorded landing on ships in the Arabian Sea.

Unrecorded in Himalayas, North East India and Sri Lanka

Laughing doves eat the fallen seeds, mainly of grasses, other vegetable matter and small ground insects such as termites and beetles. They are fairly terrestrial, foraging on the ground in grasslands and cultivation. Their flight is quick and direct with the regular beats and an occasional sharp flick of the wings which are characteristic of pigeons in general.

Nesting season – Practically throughout the year.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Oriental Turtle Dove**
Scientific Name : *Streptopelia orientalis*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kodasally

Oriental Turtle Dove is a large reddish brown dove, scaly pattern above and black-and-white 'chessboard' on sides of neck. Tail broad, round with white terminal band conspicuous when alighting. Similar to spotted dove and distinguished from it by rich rufous colour and stocky pigeon like build. Both sexes are alike.

Resident in the entire subcontinent in three races up to 4000m. Pakistan; Nepal; Bangladesh. Their numbers augmented in winter by extralimital migrants. The northern breeding race visits the peninsula in winter; vagrant to Sri Lanka.

Food : Paddy, cereals, bamboo and grass seeds.

Nesting season – May to July



Photographed by : Jithendra Singh

Common Name : Eurasian Collared Dove
Scientific Name : *Streptopelia decaocto*
Residential Status : Resident / Migratory
Place : Keradi

It is a medium-sized dove, distinctly smaller than the wood pigeon, similar in length to a rock pigeon but slimmer and longer-tailed, and slightly larger than the related turtle dove, with an average length of 32cm from tip of beak to tip of tail, with a wingspan of 47–55cm. It is grey-buff to pinkish-grey overall, a little darker above than below, with a blue-grey under wing patch. The tail feathers are grey-buff above, and dark grey tipped white below; the outer tail feathers also tipped whitish above. It has a black half-collar edged with white on its nape from which it gets its name. The short legs are red and the bill is black. The iris is red, but from a distance the eyes appear to be black, as the pupil is relatively large and only a narrow rim of reddish-brown iris can be seen around the black pupil. The eye is surrounded by a small area of bare skin, which is either white or yellow. The two sexes are virtually indistinguishable

Distribution: Throughout the drier portion of the Indian Union, Ascending locally and seasonally to 3000m in the Himalayas. Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The collared dove is not wary and often feeds very close to human habitation, including visiting bird tables; the largest populations are typically found around farms where spilt grain is frequent around grain stores or where livestock are fed. It is a gregarious species and sizeable winter flocks will form where there are food supplies such as grain (its main food) as well as seeds, shoots and insects. Flocks most commonly number between ten and fifty.

Nesting season – Practically all year



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Spotted Dove**
Scientific Name : *Streptopelia chinensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Spotted Dove is a small and somewhat long-tailed pigeon which is a common resident breeding bird across its native range on the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

They have White-spotted pinkish brown and grey upperparts, and white-an-black 'chessboard' on hind neck, are leading clues to its identity. Both sexes are alike.

Distributed throughout Indian Union (except the arid northwestern parts), and in Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. The Indian race differs from both the Burmese and Sri Lankan races in details of size and coloration.

Spotted doves move around in pairs or small groups as they forage on the ground for grass seeds, grains, fallen fruits and seeds of other plants. They may however take insects occasionally and have been recorded feeding on winged termites.

Nesting season – Practically all year.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Emerald Dove**
Scientific Name : *Chalcophaps indica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Emerald Dove is brownish pink dove, with glistening emerald bronze green upperparts and conspicuous white forehead and eyebrows. In flight chestnut underside of wings diagnostic. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pair.

Distributed in the entire Western Ghat and Nilgiris and associated hills; The sub Himalayas from Dehra Dun to NE.India; Eastern Ghats; Eastern Madhya Pradesh; Andamans; Nicobars; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. The Sri Lankan race robinsoni differs from the Indian race indica in details of colour and size.

Nesting season – January to May, varying locally



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**
Scientific Name : *Treeron phoenicopterus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Yellow-footed Green Pigeon is a stocky yellow, olive-green and ashy grey pigeon with a lilac patch on shoulders and a conspicuous yellow bar in the blackish wings. Both sexes are alike. Yellow legs always diagnostic for this species.

The species feeds on fruit, including many species of Ficus. They forage in flocks. In the early morning they are often seen sunning on the tops of emergent trees in dense forest areas. They especially are found sitting in couples on tree branches.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Nesting season – Mainly March to June



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Grey-Fronted Green Pigeon**
AN: Pompadour Green-Pigeon

Scientific Name : *Treron affinis*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Virje

Very like Yellow-footed Green Pigeon but smaller, and with red legs instead of yellow. Sexes dissimilar; male with prominent chestnut mantle.

Distributed widely. There are five subspecies in its range. *Treron affinis* belongs to Western Ghat. The endemic subspecies *T.pompadora* of Sri Lanka has the forehead yellow. Other subspecies occurs in the Andamans and Nicobars; Nepal; Bangladesh.

Food: Exclusively fruits and berries; wild figs specially favoured.

Nesting season – December to March



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : Orange-breasted Green Pigeon
Scientific Name : *Icthyophaga ichthyaetus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Orange-breasted Green Pigeon is a pigeon found across tropical Asia south of the Himalaya across the Indian Subcontinent and parts of Southeast Asia.

Similar in appearance to other green pigeons including the yellow-footed green pigeon and the grey-fronted green pigeon but has no maroon on the head but has a narrow band of lilac on the upper breast with a broader orange band below. The under tail-coverts are cinnamon with the longer feathers edged yellow. The tails is grey above with a broad sub terminal dark band. The females are yellow below and lack the orange or lilac bands.

This is a species of forest and is widely distributed from the Terai and lower Himalayas (below 1500 m) south mainly in the Western and Eastern Ghats and in Sri Lankan forests not far from the coast. They are found in Bur-ma, Thailand the Malay Peninsula, Vietnam, Java and Hainan. Some seasonal movements are suspected as va-grants have been recorded from locations like Sind.

They eat seeds and fruits of a wide variety of plants often joining other frugivores at fruiting figs, foraging by slow-ly walking along branches. They are known to feed on *Strychnos nux-vomica*, the fruits of which are toxic to mam-mals

The breeding season in India is March to September but mainly before June. In Sri Lanka, they breed mainly from December to May.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Mountain Imperial Pigeon
Scientific Name : *Ducula badia*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Hartuga

The mountain imperial pigeon is the largest pigeon species in its range at 43–51cm long. It has a fairly long tail, broad, rounded wings and slow wing-beats. The head, neck and underparts are vinous-grey with a contrasting white throat and brownish-maroon upperparts and wings, though the upper part of the body can be duller. The under wing is slate-grey and the tail is blackish with a grey horizontal line. The combination the maroon back with the large size give this species a distinctive appearance. Its call consists of a deep, resonant boom that is only detectable at close range.

Though usually solitary, this species has been seen in groups numbering up to 20, especially when going to roost or flying up or down in mountains. They can be difficult to see, since they spend their time usually in high canopy and usually fly fairly high over the canopy.

They feed on fruits and berries, especially figs and nutmeg, which are plucked and swallowed whole. They will occasionally go to the ground to drink.

The pigeon has a wide range in south-eastern Asia, where it occurs in Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In the Northern stretches of the species range, breeding is from March to August, while in the southern parts of India and southeast Asia, they breed from January to May.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Green Imperial Pigeon**
Scientific Name : *Ducula aenea*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The green imperial pigeon is a large forest pigeon, 45cm in length. Its back, wings and tail are metallic green. The head and underparts are white, apart from maroon under tail coverts. Sexes are similar.

Found in evergreen and moist deciduous forests of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar east to NE India, Orissa and the Eastern Ghats of North Andhra Pradesh, Western Ghats from Kanyakumari north to near Mumbai, Andamans and Nocona's; Myanmar; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka.

Exclusively frugivorous, figs being the staple but other fruits eaten.

Nesting season – March to June mainly April and May.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Rock Pigeon**

AN: Rock Dove, Common Pigeon

Scientific Name : *Columba livia*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kaiga Township

It is the common pigeon we generally observe everywhere whether it is urban or rural buildings , and forest dwelling, old forts at the hilltop etc.

It is a slaty grey bird with glistening metallic green, purple and magenta sheen on neck and upper breast. Two dark bars on wings, and a band across end of tail. Both sexes are alike. Flocks and colonies about cliffs and human habitations, mostly seen in a semi-domesticated condition, living as a commensally of man and largely adulterated through interbreeding with fancy artificial strains.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union, locally up to 4000m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident, but also partial local migrant.

Food : Cereals, pulses, groundnuts etc.

Nesting season – Practically all year in semi-feral birds.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Chestnut-headed Bee-eater**
Scientific Name : *Merops leschenaulti*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The chestnut-headed bee-eater, like other bee-eaters, is a richly coloured, slender bird. It is predominantly green, with blue on the rump and lower belly. Its face and throat are yellow with a black eye stripe, and the crown and nape are rich chestnut. The thin curved bill is black. Sexes are alike, but young birds are duller. This species is 18–20cm long; it lacks the two elongated central tail feathers possessed by most of its relatives.

This is a bird which breeds in sub-tropical open woodland, often near water. It is most common in highland areas. As the name suggests, bee-eaters predominantly eat insects, especially bees, wasps and hornets, which are caught in the air by sorties from an open perch.

Distributed discontinually in India. The Western Ghats country south of about Belgaum; the Himalayan terai from Dehra Dun to NE India; Orissa; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Rare or absent in central and eastern peninsular India and Andamans.

These bee-eaters are gregarious, nesting colonially in sandy banks. They make a relatively long tunnel in which the 5 to 6 spherical white eggs are laid. Both the male and the female take care of the eggs. These birds also feed and roost communally.

Nesting season – overall February to May, varying locally.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Green Bee-eater**
AN: Small Bee-eater
Scientific Name : *Merops orientalis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

Like other bee-eaters, this species is a richly coloured, slender bird. It is about 9 inches (16–18cm) long with about 2 inches made up by the elongated central tail-feathers. The sexes are not visually distinguishable. The entire plumage is bright green and tinged with blue especially on the chin and throat. The crown and upper back are tinged with golden rufous. The flight feathers are rufous washed with green and tipped with blackish. A fine black line runs in front of and behind the eye. The iris is crimson and the bill is black while the legs are dark grey. The feet are weak with the three toes joined at the base.

Distributed throughout the Indian Union from about 1000 m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and locally migratory. Moving away to drier regions in the rainy season and to warmer regions in winter. In parts of Pakistan, they are summer visitors.

Like other species in the genus, bee-eaters predominantly eat insects, especially bees, wasps and ants, which are caught in the air by sorties from an open perch. Before swallowing prey, a bee-eater removes stings and breaks the exoskeleton of the prey by repeatedly thrashing it on the perch.

Nesting season – principally February to May. Unlike many bee-eaters, these are often solitary nesters, making a tunnel in a sandy bank. The breeding pairs are often joined by helpers. They nest in hollows in vertical mud banks. The nest tunnel that they construct can run as much as 5 feet long and the 3-5 eggs are laid on the bare ground in the cavity at the end of the tunnel.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**
Scientific Name : *Merops philippinus*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Blue-tailed Bee-eater is distinguished from small Bee-eater by larger size, black stripe through the eyes deep chestnut throat and breast blue rump and tail. It can reach a length of 23–26cm, including the two elongated central tail feathers. Both sexes are alike.

Inhabits more or less the same type of country as small Bee-eater but on the whole definitely prefers better-wooded tracts and the neighbourhood of jheels and streams.

Distributed throughout India from about 1000m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and locally migratory. Winter visitor in South India

Nesting season – overall march to June. Nesting behavior and method similar to other bee-eaters



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Stork-billed Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Pelargopsis capensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

Stork-billed Kingfisher is easily distinguished from all other brightly coloured kingfishers by its large size and enormous, compressed blood-red bill. Head brown, upper parts pale greenish blue, underparts pale yellowish brown. Both sexes are alike. Singly or separated pairs, at forest streams, jungle pools, mangroves and swampy glades. It is territorial and will chase away eagles and other large predators.

Distribution: practically the entire Indian Union (except Rajasthan and the adjoining arid portions); Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Food: Fish, crabs, reptiles, frogs and occasionally also young birds and eggs from nests.

Nesting season – January to July. They dig their nests in river banks, decaying trees, or tree termite nests.



Photographed by : **Mahantesh Oshimath**

Common Name : **White-throated Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The white-throated kingfisher is a large kingfisher, 28cm in length. The adult has a bright blue back, wings and tail. Its head, shoulders, flanks and lower belly are chestnut, and the throat and breast are white. The large bill and legs are bright red. The flight of the white-throated kingfisher is rapid and direct, the short rounded wings whirring. In flight, large white patches are visible on the blue and black wings. Sexes are similar, but juveniles are a duller version of the adult.

There are four geographic races. *Smyrnensis* (Linnaeus, 1758) is found in Turkey, Northern and Central Israel, Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, northwestern India, China, Taiwan and the Philippines, south of Thailand, West Malaysia, Singapore, Sumatra and Java.

fusca (Boddaert, 1783) is found in India, Sri Lanka, South China, Taiwan, Sumatra and West Java.

Population from Burma to the Greater Sundas were treated under the name *perpulchra* but are now lumped into *fusca*. South China and Taiwanese populations are sometimes treated as subspecies *fokiensis*. *saturator* Hume, 1874 is found in the Andaman Islands. *gularis* (Kuhl, 1820) is found in the Philippines.

It perches conspicuously on wires or other exposed perches within its territory, and is a frequent sight in south Asia. This species mainly hunts large crustaceans, insects, earthworms, [10] rodents, snakes, fish and frogs. Predation of small birds such as the Oriental white-eye, chick of a red-wattled lapwing, sparrows and munias have been reported. The young are fed mostly on invertebrates.

Nesting season – principally March to July. The nest is a tunnel (50cm long, but a nest with a 3-foot tunnel has been noted) in an earth bank.



Photographed by : A.L. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Pied Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Ceryle rudis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

Pied Kingfisher is a speckled and barred black-and-white kingfisher with the typical, stout, dagger shaped bill. Female similar to male but with a single black gorget broken in the middle, as against two more or less complete ones in the male. Singly or pairs, by streams and tanks, perched on rock or hovering above water.

Its chief characteristic is its spectacular method of fishing. It hovers stationary for considerable periods, 10 m or so above the water before striking , waiting for the fish to come up.

Distributed throughout the plains of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. Myanmar.

Food: Fish, tadpoles, frogs and aquatic insects.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black Capped Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Halcyon pileata*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kuchegar

The Black Capped Kingfisher is about 28 centimeters long. The adult has a purple-blue wings and back, black head and shoulders, white neck collar and throat, and rufous underparts. The large bill and legs are bright red. In flight, large white patches or “mirrors” at the base of the primaries are visible on the blue and black wings. Sexes are similar, but juveniles are a duller version of the adult and show streaks on the throat.

In India, the species is mainly found in coastal and mangrove habitats but can sometimes be found far inland also. Andamans and nicobars; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Its food habits are quite similar to those of the more familiar white-breasted species.

The breeding season is in summer. The nest is a tunnel in an earth bank.



Photographed by : **R. Byanna**

Common Name : **Common Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Alcedo atthis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

This sparrow-sized bird has the typical short-tailed, large-headed kingfisher profile; it has blue upperparts, orange underparts and a long bill. It feeds mainly on fish, caught by diving, and has special visual adaptations to enable it to see prey under water. The female is identical in appearance to the male except that her lower mandible is orange-red with a black tip. The juvenile is similar to the adult, but with duller and greener upperparts and paler underparts. Its bill is black, and the legs are also initially black.

The flight of the kingfisher is fast, direct and usually low over water. The short rounded wings whirl rapidly, and a bird flying away shows an electric-blue “flash” down its back.

Like all kingfishers, the common kingfisher is highly territorial; since it must eat around 60% of its body weight each day, it is essential to have control of a suitable stretch of river. It is solitary for most of the year, roosting alone in heavy cover. If another kingfisher enters its territory, both birds display from perches, and fights may occur, where a bird will grab the other's beak and try to hold it under water.

Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Food: Small fish tadpoles and aquatic insects

Nesting season – Principally March to June.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Blue-eared Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Alcedo meninting*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kodasally

This 16 centimetres long kingfisher is almost identical to the common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) but is distinguished by the blue ear coverts, darker and more intense cobalt-blue upperparts with richer rufous under parts. The juvenile blue-eared kingfisher has rufous ear-coverts as in the common kingfisher but it usually shows some mottling on the throat and upper breast which disappears when the bird reaches adulthood. Young birds have a reddish bill with whitish tips.

The range of this species stretches from India in the west, Western Ghat from Goa to West Tamilnadu, eastwards across Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh, and further into Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Malaysia. The usual habitat is pools or streams in dense evergreen forest and sometimes mangroves, situated under 1,000 m of altitude.

The blue-eared kingfisher is largely resident within its range. They usually perch on branches overhanging densely shaded streams before diving below to capture prey that includes crustaceans, dragonfly larvae and fish. Other insects including grasshoppers and mantis have been recorded.

Nesting season – April to August, January in Kerala.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher**
Scientific Name : *Ceyx erithacus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, is a small, red and yellow kingfisher, averaging 13cm in length, yellow underparts with glowing bluish-black upperparts. A widespread resident of lowland forest, it is endemic across much of the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. It is found in Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Andamans and Nicobars.

The preferred habitat is small streams in densely shaded forests. In the Konkan region of southwest India, it begins to breed with the onset of the southwest monsoon in June.

This kingfisher breeds in the exclusion zone of KGS.

Food: geckos, skinks, crabs, snails, frogs, crickets, and dragonflies.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Southern Coucal**
Scientific Name : *Centropus sinensis (parroti)*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

Until recently it was considered along with Greater Coucal but now it is a separate species. The Southern Coucal is different from the Greater Coucal by smaller size, blue-green (rather than purplish) gloss to black head and body, less rufous on mantle, and brownish forehead and throat. Unlike Greater Coucal juvenile plumage is similar to adult with head and body dull blackish and lacking prominent barring. Chestnut wings are duller and contrast less with body than in adult, and coverts and tertials are marked with black (and therefore more closely resembles Green-billed Coucal)

One of the non-parasitic cuckoos and largely terrestrial. Found in open forest, scrub-bush-country interspersed with grassland and shrubbery and groves about human habitations. Stalks along the ground, or clammers and hops with agility amongst branches of shrubs in search of food.

Food: Caterpillars, large insects, snails, lizards, young mice and bird's eggs.

Distribution- found in Peninsular India (Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and southwards). Its northern boundary is unclear at present.

The breeding season is after the monsoon in southern India but varies in other parts of its range but chiefly June to September.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Common Coot**
AN: Eurasian Coot
Scientific Name : *Fulica atra*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Eurasian coot, is a member of the rail and crane bird family, the Rallidae.

The Eurasian coot is 32–42cm long and is largely black except for the white frontal shield (which gave rise to the phrase “as bald as a coot. As a swimming species, the coot has partial webbing on its long strong toes.

The juvenile is paler than the adult, has a whitish breast, and lacks the facial shield; the adult black plumage develops when about 3–4 months old, but the white shield is only fully developed at about one year old.

This is a noisy bird with a wide repertoire of crackling, explosive, or trumpeting calls, often given at night.

The coot is an omnivore, and will take a variety of small live prey including the eggs of other water birds, as well as algae, vegetation, seeds and fruit. It shows considerable variation in its feeding techniques, grazing on land or in the water. In the water it may upend in the fashion of a mallard or dive in search of food.

This species builds a nest of dead reeds or grasses, but also pieces of paper or plastic near the water's edge or on underwater obstacles protruding from the water, laying up to 10 eggs, sometimes 2 or 3 times per season. Usually only a few young survive. They are frequent prey for birds such as herons and gulls.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Drongo Cuckoo**
Scientific Name : *Surniculus lugubris*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

Closely resembles black drongo. Separated only by the white under tails coverts and the outermost tail feathers being barred with white near their base.

Arboreal, keeping to the canopy foliage of trees and shrubs. Flight definitely cuckoo- like.

Distributed throughout the Indian peninsula in well wooded country. Himalayas 2000m eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh and NE. hill states. Bangladesh; Sri Lanka

Food: Caterpillars and insects. Occasionally fruit.

Nesting season – March to October



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Banded Bay Cuckoo**
Scientific Name : *Cacomantis sonneratii*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A slim cuckoo bright rufous above conspicuously cross barred with brown, whitish below with fine wavy cross-bars, also on sides of head and neck. Tail rufous tipped with white, and sub tipped black. Both sexes are alike .

Distribution: Practically throughout India but evident mainly during the monsoon. More common in south than in northern India.

Food : Caterpillars and bugs

Nesting: Brood parasite of ioras, bulbuls, minivets and small babblers. Season – Coinciding with that of host species.



Photographed by : K . Harish

Common Name : **Common Hawk-Cuckoo**
Scientific Name : *Hierococcyx varius*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Common Hawk-cuckoo popularly known as the Brain feverbird, is a medium-sized cuckoo resident in the Indian subcontinent.

The plumage is ashy grey above; whitish below, cross-banded with brown. The tail is broadly barred. The sexes are alike but males tend to be larger. They have a distinctive yellow eye ring. Sub adults have the breast streaked, similar to the immature shikra, and there are large brown chevron marks on the belly. At first glance they can be mistaken for a hawk. When flying they use a flap and glide style that resembles that of sparrowhawks (especially the shikra) and flying upwards and landing on a perch they shake their tails from side to side. Many small birds and squirrels raise the alarm just as they would in the presence of a hawk.

The common hawk-cuckoo occurs in most of the Indian subcontinent, from Pakistan in the west, across the Himalayas foothills, east to Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh and south into Sri Lanka. Some birds of the Indian population winter in Sri Lanka.

The call of this bird has been popularly transcribed as brain-fever in English, the call is repeated with monotonous persistency 5 or 6 times, rising in crescendo and ending abruptly. Heard all through the day and frequently during moonlit nights. Other interpretations of the bird call include peea kahan in Hindi (“where’s my love”) or chokh gelo (in Bengali, “my eyes are gone”) and paos ala (Marathi, “the rains are coming”).

Food: Caterpillars and other insects berries and wild figs etc.

Nesting season - March to June, coinciding with that of some of the Turdoides babblers. A single egg is laid in each nest, blue, like that of the host. The hatchling usually evicts the eggs of its host and is reared to maturity by foster parents, following them for nearly a month. The predominant host species in India are Jungle Babbler (*Turdoides striatus*) and Yellow-billed babbler (*Turdoides affinis*). Hawk-cuckoos also parasitize the large LargeGrey Babbler (*Turdoides malcolmi*).



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Pied -crested Cuckoo**
AN: Jacobin cuckoo
Scientific Name : *Clamator jacobinus*
Residential Status : Monsoon Visitor / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Jacobin cuckoo, or Pied crested cuckoos a member of the cuckoo order of birds that is found in Africa and Asia. It is partially migratory and in India, it has been considered a harbinger of the monsoon rains due to the timing of its arrival.

This medium-sized, slim black and white cuckoo with a crest is distinctive. The white wing patch on the black wing and the pattern make it unmistakable even in flight. They are very vocal during the breeding season.

In India the subspecies *serratus* is a summer breeding visitor to northern India and is believed to migrate to southern Africa. This is larger and longer winged than the nominate subspecies found in the southern peninsular region and Sri Lanka is said to be a local migrant.

Distribution: The species is distributed south of the Sahara in Africa and south of the Himalayas in India. Also found in Sri Lanka and parts of Myanmar. Within Africa, there are movements of the species although they are resident in tropical Africa. The east African population is migratory and moves over southern Arabia into India during April. The habitat of the species is mainly in thorny, dry scrub or open woodland avoiding areas of dense forest or extremely dry environments.

These cuckoos feed on insects including hairy caterpillars that are picked up from near or on the ground.

The species is a brood parasite and in India the hosts are mainly species of babblers i.e. jungle babbler and Red-vented bulbul.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-eyed Buzzard**
Scientific Name : *Butastur teesa*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The White-eyed Buzzard (*Butastur teesa*) is a medium-sized hawk, distinct from the true buzzards in the genus *Buteo*, found in South Asia. This slim and small sized hawk is easily identified by its white iris to the eye and the white throat and dark mesial stripe. A white spot is sometimes visible on the back of the head. When perched the wing tip nearly reaches the tip of the tail. The ceres are distinctly yellow and the head is dark with the underside of the body darkly barred. In flight the narrow wings appear rounded with black tips to the feathers and the wing-lining appears dark. The upper wing in flight shows a pale bar over the brown. The rufous tail is barred with a darker sub terminal band. Young birds have the iris brownish and the forehead is whitish and a broad supercilium may be present.

This species is widely distributed in South Asia, throughout India in the plains and extending up to 1000 m in the Himalayas. It is a resident in Iran, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar, and has been recorded in Indonesia. It is absent from Sri Lanka

They feed mainly on locusts, grasshoppers, crickets and other large insects as well as mice, lizards and frogs. They may also take crabs from near wetlands and have even been reported to take larger prey like the Black-napped Hare (*Lepus nigricollis*).

Nesting season – February to May



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Peregrine Falcon**
AN: Shaheen falcon
Scientific Name : *Falco peregrinus peregrinator*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Shaheen is a small and powerful-looking falcon with blackish upperparts, rufous underparts with fine, dark streaks, and white on the throat. The complete black face mask is sharply demarcated from the white throat. It has distinctive rufous underwing-coverts. Males and females have similar markings and plumage; apart from size there is no sexual dimorphism. The birds range in length from 38cm to 44cm. The male is about the size of a house crow; the female is larger.

The Shaheen is found in South Asia from Pakistan across to India and Bangladesh in the east and to Sri Lanka, central and south-eastern China, and northern Myanmar. In India, it has been recorded in all states (except Uttar Pradesh), mainly from rocky and hilly regions. The shaheen has also been reported from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal.

The Shaheen is usually seen as a solitary bird, or in pairs on cliffs and rock pinnacles. Peregrines typically mate for life. Because of the size difference between a male and a female, a mated pair generally hunt different prey species. It is adapted to taking prey in the air and can achieve a speed of 240kmh in level flight; when diving after prey it can exceed speeds of 320 kmh .

Shaheens mostly hunt small birds, though medium-sized birds such as pigeons and parrots are also taken. Strong and fast, they dive from great heights to strike prey with their talons. If the impact does not kill the prey, the falcon bites the neck of its victim to ensure death.

The breeding season is from December to April. The birds occupy nests on high cliff ledges or in cavities and tunnels.



Photographed by : **Jalil B. Bargir**

Common Name : **Laggar Falcon**
Scientific Name : *Falco jugger*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kodasally

The Laggar falcon (*Falco jugger*) is a mid-sized bird of prey which occurs in the Indian subcontinent from extreme south-east Iran, south-east Afghanistan, Pakistan, through India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and north-west Myanmar.

This species belongs to a close-knit complex of falcons known as hierofalcons. The radiation of the entire living diversity of hierofalcons seems to have taken place in the Eemian interglacial at the start of the Late Pleistocene, a mere 130,000-115,000 years ago; the laggar falcon represents a lineage that arrived at its present range out of eastern Africa by way of the Arabian Peninsula which during that time had a more humid climate than today.

Laggar falcons used to be the most common falcons in the region, but numbers have declined markedly in recent times and today it is probably nowhere a common species anymore. The main threats are the intensification of pesticide use in the region. IUCN status Near Threatened



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Amur Falcon**
Scientific Name : *Falco amurensis*
Residential Status : Migrant/ Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Amur falcon is a small raptor of the falcon family. It breeds in south-eastern Siberia and Northern China before migrating in large flocks across India and over the Arabian Sea to winter in Southern Africa.

Males are dark grey with reddish brown thighs and undertail coverts; reddish orange eye-ring, cere, and feet. Females are duller above, with dark scaly markings on white underparts, an orange eye ring, cere, and legs. Only a pale wash of rufous is visible on their thighs and undertail coverts.

Females can be more difficult to identify as they share a pattern common to many falcons, but are distinctive in having an orange eye-ring, a red cere and reddish orange feet

The Amur falcon breeds in east Asia from the Transbaikalia, Amurland, and northern Mongolian region to parts of North Korea. They migrate in a broad front through India and Sri Lanka, sometimes further east over Thailand and Cambodia and then over the Arabian Sea, sometimes in passage on the Maldives and other islands to reach southern Africa.

Their diet consists mainly of insects, such as termites; during migration over the sea, they are thought to feed on migrating dragonflies. They capture most of their prey in flight, sometimes by hovering, but will also pick prey by alighting on the ground. Spotted first time in KBM-2017



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Gray Junglefowl**
Scientific Name : *Gallus sonneratii*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Grey Junglefowl (*Gallus sonneratii*), is one of the wild ancestors of domestic fowl together with the red junglefowl and other junglefowls.

General feature of the cock is streaked gray with a metallic black-sickle shaped tail. Hen distinguishable from that of Red jungle fowl by her white (not rufous brown) breast with blackish borders to the feathers producing a scaly pattern. Legs of males are red and have spurs while the yellow legs of females usually lack spurs. Males have an eclipse plumage in which they moult their colourful neck feathers in summer during or after the breeding season. Singly or small parties, in forest and scrub jungle.

The species is mainly in the Indian Peninsula but extends into Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and south Rajasthan. This species and the red jungle fowl overlap slightly along the northern boundary of the distribution although the ranges are largely non-overlapping.

They feed on grains including bamboo seeds, berries, insects and termites.

Nesting season – undefined; principally February to May



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Ruddy-breasted Crake**
Scientific Name : *Porzana fusca*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The ruddy-breasted crake or ruddy crake, is a waterbird in the rail and crake family Rallidae.

The ruddy-breasted crake is about 22–23cm long. The body is flattened laterally to allow easier passage through the reeds or undergrowth. It has long toes and a short tail. Coloring includes a pale brown back and chestnut head and underparts, with white barring on the flanks and undertail. The bill is yellowish, and the eyes, legs, and feet are red.

The sexes are similar, but juveniles are dark brown with some white spotting.

These birds probe in mud or shallow water and also pick up food by sight. They forage for shoots, berries and insects, as well as large snails, which they eat by using their bills to peck through the hard shell.

Ruddy-breasted crakes are territorial, but are quite secretive, hiding amongst grassy shrubs and bushes when disturbed.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-breasted Waterhen**
Scientific Name : *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The white-breasted waterhen is a water bird of the rail and crane family, Rallidae.

Adult white-breasted water hens have mainly dark grey upperparts and flanks, and a white face, neck and breast. The lower belly and under tail are cinnamon coloured. The body is flattened laterally to allow easier passage through the reeds or undergrowth. They have long toes, a short tail and a yellow bill and legs. Sexes are similar but females measure slightly smaller. The downy chicks are black, as with all rails.

Their breeding habitat is marshes across south Asia from Pakistan, Maldives, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka to south China, Philippines, and Indonesia. They are mainly seen in the plains but have been known from the higher hills such as in Nainital (1300m) and the High Range (1500m) in Kerala. These large 32cm long rails are permanent residents throughout their range.

These birds are usually seen singly or in pairs as they forage slowly along the edge of a water body mainly on the ground but sometimes clambering up low vegetation. The tail is held up and jerked as they walk. They probe with their bill in mud or shallow water, also picking up food by sight. They mainly eat insects (large numbers of beetles have been recorded), small fish, aquatic invertebrates and seeds such as those of *Pithecolobium dulce*. They may sometimes feed in deeper water in the manner of a moorhen.

Many rails are very secretive, but white-breasted water hens are often seen out in the open. They can be noisy especially at dawn and dusk, with loud croaky calls.

Nesting season – mainly June to October but varies locally. They nest in a dry location on the ground in marsh vegetation, laying 6-7 eggs.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Baya Weaver**
Scientific Name : *Ploceus philippinus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The baya weaver is a weaverbird found across the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

These are sparrow-sized (15cm) and in their non-breeding plumage, both males and females resemble female house sparrows. They have a stout conical bill and a short square tail. Breeding males have a bright yellow crown, dark brown mask, blackish brown bill, upper parts are dark brown streaked with yellow, with a yellow breast and cream buff below.

Baya weavers are social and gregarious birds. They forage in flocks for seeds, both on the plants and on the ground. They are known to glean paddy and other grain in harvested fields, and occasionally damage ripening crops and are therefore sometimes considered as pests. They roost in reed-beds bordering water bodies.

Distributed throughout India; Bangladesh: Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and locally migrant.

Three races. The nominate race *philippinus* is found through much of mainland India while *burmanicus* is found eastwards into Southeast Asia. The population in southwest India is darker above and referred to as subspecies *travancorensis*.

The breeding season of the baya weavers is during the monsoons. Baya weavers are best known for the elaborately woven nests constructed by the males. The nests are partially built before the males begin to display to passing females by flapping their wings and calling while hanging from their nests. The females inspect the nest and signal their acceptance of a male. Once a male and a female are paired, the male goes on to complete the nest by adding the entrance tunnel.

They also feed on insects (including butterflies), sometimes taking small frogs, geckos and molluscs, especially to feed their young. Their seasonal movements are governed by food availability.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Dark-fronted Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Rhopocichla atriceps*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

The dark-fronted babbler is an Old World babbler found in the Western Ghats of India and the forests of Sri Lanka. They are small chestnut brown birds with a dark black cap, a whitish underside and pale yellow iris. They forage in flocks in the undergrowth of forests constantly making calls and uttering alarm calls when disturbed.

The two subspecies in the Western Ghats have black hoods, but the two Sri Lankan races have this reduced to a dark bandit mask. The pale yellow iris stands in contrast. The subspecies in the southern Western Ghats *bourdilloni* has a duller sooty-black hood, browner underside and the upper parts are more olive. The nominate form found north of the Palghat Gap has the hood dark black.

The typical habitat is undergrowth in forest or on the edge of forests in more open growth. Their food is mainly insects. They can be difficult to observe in the dense vegetation they prefer, but like other babblers, these are noisy birds, and their characteristic rattling churr alarm calls are often the best indication that these birds are present. They often join mixed-species foraging flocks.

The breeding season is May to July. This babbler builds its nest low down in a bush, the nest being a ball of leaves, often of bamboo.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Puff-throated Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Pellorneum ruficeps*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

Puff-throated babblers are brown above, and white below with heavily brown streaks towards the breast and belly. They have a chestnut crown, long buff supercilium and dusky cheeks. The throat is white, and is sometimes puffed out giving it the English name. Puff-throated babblers have strong legs, and spend a lot of time on the forest floor.

The widespread distribution with population variations has led to nearly thirty subspecies being described. The nominate population is found in peninsular India (excluding the Western Ghats). The population in the northern Eastern Ghats is paler and has been called as pallidum while a well marked dark form occurs in the southern Western Ghats which has been named *granti* (includes *olivaceum*).

The breeding season is mainly during the rainy season. They build a nest on the ground at the base of bush and is a dome of leaves and twigs with an entrance on the side.



Photographed by : **K. Sriram**

Common Name : **Jungle Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Turdoides striata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga township

The jungle babbler is a common resident breeding bird in most parts of the Indian subcontinent and is often seen in gardens within large cities as well as in forested areas.

The jungle babbler's habitat is forest and cultivation. The sexes are identical, drably coloured in brownish grey with a yellow-bill making them confusable only with the endemic yellow-billed babblers of peninsular India and Sri Lanka. The upperparts are usually slightly darker in shade and there is some mottling on the throat and breast. They are gregarious birds that forage in small groups of six to ten birds, a habit that has given them the popular name of Seven Sisters or Saath bhai in Bengali with cognates in other regional languages which means "seven brothers".

Distributed throughout India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, plains and hills up to 2000m elevation. Four races. Striata which is found over much of northern India south of the Himalayan foothills extending to

Bhutan, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and northeastern Andhra Pradesh. The form in parts of Orissa, is said to be more rufous above is usually subsumed into this. Indian is a paler desert form that is found in the Indus plains of Pakistan and extends into Rajasthan and the Rann of Kutch in India. somervillei is found in the northern Western Ghats south to the Goa Gap. Malabarica is found in the southern Western Ghats. orientalis is found in peninsular India east of the Western Ghats.

Food: Spiders, cockroaches, and other insects, and larvae; wild figs, berries, grain and nectar of flowers of Coral, Silk Cotton and other trees.

Nesting season – irregularly throughout the year. Peak breeding in northern India has been noted between March–April and July–September. Birds are able to breed after their third year. Brood parasitized by the pied crested cuckoo and sometimes by the common hawk-cuckoo.



Photographed by : Vijesh Vallikkunnu

Common Name : **Indian Scimitar-babbler**
Scientific Name : *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A slaty headed dark brown babbler with white throat and breast, prominent white eyebrows, and curved pointed yellow bill. Both sexes are alike. Pairs or parties, in dense bush cover.

The most distinctive feature of this 22cm long bird is the long down-curved yellow bill which is blackish at the base of the upper mandible, used to work through the leaf litter in search of their food which is mainly insects and berries.

They can be difficult to observe in the dense vegetation they prefer, but like many other babblers, these are noisy birds, and the characteristic bubbling calls are often the best indication that these birds are present.

Distribution: The Indian Union; Sri Lanka. Bangladesh and eastward. Ten races, of which horsfieldi of Deccan and peninsular India best known.

They breed from December to May. The nest is large and loose globular mass of foliage concealed in a bush on the ground or low down.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Yellow-billed Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Turdoides affinis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The Yellow-Billed babbler is a common resident breeding bird in Sri Lanka and southern India. Its habitat is scrub, cultivation and garden land.

These birds have grey brown upperparts, grey throat and breast with some mottling, and a pale buff belly. The head and nape are grey. The Sri Lankan form *T. a. taprobanus* is drab pale grey. Nominant race of southern India has whitish crown and nape with a darker mantle. The rump is paler and the tail has a broad dark tip. Birds in the extreme south of India are very similar to the Sri Lankan subspecies with the colour of the crown and back being more grey. The eye is bluish white.

Like jungle babblers, the yellow-billed babbler lives in flocks of seven to ten or more. It is a noisy bird, and the presence of a flock may generally be known at some distance by the continual chattering, squeaking and chirping produced by its members. One member often perches high and acts as a sentinel while the remaining members of the flock forage on or close to the ground.

They feeds mainly on insects, but also eat fruit, nectar and human food scrap. They have been known to take Oriental Garden lizard (*Calotes versicolor*) and whip-scorpions.

Nests of the species have are seen round the year but the peak breeding season is prior to the onset of the Southwest Monsoon. Brood parasitism by the pied cuckoo (*Clamator jacobinus*) is known from both the Indian and Sri Lankan region. The common hawk-cuckoo has also been noted as a brood-parasite.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Yellow-eyed Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Chrysomma sinense*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The yellow-eyed babbler is about 18 centimetres long with a short bill and a long graduated tail. The body above is brown and the wings are cinnamon coloured. The lores and supercilium are white and the rim of the eye is orange-yellow in adult birds. The beak is black. The underside is whitish buff. The central tail feathers are about twice as long as the outermost. The sexes are indistinguishable in the field. Three races: nasale, hypoleucum, saturation

Like babblers, these birds are usually seen in small groups of five to fifteen, especially in the non-breeding season. They are usually found inside bushes, emerging up to the top of a stem and then diving back into cover to forage.

The yellow-eyed babbler has an extremely large range and is native to Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Nesting season – Mainly the southwest monsoon-June to August.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Rufous Babbler**
Scientific Name : *Turdoides subrufa*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

This babbler is large and dark olive brown above with a grey forehead. The wing feathers have a rufous tinge. The feathers of the forehead have black shafts. The iris is pale white to yellow and the lores are dark. The underside is bright rufous, paler on the center of the throat and belly.

This species is found in the Western Ghats south of Mahabaleshwar south to the Palani hills and east into the Shevaroy hills.

They are found mainly close to the ground where they feed on insects and berries. The usual habitat is open forest, scrub or grassy hillsides.

The breeding season is mainly from February to November and the nest is a small cup in the fork of a tree.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Tawny-bellied Babbler**
AN: Rufous-bellied Babbler

Scientific Name : *Turdus merula*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The Tawny-bellied Babbler is a small babbler at 13cm including its long tail. It is dark brown above and orange-buff below, with a rufous grey crown. The feathers on the forehead are stiff and the tail has cross rays and is otherwise olive brown. The throat is white in the populations of peninsular India and Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan population however has a larger beak and paler underparts.

The babbler is a resident breeding bird in India, Sri Lanka and southwest Nepal. Its habitat is scrub and tall grassland.

Nesting season – Chiefly between May and September; November to March in Sri Lanka.



Photographed by : Prashant A. Nayak

Common Name : Coppersmith Barbet
Scientific Name : *Megalaima baemacephala*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A heavy-billed grass-green Barbet with crimson breast and forehead, yellow throat and green streaked yellowish underparts. Short truncated tail, distinctly triangular in flight silhouette. Both sexes are alike. Singly or loose parties, on banyan and peepul trees in fruit.

It is a resident found in the Indian subcontinent and parts of Southeast Asia. Distributed greater part of India from about 1000m in the Himalayas south; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Prefers banyan, peepul, and other wild figs, various drupes and berries, and the occasional insect, caught in aerial sallies. Petals of flowers may also be included in their diet. They eat nearly 1.5 to nearly 3 times their body weight in berries each day.

They compete with other cavity nesting birds and frugivores. Blue Throated Barbet (*Psilopogon asiatica*) have been noted to evict them from their nest holes, while red-vented bulbuls have been seen to indulge in kleptoparasitism, robbing the male of berries brought to the female at the nest.

They breed through much of the year with local variation. The breeding season is mainly February to April in India and December to September in Sri Lanka. Both sexes excavate the nest on the underside of a narrow horizontal branch. The nest holes are also used for roosting and some birds roost alone in cavities and these often roost during part of the day. Immature will roost with the parents but often return to roost early so as not to be prevented by the parents from entering the roost cavity.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Malabar Barbet**
AN:Crimson Fronted Barbet
Scientific Name : *Megalaima malabarica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A little grass-green barbet similar to the Coppersmith but with fore crown, forehead, chin, throat and upper breast crimson, the last streaked with black. Crimson patch below eye and on cheek. Both sexes are alike.

Found in Western Ghat, Goa southwards to Kerala and W. Tamilnadu in evergreen forest up to 1200m. Sri Lanka.

The species feeds mainly on fruits but sometimes takes grubs, termites (fly catching at emerging swarms of ablates), ants and small caterpillars.

The breeding season is mainly February–March prior to the rains. The nest hole is excavated on the underside of thin branches. It takes about 18 days to excavate the nest. These nest holes are often destroyed by larger barbets that may attempt to enlarge the hole. A nest is made each year. Multiple holes may be made and any extra hole may be used for roosting.



Photographed by : **Puttaraju K.**

Common Name : **Brown-headed Barbet**
Scientific Name : *Megalaima zeylanica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The brown-headed barbet is a resident breeder in the Indian subcontinent, widespread in India and also seen in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Three races occur in India and Sri Lanka.

This is a relatively large barbet at 27cm. It is a plump bird, with a short neck, large head and short tail. The adult has a streaked brown head, neck and breast, with a yellow eye patch. The rest of the plumage is green. The bill is thick and red. Sexes are similar.

It is an arboreal species of gardens and wooded country which eats fruit and insects. Nonetheless, it is fairly tolerant of humans and is often seen in cities, in greenery.

Nesting season – February to June.



Photographed by : Jalil B. Bargir

Common Name : **White-cheeked Barbet**
Scientific Name : *Megalaima viridis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The White-Cheeked barbets a species of barbet found in southern India. It is very similar to the more widespread brown-headed barbet (*Psilopogon zeylanica*) but this species has a distinctive supercilium and a broad white cheek stripe below the eye and is endemic to the forest areas of the Western Ghats and adjoining hills.

These birds are mostly frugivorous, but will take winged termites and other insects opportunistically. They feed on the fruits of various *Ficus* species including *Ficus benjamina* and *Ficus mysorensis*, and other introduced fruit trees such as *Muntingia calabura*. When foraging they are quite aggressive and will attempt to chase other barbets, koels and other frugivores.

The main range is along the Western Ghats south from the Surat Dangs and along the associated hills of southern India into parts of the southern Eastern Ghats mainly in the Shevaroy and Chitteri hills.

In southern India (Periyar Tiger Reserve) these barbets begin breeding in December and continue to nest until May. This species is believed to form a pair bond that lasts for longer than a single breeding season. Calling is intense during the courtship period.

The nest hole is usually made in dead branches. These barbets are aggressive towards smaller hole-nesters such as the Malabar barbet, sometimes destroying their nests by pecking at the entrance. Both sexes excavate the nest and it can take about 20 days to complete the nest.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Indian Blackbird**
Scientific Name : *Turdus (merula) simillimus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Indian Blackbird is a member of the thrush family Turdidae. It was formerly considered a subspecies of the common blackbird. It is found only in India. The subspecies from most of the Indian subcontinent, *simillimus*, *nigropileus*, *bourdillonii* and *spencei*, are small, only 19–20cm long, and have broad eye-rings. They also differ in proportions, wing formula, egg colour and voice from the common blackbird.

Nilgiri blackbird *T. s. simillimus* is resident up to 2000m in the Western Ghats from Biligirirangans and Nilgiris till about Nelliampathies where it intergrades with Bourdillon's blackbird.

Black-capped blackbird *T. s. nigropileus* is resident up to about 1820m in the Western Ghats of western India and the northern and central parts of the Western Ghats. Some populations migrate further south in winter. The male is brownish slate-grey with a dark cap, and the female is mid-brown, paler below. It is small with a relatively broad yellow eye-ring.

T. s. spencei, is very similar to *nigropileus*, but has a less distinct cap. It is resident in the Eastern Ghats of India. It is of dubious validity, and is often included in *nigropileus* with which it is said to intergrades in the Nallamala Hills.

Bourdillon's blackbird *T. s. bourdillonii* is a common resident of the hills above 900m in southern Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It resembles *simillimus* and intergrades with it in the Palni Hills, but the male is uniform slate brown.



Photographed by : **Puttaraju K.**

Common Name : **Asian Fairy Blue Bird**
Scientific Name : *Irena puella*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The Asian fairy-bluebird is a medium-sized, arboreal passerine bird.

The Asian fairy bluebird measures 24 to 27cm in length. The iris is crimson and eyelids pinkish; the bill, legs and claws are black, and mouth a flesh-colour. Marked sexual dimorphism is evident. The male is a shining ultramarine-blue with lilac reflections on its upper plumage, lesser wing coverts, and under tail coverts, while the sides of its head and the whole lower plumage are deep black; greater wing-coverts, quills, and tail black, and some of the coverts tipped with blue, and the middle tail-feathers glossed with blue.

Distribution : Sri Lanka; the western coast of India from Travancore up to the latitude of Belgaum and Sawantwadi; Sikkim and the lower ranges of the Himalayas to Dibrugarh in Assam; the Khasi Hills; Cachar; Manipur; Arrakan; Bago and Taninthayi Division in Burma; the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

It feeds principally on fruit and is generally found on the larger forest-trees.

It breeds from February to April, constructing a shallow cup-shaped nest, sometimes of moss and sometimes of small twigs, in a sapling or small tree.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **White-browed Bulbul**
Scientific Name : *Pycnonotus luteolus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The white-browed bulbul is about 20 cm long, with a moderately long (8cm) tail. It has olive-grey upperparts and whitish underparts. This species is identifiable by the white supercilium, white crescent below the eye, and dark eye stripe and moustachial stripe. The vent is yellowish and there is some yellow on the chin and moustache. The throat is however largely whitish.

This species is endemic to southern India and Sri Lanka. The northern boundary is along Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and eastern boundary West Bengal (near Midnapur). It is found in dry open scrub country mainly on the plains and also occurs in gardens and woodlands with dense shrubbery.

They forage within bushes for fruit, nectar and insects. The breeding season is spread out from March to September.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black Bulbul (square-tailed)**
Scientific Name : *Hypsipetes (leucocephalus) ganeesa*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Square-tailed bulbul (*Hypsipetes ganeesa*) is a species of songbird in the Pycnonotidae family. It is found in southwest India and Sri Lanka. Its natural habitat is subtropical or tropical moist montane forests. It was previously treated as a subspecies of the black bulbul.

The species has no black streak behind the eye and on the ear-coverts that is present in the black bulbul. The Sri Lankan *humii* has a heavier bill

In Southern India, nesting activity begins from February and rises to a peak in May. The eggs hatch after an incubation period of 12 to 13 days and the chicks fledge after about 11 or 12 days.

Adults of *H. ganeesa* have been known to be preyed on by the crested goshawk. Populations make movements in response to the monsoon.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Flame-throated Bulbul**
AN: Ruby-throated Bulbul
Scientific Name : *Pycnonotus gularis (melanicterus)*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Flame-throated Bulbul is endemic to Western Ghats, with olive-green upperparts and yellow underparts. Shows slight crest, and has ruby red throat, bright yellow breast and belly, and indistinct white tips to outer tail feathers. Juvenile similar but cap browner, and has yellow throat.

Distribution : Goa, Karnataka, Belgaum south to the end of the ghats.

This is a bird of forest and dense scrub. Nesting season is January to August. It builds its nest in a bush; two to four eggs is a typical clutch. The flame-throated bulbul feeds on fruit and insects.



Photographed by : **Jitendra Singh**

Common Name : **Red-whiskered Bulbul**
Scientific Name : *Pycnonotus jocosus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Red-whiskered Bulbul is brown above, white below with a broken blackish necklace on breast. Black, upstanding, pointed crest, crimson 'whiskers' and crimson patch under root of tail are distinguishing features. Both sexes are alike. Pairs or loose gathering.

This is a bird of lightly wooded areas, more open country with bushes and shrubs, and farmland.

Distribution : In India except the arid portion of Northwest (Rajasthan etc); Bangladesh; Myanmar, Andamans; introduced in Nicobars. Patchily up to about 2000m. Not in Sri Lanka or Pakistan.

The red-whiskered bulbul feeds on fruits (including those of *Casabela thevetia* that are toxic to mammals), nectar and insects.

The breeding season is spread out and peaks from December to May in southern India and March to October in northern India.



Photographed by : **D. Subba Rao**

Common Name : **Red-vented Bulbul**
Scientific Name : *Pycnonotus cafer*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A perky smoke-brown bird with partially erected black head, scale-like markings on breast and back, a conspicuous crimson patch below root of tail, and a white rump. Both sexes are alike. Pairs or small gatherings, in gardens and lightly wooded country.

Distribution : Throughout India; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar; up to about 1500m. Rare in Pakistan. Seven races, on minor differences in size and coloration.

Red-vented bulbuls feed on fruits, petals of flowers, nectar, insects and occasionally geckos. They have also been seen feeding on the leaves of *Medicago sativa*.

They breed from June to September. The pied crested cuckoo is a brood parasite of this species.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Grey-headed Bulbul
Scientific Name : *Pycnonotus priocephalus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This bulbul is resident in moist broadleaved evergreen forest with bamboo and dense undergrowth. Its plumage is olive-green, with a medium-grey on the crown head, nape and throat. The forehead is yellow-green. The back, wings are olive green becoming lighter towards the vent. The rump has yellowing green feathers edged in black giving a barred appearance. The flanks are dark and grey edged. The under tail coverts are gray. The beak is greenish and grey while the legs are pinkish yellow. The iris is distinctly bluish white. The tail is grey on the central feathers (the shaft being black), the outer ones are black and are broadly tipped with grey. Both sexes are similar but juveniles have the head dark olive with the yellow on the forehead duller.

It is endemic to the Western Ghats of south-west India, found from Goa south to Tamil Nadu, at altitudes up to 1200m.

The diet consists mainly of fruits and invertebrates.

Nesting season – March to July



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Yellow-browed Bulbul**

Scientific Name : *Iole indica*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Irpage

This bulbul is about 20cm long, lacks a crest and has the upperparts olive green with a prominent yellow brow and goggle with the under parts being all yellow. The sexes do not differ in plumage. The bill is black and the iris is reddish brown.

The population in the northern Western Ghats (ssp. *icterica*) is paler yellow than the populations further south (ssp. *indica*)

The yellow-browed bulbul has been considered as the wet-zone counterpart of the dry-zone white-browed bulbul. It is found mainly below the forest canopy of the hill forests and plantations in the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka. They also occur in parts of the Eastern Ghats including the Kolli hills, Nallamalas and parts of Tirupathi and Mamandur regions in Andhra Pradesh.

The breeding season is during the dry spell before the monsoons, mainly January to May.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Pied Bushchat**
Scientific Name : *Saxicola caprata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Pied Bush chat is a small passerine bird found ranging from West Asia and Central Asia to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. About sixteen subspecies are recognized through its wide range with many island forms. It is a familiar bird of countryside and open scrub or grassland where it is found perched at the top of short thorn trees or other shrubs, looking out for insect prey.

Male black, with white patches on rump, abdomen and wings, the last particularly conspicuous in flight. Female earth- brown with pale rusty coloured rump. Separated pairs on bush tops.etc, in open country.

Distribution :Resident or winter visitor throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and hills up to about 2500m.

Nesting season – mostly between February and May.



Photographed by : **K . Harish**

Common Name : **Grey necked Bunting**
Scientific Name : *Emberiza buchanani*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The Grey-necked Bunting has a long pink bill and is greyish above. The male has a distinctive white eyering that stands out in contrast to the grey hood. The chin and throat are whitish pink and are bordered by grey malar stripes. The underparts are pinkish brown. The female is duller but the moustachial stripe can appear more noticeable. The outer tail feathers are whitish.

This bunting is found mainly in dry and open habitats, often stony, scrubby hillsides covered with low thorn scrub. Birds that breed in the Baluchistan region winter in India moving through Gujarat in September and returning in March to their breeding grounds. It is found in Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Nepal, China, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Oman, Pakistan, Russia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Three subspecies are noted nominate *buchanani*, *neobscura*, *ceruttii*.

They winter in parts of Africa, West Asia, and parts of South Asia as far south as Sri Lanka.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Common Chiffchaff**
Scientific Name : *Phylloscopus (collybita) tristis*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kuchegar

The common chiffchaff, or simply the chiffchaff, is a small insectivore, common and widespread leaf warbler which breeds in open woodlands throughout northern and temperate Europe and Asia.

There are three commonly accepted subspecies. *P. c. collybita*, *P. c. abietinus* and *P. (c.) tristis*

The subspecies *P. (c.) tristis* or Siberian chiffchaff is the winter visitor in India.

It is a dull bird, grey or brownish above and whitish below, with little yellow in the plumage, and the buff-white supercilium is often longer than in the western subspecies. It has a higher pitched 'suitsistsuisit' song and a short high-pitched cheer call.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Zitting Cisticola**
AN: Streaked Fantail-Warbler
Scientific Name : *Cisticola juncidis cirsitans*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The Zitting Cisticola is widely distributed Old World warbler whose breeding range includes southern Europe, Africa (outside the deserts and rainforest), and southern Asia down to northern Australia. A small bird found mainly in grasslands

The zitting cisticola is brown above, heavily streaked with black markings. The underparts are whitish, and the tail is broad, white-tipped and flicked frequently, giving rise to the alternative name for the species. The adult males have less crown streaking and more back marking than the females, but there are no great difference between the sexes or the eighteen geographical races.

This species is found mainly in grassland habitats, often near water. Most populations are resident, but some East Asian populations migrate south to warmer areas in winter. In the Himalayas, they ascent to about 1,900m during summer but are below 1,300m in the winter.

Nesting season – coincident with the monsoon, varying in different parts of its range, but chiefly June to September.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Indian Jungle Crow**
Scientific Name : *Corvus macrorhynchosculminatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Indian Jungle crow is usually considered a subspecies of jungle crow found in the plains of India where it is very common and readily distinguished from the house crow which has a grey neck. Some authorities consider it to be a distinct species. Often grouped along with other crow species in the region, it differs in its voice from the large-billed crow found in the higher elevations of the Himalayas and the eastern jungle crow (*Corvus levaillantii*) overlaps in the eastern part of its range. In appearance it cannot be easily distinguished from either of these species although the plumage tends to be more uniformly glossed in purple and has a longer bill with a fine tip and an arched culmen. The Himalayan species has a slightly wedge-shaped tail unlike the rounded tail of the Indian jungle crow.

This glossy all-black crow has a heavy black bill with an arching culmen (upper edge of the mandible) and has a fine tip. The feathers have a purple gloss throughout. The tail of the Indian jungle crow is rounded and the legs and feet are stout.

The Indian jungle crow is found across mainland India south of the foothills of the Himalayas, east of the desert regions of northwestern India and having an eastern limit around Bengal. It is also found in Sri Lanka.

It is an opportunist and generalist omnivore. They have also been observed to eat sand after feeding on meat from a carcass.

The breeding season is mainly March–April in northern India and earlier in south India. In Sri Lanka it is from May to July. The nests are sometimes parasitized by the Asian koel although not as frequently as the house crow.



Photographed by : Prashant A. Nayak

Common Name : **House Crow**
Scientific Name : *Corvus splendens*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The House Crow is a common bird of the crow family that is of Asian origin but now found in many parts of the world, where they arrived assisted by shipping.

Perhaps the most familiar bird of Indian towns and villages. Lives in close association with man and obtain its livelihood from his work. Audacious, cunning and uncannily wary. Has no particular food preferences. Will eat almost anything: dead sewer rat, offal, carrion, kitchen scraps and refuse, locusts, termites, fruit, grain, and eggs or fledgling birds lifted from nests.

A useful scavenger but also a great bully and therefore a serious menace for defenseless small bird species in urban area. Has community roosts in selected trees or groves where large numbers collect every night.

The nominate race *C. s. splendens* is found in Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bangladesh and has a grey neck collar. The subspecies *C. s. zugmayeri* is found in the dry parts of South Asia and Iran and has a very pale neck collar. The subspecies *C. s. protegatus* is found in southern India, the Maldives (sometimes separated as *maledivicus*) and Sri Lanka and is darker grey. *C. s. insolens*, found in Myanmar, is the darkest form and lacks the grey collar.

Nesting season – principally April to June.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Large Cuckoo-shrike**
Scientific Name : *Coracina macei*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A rather thick-set grey bird whitish from breast down with a broad dark eye-streak. Wings and tail black. Eye streak less prominent in female and her underparts barred grey and white

Found in deciduous forest and as well as secondary evergreen jungle, plains and hills alike.

Distribution: entire Indian Union except East Punjab and Rajasthan; from about 1300m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar; Not in Pakistan.

Food: Large insects captured in the foliage, as well as berries and banyan, peepul and other wild figs.

Nesting season – Mainly May to October



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Black-headed Cuckooshrike**
Scientific Name : *Coracina melanoptera*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

Male: grey plumage; black head, wings, tail, the latter white-tipped, except on middle feathers; pale grey below breast, whiter on abdomen, vent. Female: brown plumage; whitish-buff below barred dark-brown till abdomen; lacks black head. Solitary or in pairs, only occasionally several together; often part of mixed-hunting bands; keep for most part to leafy, upper branches, probes the foliage for insects; methodically checks foliage before flying off. Found in Forests, gardens, groves.

All India east and south of line from Mt. Abu to W Uttar Pradesh; a Himalayan race is found in parts of Punjab, Himachal and hill regions of Uttar Pradesh, to about 2000m. Undergoes considerable seasonal migration.

Food: Chiefly insects, but also berries such as Lantana.

Nesting season – overall March to August; earlier in Sri Lanka than in the Deccan.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Bronzed Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus aeneus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The Bronzed Drongo is a small black drongo smaller than the Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*) and has more metallic gloss with a spangled appearance on the head, neck and breast. The lores are velvety and the ear coverts are duller. The tail is slender and well forked with the outer tail feathers flaring outward slightly. Immatures have their axillaries tipped in white. The young bird is duller and brownish with less spangling.

They are found singly or in a group of two to three. They actively forage for insects under the forest canopy by hawking, often returning to their favorite perches (The technique is called aerial sallies). They sometimes join mixed-species foraging flocks.

The bronzed drongo is found in the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats of India and the lower Himalayas from western Uttaranchal eastwards into Indochina, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and northern Borneo. This species is usually found in moist broadleaved forest.

These are aggressive and fearless birds, 24cm in length, and will attack much larger species if their nest or young are threatened.

Nesting season – March to June



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **White-bellied Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus caeruleus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

This drongo is black without any gloss on the upper side and greyish on the throat and breast while the belly and vent are entirely white in the Indian form which is the nominate subspecies. The fork of the tail is less deep than in the black drongo which is often seen in the same habitats. Young black drongo's can have a lot of white on the underside but it is usually scaly in appearance. The Sri Lankan forms *insularis* of the northern dry zone and *leucopygialis* of the southern wet zone have the white restricted to the vent. Birds that are less than a year old lack the white on the underside but are browner above and greyish below.

The white-bellied drongo is a resident breeder in India and Sri Lanka. This species is usually found in dry scrub or open forests. The distribution is restricted to peninsular India south of the Himalayas and to the west of the Gangetic delta bounded on the west by the Aravallis.

Nesting season – March to June.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus paradiseus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A glossy black drongo with prominently tufted forehead and two long wire like spatula-tipped feathers or 'streamers' in the tail. In flight the broadened tips sometimes give the illusion of the bird being pursued by a pair of large bubble bees. Both sexes are alike. Found singly or loose party, in forest.

The distribution range of this species extends from the western Himalayas to the eastern Himalayas and Mishmi Hills in the foothills below 4000 feet. They are found in the hills of peninsular India and the Western Ghats. Continuing into the west to the islands of Borneo and Java in the east through the mainland and islands. Six geographical races identified in Indian subcontinent.

Like other drongos, these feed mainly on insects but also feed on fruits and visit flowering trees for nectar. Having short legs, they sit upright and are often perched on high and exposed branches. They are aggressive and will sometimes mob larger birds especially when nesting. They are often active at dusk. It is a very noisy bird, has a large repertoire of loud metallic calls and is a convincing mimic besides. Its mimicry often confounds the observer into imagining birds which are not present in the surrounding. A few decades ago, it was much sought after bird as an amusing pet in certain parts of India.

Nesting season – chiefly March to June, with considerable local variations.



Photographed by : **Sudhir Prabhu**

Common Name : **Black Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus macrocoercus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This bird is glossy black with a wide fork to the tail. Adults usually have a small white spot at the base of the gape (nictal spot). The iris is dark brown (not crimson as in the similar ashy drongo). The sexes cannot be told apart in the field. Juveniles are brownish and may have some white barring or speckling towards the belly and vent, and can be mistaken for the white-bellied drongo. First-year birds have white tips to the feathers of the belly, while second-years have these white-tipped feathers restricted to the vent.

They are aggressive and fearless birds, and although only 28cm in length, they will attack much larger species that enter their nesting territory, including crows and birds of prey. This behaviour led to their former name of king crow. They are capable of producing a wide range of calls.

The black drongo is found predominantly in open country and usually perches and hunts close to the ground. They are mostly aerial predators of insects but also glean from the ground or off vegetation. They are found as summer visitors to northeastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan but are residents from the Indus Valley until Bangladesh and into India and Sri Lanka.

Black drongos breed mainly in February and March in southern India, and until August in other parts of the country. Males and females sing in the mornings during the breeding season.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Ashy Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A slim glossy slate black drongo with long deeply forked tail. Crimson eyes diagnostic. Below dull grey.

Distribution: Summer- Himalayas from Pakistan eastward to Arunachal Pradesh, NE. hill states; Bangladesh (Chittagong hills). Winter. Throughout the subcontinent in well wooded areas.

Nesting season – April to June in the Himalayas.



Photographed by : S. N. Panchamukhi

Common Name : **Spangled Drongo**
Scientific Name : *Dicrurus bontentottus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A glossy, spangled, blue-back drongo with longish slightly forked tail, outwardly up curled at the ends. Both sexes are alike.

Distribution: Practically the entire subcontinent-except Pakistan, the dry NW. portions and Sri Lanka-from the Himalayan terai and foothills south to Kerala; in suitable moist- deciduous forest country, plains and foothills, rarely even up to 2000m.

Food habit is more or less same as of other drongos. Local movements largely governed by the flowering seasons of its favorite blossoms such as Silk Cotton or Simul (Bombax).

Nesting season – April to June (north), March-April (south).



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-spotted Fantail**
AN: White-throated Fantail
Scientific Name : *Rhipidura albogularis*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

A cheery restless smoky brown bird with conspicuous white eyebrows, white spotted breast and flanks, and whitish abdomen. Its most striking feature is the perky, cocked and fanned-out tail with wings drooping on either side. Pairs, in wooded country, shrubbery, gardens etc.

Distribution: The subspecies *albogularis* inhabits southern Gujarat and Maharashtra and peninsular India in and south of Madhya Pradesh, up to about 2000m elevation. Five other subspecies, on minor colour differences.

Nesting season – March to August



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Common Rose Finch**
Scientific Name : *Carpodacus erythrinus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kodasally

The common rose finch is 13–15cm in length. It has a stout and conical bill. The mature male has brilliant rosy-carmine head, breast and rump; heavy bill; dark brown wings with two indistinct bars, and a white belly. Females and young males are dull-colored with yellowish-brown above, brighter on the rump and greyer on head; buff below.

The Indian race *roseatus* which breeds at 3000m and higher in the Himalayas from Kashmir to Eastern Tibet. In winter it spreads out practically all over India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

Found south of the Himalayas between September and May, keeps in flocks to wooded country, feeding on lantana and other berries, wild figs and flower buds, bamboo seeds, linseed and cereals. Flower nectar of *Butea*, *Erythrina* and other flowers is also relished, and the birds do serve in cross-pollinating them.

Nesting season – June to August.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Nilgiri Flowerpecker**
Scientific Name : *Dicaeum concolor*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The Nilgiri flowerpecker is a tiny bird in the flowerpecker family. Formerly a subspecies of what used to be termed as the Plain flowerpecker although that name is now reserved for *Dicaeum minullum*.

These birds are tiny (9cm long) and there is no marked difference between the males and females. It is found in hill forests of the Western Ghats and Nilgiri hills of southern India. It is pale brown on the upper side and the underside is whitish. The whitish brow in front of the eye is wider than in Pale-billed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*). This subspecies has been raised to full species by Pamela Rasmussen. The subspecies found in northeastern India, extending into Myanmar, Laos and southern China is called *olivaceum* by earlier authors but is treated by Rasmussen and other taxonomists now as a separate species Plain Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum minullum*)

Food: Berries, nectar and insects.

Nesting season – January to August.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Pale-billed Flowerpecker**
AN: Tickell's Flowerpecker
Scientific Name : *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

This is a tiny bird, 8 cm long, and is one of the smallest birds occurring in most parts of southern India and Sri Lanka. The bird is plain brownish to olive green. The underside is buff olive and does not contrast greatly with the upperparts and not whitish as in the Nilgiri flowerpecker of the Western Ghats and Nilgiri hills nor is it streaked as in the thick-billed flowerpecker. The Nilgiri flowerpecker has a pale supercilium unlike this species which has no marking on the head. The Sri Lankan race ceylonense Babault, 1920 - is greyer and smaller than the nominate race of peninsular India. It has been considered one of the early flowerpeckers, originating in the Malay Peninsula, to colonize the Indian Subcontinent.

In forested areas, they often visit the flowers of *Loranthus* and *Viscum* species, the seeds of which are dispersed mainly by this and other flowerpecker species. The flowers of *Dendrophthoe falcata* are pollinated by this species. The flower has a mechanism that causes pollen to explosively spray on the plumage of the visiting bird. In urban areas, they are particularly attracted to introduce fruit trees such as *Muntingia calabura*, the fruits of which are swallowed whole. They also feed by crushing ripe berries and sipping the juice. They may also sip nectar from flowers such as those of *Sterculia colorata* and *Woodfordia floribunda*, pollinating them in the process.

Nesting season – Chiefly February to June



Photographed by : **G. Mohandas**

Common Name : **Thick-billed Flowerpecker**
Scientific Name : *Dicaeum agile*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

This species flowerpecker is about 10cm long and has a dark stout beak and short tail. They are dark grey brown above and dull greyish with diffuse streaking on light buffy underparts. The rump is slightly more olive in the nominate race. The bill is dark, somewhat stout and heavy and the iris is reddish. The sexes are not distinguishable in the field and the juvenile has a paler base to the mandible and less streaks on the underside. There are whitish spots at the tip of the tail feathers.

The nominate race is found on the plains of the mainland of the Indian Subcontinent. The Sri Lankan population, zeylonense, is smaller and darker above. and Subspecies modestum (including pallescens) is found in northeastern India and extends into Burma.

Like other flowerpeckers they feed mainly on berries, nectar but sometimes take insects. Many of the subspecies are found in dense lowland forests with the exception of the nominate race which is found mainly in cultivated areas or open forest.

Nesting season – January to June



Photographed by : K.V. Rajeev

Common Name : **Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Cyornis tickelliae*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

Tickell's blue flycatcher is about 11–12cm long. It sits upright and forages mainly in the overgrowth. The male's upper parts are bright blue, its throat and breast are red, and the rest of the underparts are white. The female is duller blue with a brighter blue brow, shoulder, rump, and tail. The juvenile is streaked and has a spotted mantle, scaly brown upperparts, head and breast, with just the wings and tail being blue.

They feed mainly by capturing insects in flight but their prey include other insects such as termites and earwigs that may be gleaned or picked from the ground.

Distribution – particularly throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka. Two races differing mainly in details of coloration: Indian (*tickelliae*), and Sri Lankan (*jerdoni*).

Nesting season – March to August



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Asian Paradise-Flycatcher
Scientific Name : *Terpsiphone paradisi*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

Most fascinating flycatcher in the forest with its agile fairy-like movements of the male as he twists and turn in the air after flies, with his tail-ribbons looping or trailing behind, is a spectacle of exquisite charm.

Adult male silvery white with metallic black crested head and two long, narrow ribbon-like feathers in tail. Young male, and female, chestnut above, Greyish white below, very like a bulbul in overall appearance. Young male has chestnut streamers in tail; female without.

Singly or pairs, in wooded country.

Food: Flies, gnats and other dipterous insects.

Distribution: Practically throughout the Indian Union; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and up to about 2000m in the Himalayas and peninsular hills. Resident in some localities and migratory in others. The two Indian races, paradise and leucogaster differ in details of size and coloration. In the Sri Lankan race, ceylonensis, the adult male never acquires the white plumage.

Nesting season – February to July, varying locally.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-bellied Blue-Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Cyornis pallipes*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This flycatcher is about 13cm long and has a longish beak. It forages in the undergrowth in the shade of dense forest canopy where it makes aerial forays to capture insects. The male is indigo blue with ultramarine blue supercilium and forehead. The lores and face are dark grey. The belly is white and bordered by smoky grey wash. The female is olive brown above with whitish lores. The rufous throat and breast fades to white towards the belly. The female has a chestnut tail and can be told apart from other flycatchers like by the lack of the black and white tail pattern.

The white-bellied blue flycatcher occurs in dense forest and sholas south from Mahabaleshwar[6] through the Western Ghats, extending into the Nilgiris and the Biligirirangan Hills, down to southern Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It is found mainly in the hill forests from the foothills to about 1700m in the Nilgiris.

The breeding season is from February to September, mainly during the monsoon



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Red Breasted Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Ficedula parva*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Kaiga Township

The Red-breasted Flycatcher is a small passerine bird in the Old World flycatcher family. It breeds in eastern Europe and across central Asia and is migratory, wintering in south Asia.

Winter visitor throughout India; Andamans; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka.

The breeding male of this small 11–12cm long flycatcher is mainly brown above and white below, with a grey head and orange throat. The bill is black and has the broad but pointed shape typical of aerial insectivores. As well as taking insects in flight, this species hunts caterpillars amongst the oak foliage, and will take berries. The base of the outer tail feather is white and the tail is often flicked upwards as they perch looking out for insect prey which are caught on the wing or sometimes from the ground.

The Asian species *Ficedula albicilla*, previously considered a subspecies of the red-breasted flycatcher, has the red throat surrounded by grey and a different song. It is usually now separated as the Taiga flycatcher

The other subspecies *Ficedula subruba* also now separated as Kashmir Flycatcher.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Asian Brown Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Muscicapa dauurica*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kodasally

This is an insectivorous species which breeds in Japan, eastern Siberia and the Himalayas. It is migratory and winters in tropical southern Asia from southern India and Sri Lanka east to Indonesia.

The correct specific epithet for this species is disputed.

Ashy brown above with a conspicuous white ring around strikingly large dark eyes: dirty white below, grayish on breast and flanks. Throat conspicuously white, clear bright yellow lower mandible and black legs.

Although usually treated as monotypic if the brown-streaked flycatcher is not included, Rasmussen and Anderton, in *Birds of South Asia*. The Ripley Guide argue that populations in the Indian subcontinent and the Andaman Islands should be regarded as a separate subspecies, *poonensis*, from the nominate race which occupies most of the species' range. They describe *poonensis* as paler and browner above, with a deeper bill, and mostly pale lower mandible, a more mottled throat, breast and flanks (in fresh plumage), less contrastingly white "spectacles" and throat, and perhaps a more rounded wing.

On 3 October 2007 a first winter brown flycatcher was discovered at Flamborough Head, East Riding of Yorkshire which attracted hundreds of birdwatchers during its stay which lasted until dusk of the following day.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Brown breasted flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Muscicapa muttui*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Virje

Similar to Asian Brown Flycatcher but olive-brown above with a brownish breast band highlighting the white throat. Legs yellow. Rufous- brown on lower rump and tail, wing feathers rusty edged. Lores, ring around eye, throat and centre of belly white. Both sexes are alike.

Distribution – Breeds in NE hill states of India, winters in the Western Ghats from Londa southwards from October to April. Also Sri Lanka. Seen on passage in Sikkim, Central India, North Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Nesting season – April to June



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Black-and-Orange Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Ficedula nigrorufa*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kodasally

The Black-and-Orange flycatcher is a species of flycatcher endemic to the central and southern Western Ghats, the Nilgiris and Palni hill ranges in southern India.

A distinctly coloured bird found mainly in the high-elevation areas of the Western Ghats, the Nilgiris, the Palnis and associated hill ranges. The male is distinctly black headed with black wings. The female has the black replaced by dark brown and has a light eye-ring. They are usually seen singly or in pairs.

The young bird at around two weeks of age is brownish orange with a whitish vent and abdomen. The head has dark streaks and the wings appear bluish with a trace of brown. There is a pale ring around the eye and the orange tail appears stumpy. Eight weeks after fledging they appear almost like adults except for patches of brown feathers in the crown.

The main population of this bird is found in the high elevation plateaus (above 1500m) areas of the Nilgiris, Palani Hills, Biligirirangans (Bellaji and Honnametti) and Kannan Devan Hills. They prefer areas with high leaf litter and undergrowth in open shola grassland habitats. It is a highly parochial bird and no local movements other than dispersal of young has been noted. To the north, it occurs in the Kudremukh National Park and the Bababudan Hills and south to the Ashambu Hills.

They feed on insects by fly catching low over the ground (under 2m height) and also pick insects from the ground. Territories are maintained by a pair throughout the year.

Nesting season – April to June



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Verditer Flycatcher**
Scientific Name : *Emyias thalassinus*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Kaiga

The Verditer Flycatcher is an Old World flycatcher widespread in Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, especially in the Lower Himalaya. It is named after its distinctive shade of copper-sulphate blue and has a dark patch between the eyes and above the bill base. The adult males are intense blue on all areas of the body, except for the black eye-patch and grey vent. Adult females and sub-adults are lighter blue. They are also interesting among the flycatchers in that they forage above the canopy level and perching on electric wires or exposed tree top branches.

Distribution: Winter- More or less over the entire Indian Union(except the drier portions of Rajasthan); Pakistan (except Punjab plains and sindh); Bangladesh; Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

Summer(breeding) – The Himalayas west, to east Arunachal Pradesh, between 1000 to 3000m elevation and hills south of the Brahmaputra.

Nesting season – in the Himalayas, April to July.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Sri Lankan Frogmouth**
Scientific Name : *Batrachostomus moniliger*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Sri Lankan frogmouth or Ceylon frogmouth is a small frogmouth found in the Western Ghats of south India and Sri Lanka. Related to the nightjars, it is nocturnal and is found in forest habitats.

This species is found in the Western Ghats of southwest India and Sri Lanka. Its habitat is tropical forest, usually with dense undergrowth.

This bird reaches 23 centimetres in length. Like all frogmouths, this species has a wide and hooked bill with slit-like nostrils and the large head with eyes facing forward to provide a wide field of binocular vision. The male is gray-brown with fine barring and a spotted crown. The female is more rufous or chestnut brown. Indian female birds have very fine black speckles on the crown but Sri Lankan females may lack or may have reduced markings. The bird also has short, stiff bristles in front of and surrounding the eyes. The Western Ghats population, ssp. roonwali (named after Mithan Lal Roonwal), looks very slightly

different. The male has a brownish-gray wing mirror and yellowish spots on the undersides, compared to gray or white in the nominate Sri Lankan form. The female has a bright reddish-brown wing mirror and the wings are unspotted below.

This frogmouth is rarely seen during the day except at roost sites or when flushed. It regularly uses the same roost spot for months. When alarmed at its perch, it slowly moves its head, pointing its bill upward, and it can easily be mistaken for a jagged, broken branch. It relies on this pose and will often sit still a long time before making an escape. It may open its mouth wide in a threat display. Like its congeners, it feeds on insects, catching them in flight or gleanings them from the ground or tree branches. It is sometimes mobbed at its day roost by small songbirds. It is vocal at dusk.

The breeding season in southern India is January to April, and in Sri Lanka February to March.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Brown-cheeked Fulvetta**

Scientific Name : *Alcippe poiocephala*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Irpage

A small olive brown babbler with ashy grey head and neck, pale greyish underparts, and rusty brown wings and tail. Both sexes are alike. Flocks in foliage canopy of forest trees or shrubs.

Distribution: Peninsular India and Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur and hill tracts of Assam; Bangladesh; Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka.

Brown-cheeked fulvettas have short dark bills. Their food is mainly insects and nectar. They can be difficult to observe in the dense vegetation they prefer, but these are vocal birds, and their characteristic calls are often the best indication that these birds are present.

Nesting season – Principally SW Monsoon, June to September; in South India January to May.



Photographed by : C.P. Singh

Common Name : **Asian Koel**
Scientific Name : *Eudynamys scolopacea*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Asian koel is a large, long-tailed, cuckoo measuring 39–46cm. The male of the nominate race is glossy bluish-black, with a pale greenish grey bill, the iris is crimson, and it has grey legs and feet. The female of the nominate race is brownish on the crown and has rufous streaks on the head. The back, rump and wing coverts are dark brown with white and buff spots. The underparts are whitish, but is heavily striped.

The Asian koel is a bird of light woodland and cultivation. It is a mainly resident breeder in tropical southern Asia from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to south China and the Greater Sundas. The NE Indian-Myanmar race malayana being larger than the Indian-Sri Lankan scolopacea.

The Asian koel is a brood parasite, and lays its single egg in the nests of a variety of birds, including the jungle crow, and house crow.

The koel is not known to lay eggs in an empty host nest and a study in Pakistan found that the first koel eggs were laid, on average, within one and half days of the laying of the host's first egg. The chicks of the koel hatched about 3 days ahead of the host chicks. Koels usually lay only an egg or two in a single nest. A female may remove a host egg before laying. Eggs hatch in 12 to 14 days. The young koel does not always push out eggs or evict the host chicks, and initially calls like a crow.

The Asian koel is omnivorous, consuming a variety of insects, caterpillars, eggs and small vertebrates. Adults feed mainly on fruit. They have been noted to be especially important in the dispersal of the sandalwood tree (*Santalum album*) in India.

Nesting season – mainly April to August. They are very vocal during the breeding season, with a range of different calls.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Crested Lark**
Scientific Name : *Galerida cristata*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The crested lark is a species of lark distinguished from the other 81 species of lark by the crest of feathers that rise up in territorial or courtship displays and when singing.

The larger size and prominent pointed crest distinguish it from most other larks. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pairs in dry open country. Occasionally flocks in winter.

Distribution: Rajasthan and continental India south to Madhya Pradesh, east to Bengal. Also Pakistan.

Food: Runs about in search of food: grass seeds, small beetles and other insects.

Nesting season – March to June



Photographed by : Prashant A. Nayak

Common Name : **Malabar Lark**
Scientific Name : *Galerida malabarica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Malabar lark, or Malabar crested lark is a sedentary breeding bird in western India.

This is a common bird of open country, cultivation and scrub, often at some altitude. It nests on the ground, laying two or three eggs. Its food is seeds and insects, the latter especially in the breeding season.

It is very similar to the crested lark, *Galerida cristata*, which breeds in northern India. It is smaller and dark-streaked reddish brown in plumage, whereas the crested lark is grey. The belly is white. The sexes are similar.

The Sykes's lark, or tawny lark, *Galerida deva*, is another Indian relative. That species also has reddish-brown plumage, but is smaller, shorter-billed, with a stiff upright crest and has plain rufous underparts.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Oriental Skylark**
Scientific Name : *Alauda gulgula*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Oriental skylark is a species of skylark widespread in Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Like other skylarks, it is found in open grassland - often near bodies of water - where it feeds on seeds and insects.

Six races in its range. Two main races are *A.g.australis* of Western peninsula and Sri Lanka, *A.g.inconspicua* of Northwest and North.

These skylarks frequently rocket up into the sky, fluttering and singing before descending down to earth. Male Oriental skylarks may also hover in the air and sing, in order to attract a mate.

Oriental skylarks are about 16cm long. They have streaked, yellow-brown upper plumage, with white outer tail feathers and a short crest. Both sexes are similar.

Nesting season – variable; mainly February to July.



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Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Jerdon's Bush Lark**
Scientific Name : *Mirafra affinis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

Jerdon's bush lark is a lark of the open countryside found in southern India and Sri Lanka. This species was earlier considered a subspecies of the Bengal bush lark (*M. assamica*). However recent studies of differences in call and distribution have led to it being treated as a full species.

M. affinis has arrowhead like spots pointing upwards on the breast. It is very similar to the Indian bush lark (*M. erythroptera*) but has buffy lores, less white behind ear coverts, darker center to wing coverts and central tail feathers. Dark centers of primary coverts are prominent, and wing panels are duller and rufous. In the southern Western Ghats, the race *ceylonensis* is darker and more rufous on the underside and has a longer bill.

Resident. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

Nesting season – March to May in the south.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Greater Short-toed Lark**
Scientific Name : *Calandrella brachydactyla*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Halaga Ulaga

Widespread winter visitor in India; unrecorded in Sri Lanka and parts of India.

This is a small pale lark, smaller than the skylark. It is dark-streaked greyish-brown above, and white below, and has a strong pointed bill that is pinkish with a grey culmen. It has a pale supercilium, dark patches on each side of its neck and a dark tail. Some birds in the west of the range have a rufous crown. The sexes are similar. Subspecies *longipennis* (mainly North West) is paler than *dukhunensis* (mainly South and East) which also has a shorter bill.

It is sometime confused with Hume's Short-toed lark (*C. acutirostris*). In winter they fly in large and compact flocks that swing in synchrony.

Food: Grass-and weed seeds and Insects.

Nesting season – July



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Jerdon's Leafbird**
Scientific Name : *Chloropsis jerdoni*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Jerdon's leaf bird is a species of leaf bird found in forest and woodland in India and Sri Lanka.

It has traditionally been considered a subspecies of the blue-winged leaf bird (*C. cochinchinensis*), but differ in measurements and morphology; it lacking the blue flight feathers for which the blue-winged leaf bird was named.

The male is green-bodied with a yellow-tinged head, black face and throat. It has a blue moustachial line.

The female differs in that it has a greener head and blue throat, and young birds are like the female but without the blue throat patch.

This species eats insects, fruit and nectar.

Nesting season – chiefly April to August.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Golden-fronted Leafbird**
Scientific Name : *Chloropsis aurifrons*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Golden-fronted Leaf bird is a species of leaf bird. It is a common resident breeder in India, Sri Lanka, and parts of Southeast Asia.

Observed in well wooded areas, forests as well as neighbourhood of habitation. Hunts for insects and spiders in the foliage where its plumage blends perfectly. It mimics the calls of other birds- Bulbul, Drongos, Shrike, Magpie-Robin etc.

The southern Indian race, *C. a. frontalis*, has a narrower yellow border to black face. The throat is black and it has a blue sub-moustachial stripe and duller orange forehead. Towards the extreme south of India and Sri Lanka the race *insularis* occurs which is slightly smaller than *frontalis*.

Nesting season – mainly May to August, with local variations.



Photographed by : **Kaushal Raj**

Common Name : **Blue-faced Malkoha**
Scientific Name : *Rhopodytes viridirostris*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The blue-faced malkoha (*Rhopodytes viridirostris*; formerly placed in *Phaenicophaeus*) is a member of the cuckoo order of birds, the Cuculiformes.

It is restricted to Sri Lanka and southern India. The blue-faced malkoha is a bird of open forests and scrub jungle.

This is a largish species at 39cm. Its back and head are dark green, and the uppertail is green edged with white. The throat and belly are lighter green. There is a large blue patch around the eye and the bill is green. Sexes are similar, but juveniles are duller and barred above.

The blue-faced malkoha takes a variety of insects, caterpillars and small vertebrates. It occasionally eats berries.

Nesting season – chiefly March to May, but also other months.



Photographed by : **R. Byanna**

Common Name : **Dusky Crag-Martin**
Scientific Name : *Ptyonoprogne concolor*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Dusky Crag Martin is a small passerine bird in the swallow family. Earlier it was described as *Hirundo concolor* but later it was moved to the new genus *Ptyonoprogne*.

The dusky crag martin is 13cm long with a broad body, wings and tail. It has sooty-brown upperparts and slightly paler underparts, with a streaked pale dull rufous chin, throat and fore neck. The tail is short and square, with small white patches near the tips of all but the central and outermost pairs of feathers. The under wing coverts are dark brown, the eyes are brown, the small bill is mainly black, and the legs are brownish-pink. The sexes are alike, but juveniles have rufous grey tips to the plumage of the upperparts and wings. This species can be distinguished from the Eurasian crag martin and rock martin by its darker underparts, and its white tail spots are significantly smaller than those of the Eurasian crag martin.

The under-tail coverts are of the same shade as the underside of the abdomen but these are darker in the Eurasian crag martin.

The nominate subspecies of the dusky crag martin breeds in much of the Indian subcontinent from the base of the Himalayas south to the Nilgiri mountains and east to West Bengal. It is absent Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; and Myanmar.

Insectivorous. Hawks midges and other tiny winged insects in the air.

Nesting season – principally between June and October when wet mud for nest building is easily obtainable.

Dusky Crag Martin found building its nest in the buildings in KGS premise during monsoon.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Eurasian Crag-Martin**
Scientific Name : *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Uncommon
Place : Kuchegar

The Eurasian crag martin is 13–15cm long with a 32–34.5cm wingspan. It has ash-brown upperparts and paler underparts, and has a broader body, wings and tail than any other European swallow. The tail is short and square, with white patches near the tips of all but the central and outermost pairs of feathers. The under wing and under tail coverts are blackish, the eyes are brown, the small bill is mainly black, and the legs are brownish-pink. The sexes are alike, but juveniles have buff-brown tips to the plumage of the head, upperparts and wing coverts.

It was earlier described as *Hirundo rupestris* and was moved to the new genus *Ptyonoprogne*.

Resident. Breeds in Pakistan hills and Himalayas; winters mainly in Western Ghats. Found in rocky cliffs and gorges.

The Eurasian crag martin feeds mainly on insects caught in its beak in flight, although it will occasionally take prey items off rocks, the ground, or a water surface.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Orange Minivet**
Scientific Name : *Pericrocotus flammens*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The orange minivet is a species of bird in the cuckoo shrike family. It is found in southeast Gujarat and North Maharashtra through Western Ghats and SW Eastern ghats in India and Sri Lanka. Its natural habitats are temperate forests, subtropical or tropical moist lowland forests, and subtropical or tropical moist montane forest. It was formerly considered a subspecies of the scarlet minivet.

Large minivet with isolated orange (male) or yellow (female) patch on tertials. Male has deep orange underparts. Female has colder grey-brown upperparts than Scarlet, with less yellow on forehead, and darker grey ear-coverts.

Food: Insects and their larvae; sometimes captured in air like flycatcher.

Nesting season – principally April to July.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Small Minivet**
Scientific Name : *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga

This minivet is found in tropical southern Asia from the Indian subcontinent east to Indonesia.

The small minivet is 16cm long with a strong dark beak and long wings. The male differs from most other common minivets by having grey, not glossy black, upperparts and head, and orange underparts, fading to yellow on the belly, orange tail edges, rump and wing patches. The female is grey above, with yellow underparts (including the face), tail edges, rump and wing patches.

There is much racial variation. The male *P. c. pallidus* of the northwest Indian subcontinent is pale grey above, with the underparts whitish except on the throat and flanks, whereas the male *P. c. malabaricus* of peninsular and southern India is darker above, has more extensive scarlet below. The female of the southern race is also brighter yellow below.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Nesting season – Between February and September, varying locally.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Black Naped Monarch**
Scientific Name : *Hypothymis azurea*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Black-napped Monarch or black-napped blue flycatcher is a slim and agile passerine bird belonging to the family of monarch flycatchers.

The adult male black-napped monarch is about 16 cm long, and is mainly pale azure blue apart from a whitish lower belly. It has a black nape and a narrow black gorget. The female is duller and lacks the black markings. Her wings and back are grey-brown. There are however several geographically separated breeding populations that differ in the extent and shade of markings. The India has subspecies styani which has the black markings very distinct. Males of the Sri Lankan race *H. a. ceylonensis* lack the black nape and gorget and the shade is more purplish.

The subspecies of the Andaman Islands, *tyleri*, has the underparts blue grey. The form on Car Nicobar Island *idiochroa* has a greyish white belly while *nicobarica* from the southern Nicobars has a smaller and finer bill. The colour of the gape is yellowish to green.

The black-napped monarch breeds across tropical southern Asia from India and Sri Lanka east to Indonesia and the Philippines. This species is usually found in thick forests and other well-wooded habitats.

Nesting season – April to August



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Scaly Breasted Munia**
Scientific Name : *Lonchura punctulata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The scaly-breasted munia or spotted munia, known in the pet trade as nutmeg mannikin or spice finch, is a sparrow-sized estrildid finch native to tropical Asia.

The scaly-breasted munia is about 11–12cm long. The adult has a stubby dark bill typical of grain eating birds, brown upperparts and a dark brown head. The underparts are white with dark scale markings. The sexes are similar, although males have darker markings on the underside and a darker throat than females.

This munia eats mainly grass seeds apart from berries and small insects. They forage in flocks and communicate with soft calls and whistles. The species is highly social and may sometimes roost with other species of munias. This species is found in tropical plains and grasslands.

Over its range the scaly-breasted munia has been assigned to 11 generally accepted subspecies. These include the nominate form found in the plains of South Asia, including Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The breeding season is during the summer rainy season (mainly June to August in India) but can vary.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Black Throated Munia**
Scientific Name : *Lonchura kelaarti*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Black-throated Munia is 12cm in length with a long black tail. The adult of the southwest Indian population, *L. k. jerdoni*, has a stubby grey bill, dark brown upperparts with pale shaft streaks; a blackish face and bib; and pinkish brown underparts with scaly marking towards the vent. The Eastern Ghats form *vernayi* has paler pinkish underparts. The nominate form *L. k. kelaarti* of Sri Lanka has scaly patterning on the underparts and vent with the pale almost whitish shaft streaks contrasting on the darker back. The sexes are similar in all populations, but immature lack the darker face and have more uniform underparts.

Distribution: Common resident in the northern section of Eastern Ghats and hills of southwestern India from about Belgaum southwards to Kanyakumari district. Also Sri Lanka.

Food : Grass and weed seeds and rice.

Nesting season – April to August



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **White-rumped Munia**
Scientific Name : *Lonchura striata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The white-rumped munia is approximately 10 to 11cm in length, with a stubby grey bill and a long black pointed tail. The adults are brown above and on the breast, and lighter below; the rump is white. There is some variation between the subspecies, but the sexes are almost impossible to distinguish in all subspecies; males have a more bulky head and bill.

Lonchura striata acuticauda – northwestern white-rumped munia. Northern Indian mainland below c. 1,500 meters ASL, north through the Himalayas foothills of Bhutan and Nepal to the Dehradun region of Uttarakhand, India.

Lonchura striata semistriata – Nicobar white-rumped munia. Car Nicobar and Central (Nancowry) group, Nicobar Islands

Lonchura striata striata – southwestern white-rumped munia. Southern Indian mainland Dark chocolate-brown above, white below

Distribution: The greater part of peninsular India and a wide sub-Himalayan belt east of Garhwal; W. Bangal; Bangladesh; NE India; Sri Lanka; Myanmar; Andamans and Nicobars.

It is a gregarious bird which feeds mainly on seeds, moving through the undergrowth in groups and sometimes accompanying other birds such as puff-throated babblers (*Pellorneum ruficeps*).

Nesting season – practically all year, varying locally.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Black-headed Munia**
AN: Tricoloured Munia

Scientific Name : *Lonchura malacca*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Black-headed munia (*Lonchura malacca*) is an estrildid finch, native to India, Sri Lanka, and southern China.

A small chestnut, black and white munia with typical short, heavy, conical bill. Head, neck and upper breast, vent, thighs and under tail-coverts black. Abdomen white. Both sexes are alike.

Distribution: Peninsular India south of about Madhya Pradesh, and Sri Lanka. Not Bangladesh, Pakistan or Myanmar.

Nesting season – principally the monsoon, June to October, varying with local conditions.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Common Myna**
Scientific Name : *Acridotheres tristis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

The Common Myna, also sometimes known as “Indian myna”, is a member of the family Sturnidae (starlings and mynas) native to Asia.

The common myna is readily identified by the brown body, black hooded head and the bare yellow patch behind the eye. The bill and legs are bright yellow. There is a white patch on the outer primaries and the wing lining on the underside is white. The sexes are similar and birds are usually seen in pairs.

A confirmed associate of man, following wherever he opens up new habitations. Omnivorous. Eats fruits, insects, kitchen scraps. Follows the plough for earthworms. Etc, and attends on grazing cattle for the grasshoppers disturbed, side-hopping jauntily, and springing up in the air to capture them.

It is a species of bird native to Asia with its initial home range spanning from Iran, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka; as well as Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Myanmar, to Malaysia, Singapore, peninsular Thailand, Indo-China and China.

The range of the common myna is increasing to the extent that in 2000 the IUCN Species Survival Commission declared it among the World’s 100 worst invasive species.

Nesting season – April to August



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Jungle Myna**
Scientific Name : *Acridotheres fuscus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

Very like common Myna but more greyish brown overall; with similar white wing patches, conspicuous in flight. Absence of bare bright yellow skin around eyes, and the bushy upstanding tuft of feathers on forehead are diagnostic points. Pairs or parties on well-wooded countryside; seldom about human habitations.

This bird is a common resident breeder in tropical southern Asia from Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Burma east to Indonesia.

Two races; fuscus more slaty grey on upperparts, with bright yellow iris; mahrattensisless grey on upperparts with bluish white iris.

Nesting season – mainly February to July.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Common Hill Myna**
Scientific Name : *Gracula (religiosa) indica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

A glossy jet black myna with a conspicuous white patch on the wings, yellow bill and legs, and bright orange-yellow patches of naked skin and wattles on the head. Both sexes are alike. Pairs or noisy flocks in hill forest.

Distribution: Restricted and patchy. In India proper in three distinct areas: (1) Himalayan foothills to about 1000m elevation from Almora to Arunachal Pradesh, (2) Chota Nagpur, Orissa and SE Madhya Pradesh, (3) the Western Ghats north to about Mumbai. Also the Andamans and Nicobars. Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and South Myanmar.

The Sri Lanka hill myna, a former subspecies of *G. religiosa*, is now generally accepted as a separate species *G. ptilogenys*. The Enggano hill myna (*G. enganensis*) and Nias hill myna (*G. robusta*) are also widely accepted as specifically distinct, and many authors favor treating the Southern hill myna (*G. indica*) from the Nilgiris and elsewhere in the Western Ghats of India as a separate species.

Nesting season – March to October.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Jerdon's Nightjar**
Scientific Name : *Caprimulgus atripennis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

Jerdon's Nightjar is a medium-sized nightjar species which is found in southern India and Sri Lanka.

Like other nightjars, it has a wide gape, long wings, soft downy plumage and nocturnal habits. At 26 cm in overall length, it is almost a head's length larger than the Indian nightjar (*C. asiaticus*), and differs from that species in its barred tail, rufous rear neck, and wing bars. The male has a white patch on each wing.

The Sri Lankan *acquabilis* is slightly smaller and darker.

Open woodland, scrub, and cultivation is the habitat of this nocturnal bird. It flies after sundown with an easy, silent fluttering flight, appearing a bit like an oversized moth at a casual glance. During the day, Jerdon's nightjar lies silent upon the ground, concealed by its plumage; it is then difficult to detect, blending in with the soil.

Nocturnal insects, such as moths, are its food. Unlike the Indian nightjar (*C. asiaticus*), this species rarely rests on roads during the night, preferring to alight on bushes. This makes it harder to spot, since it is not so readily seen in vehicle headlights. It however roosts on the ground although calling from the trees.

The breeding season is March to July in India and February to May in Sri Lanka. No nest is made; the two marbled eggs are placed upon the bare ground. The brooding bird, covering them closely with its camouflage plumage, is their best protection.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Indian Nightjar**
Scientific Name : *Caprimulgus asiaticus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Indian nightjar is a small nightjar which is a resident breeder in open lands across South Asia and Southeast Asia. Like most nightjars it is crepuscular and is best detected from its characteristic calls at dawn and dusk that have been likened to a stone skipping on a frozen lake - a series of clicks that become shorter and more rapid. They are sometimes spotted on roads when their eyes gleam red in the spotlight of a vehicle.

It flies after sundown with an easy, silent moth-like flight. During the day, Indian nightjar lies still on the ground, concealed by its plumage; it is then difficult to detect, blending in with the soil.

Food: Insects like mosquitoes, flies, beetles, locusts, winged ants, moths and grasshoppers, as well as plant lice and crickets

No nest is made; the two beautifully marbled creamy pink eggs are placed upon the bare ground during February to September; the brooding bird, sitting closely, is well camouflaged. Eggs may be moved short distances



Common Name : **Brown backed Needletail**
Scientific Name : *Hirundapus giganteus indicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga

Photographed by : Creative Commons

The brown-backed needletail is a very large swift, and at 23cm is bigger than the Alpine swift and the white-throated needletail. It has a similar build to the latter species, with a heavy barrel-like body. They are dark brown except for a white under tail, which extends on to the flanks.

These birds have very short legs which they use only mainly for clinging to vertical surfaces. They never settle voluntarily on the ground and spend most of their lives in the air, living on the insects they catch in their beaks.

These swifts are resident breeders in hill forests in southern Asia from India east to Indonesia and the Philippines.

They build their nests in rock crevices in cliffs, laying 3-5 eggs. The flight is impressively fast, even compared to other swifts.



Photographed by : **Jalil B. Bargir**

Common Name : **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch**

Scientific Name : *Sitta frontalis*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Irpage

The velvet-fronted nuthatch has the typical nuthatch big head, short tail and powerful bill and feet. It is 12.5cm long. It is violet-blue above, with lavender cheeks, beige underparts and a whitish throat. The bill is red, and there is a black patch on the forehead. The male also has a black supercilium.

Females lack the supercilium and have a warmer under part colour. Juveniles are duller versions of the adult. There are four races differing in the shade of the underparts and the extent of white on the throat.

Distribution: Better wooded part of India and Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, plains as well as hills up to about 2500m elevation. The birds occupying the lower Eastern Himalayas, Assam and Myanmar are slightly smaller.

Food: Spiders, grubs and insects lurking in holes and crevices in the bark; occasionally also kernels of seeds and nuts.

Nesting season – about February to April in South India; April to June in the North. Old woodpecker and barbet holes commonly utilized, the original entrance partially blocked up with mud plaster.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : Indian Golden Oriole
Scientific Name : *Oriolus kundoo*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Indian Golden Oriole (*Oriolus kundoo*) is a species of oriole found in the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia. The species was once considered to be a subspecies of the Eurasian golden oriole, but has been elevated to a full species on the basis of differences in morphology, plumage, calls and the fact that the two do not intergrade.

Very similar to the Eurasian golden oriole but has more yellow in the tail and has a paler shade of red in the iris and bill. The male has the black eye stripe extending behind the eye, a large carpal patch on the wing and wide yellow tips to the secondaries and tertiaries. The streaks on the underside of females is sharper than in the females of the Eurasian golden oriole. The European species is larger with a wing length of 149-162cm in adult males compared to 136-144cm in *O. kundoo*.

This oriole breeds from Baluchistan and Afghanistan along the Himalayas to Nepal. Some populations breed in the peninsular region but are very local. The northern populations winter in southern India, with some birds wintering in Sri Lanka.

Food: Orioles feed on fruits, nectar and insects.

Nesting season – The breeding season is April to August



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Black-hooded Oriole**
AN: **Black-headed Oriole**

Scientific Name : *Oriolus xanthornus*

Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common

Place : Irpage

The black-hooded oriole (*Oriolus xanthornus*) is a member of the oriole family of passerine birds and is a resident breeder in tropical southern Asia from India and Sri Lanka east to Indonesia.

It is a bird of open woodland and cultivation. The nest is built in a tree, and contains two eggs. Its food is insects and fruit, especially figs, found in the tree canopies where they spend much of their time.

The male is striking, with the typical oriole black and yellow colouration. The plumage is predominantly yellow, with a solid black hood, and black also in the wings and tail centre.

The female black-hooded oriole is a drabber bird with greenish underparts, but still has the black hood. Young birds are like the female, but have dark streaking on the underparts, and their hood is not solidly black, especially on the throat.

Nesting season – April to July; in Sri Lanka October to May



Photographed by : **Mahantesh Oshimath**

Common Name : **Black-naped Oriole**
Scientific Name : *Oriolus chinensis*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Virje

The black-napped oriole is medium-sized and overall golden with a strong pinkish bill and a broad black mask and nape. The adult male has the central tail feathers tipped yellow and the lateral ones are more broadly yellow. The female has the mantle colour more greenish or olive. The juvenile has a streaked underside.

It breeds in China and is widespread across India during winter, mainly in the northeastern parts and in the peninsular region. The population in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are resident. The subspecies in the Andamans, *O. c. andamanensis* has all black wings while *O. c. macrourus* of the Nicobars has a very broad nape band so that only the top of the head is yellow. T. C. Jerdon described a bird from the Malabar region that he identified as *Oriolus indicus* and this is now considered to be *Oriolus chinensis diffusus*.

Nesting season – chiefly May –June in the E.Himalayas.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Brown Fish Owl**
Scientific Name : *ketupa zeylonensis*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Hartuga

A large heavy brown owl, the underparts paler with dark vertical streaks especially about the breast. Feather tufts projecting above the head like long ears; large round yellow forwardly directed eyes. Unfeathered legs diagnostic. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pairs, in ancient trees near water.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. The race *zeylonensis* being smaller and darker than the Indian *leschenaulti*.

Food: Fish, frogs, crabs, small mammals, birds, reptiles; occasionally carrion.

Nesting season – December to March, but varying with locality.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Brown Hawk-owl**
Scientific Name : *Ninox scutulata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

The Brown Hawk-owl is a medium-sized (32cm) owl with a hawk-like shape due to its long tail and lack of a distinct facial disk. The upperparts are dark brown, with a barred tail. The underparts are whitish with reddish-brown streaking, although the subspecies found in the Andaman Islands has dark brown underparts. The tail is barred. The eyes are large and yellow. Sexes are similar.

This species is very nocturnal but it can often be located by the small birds that mob it while it is roosting in a tree. It feeds mainly on large insects, frogs, lizards, small birds, and mice.

Distribution: Practically the entire Indian Union from the Himalayan foothills at Dehra Dun eastward to NE. India and Bangladesh southward to Kerala and Sri Lanka. Also Andaman and Nicobar islands.

Food : Large insects, frogs, lizards, mice, small birds etc.

Nesting season – overall January to July, varying locally.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Brown Wood-owl**
Scientific Name : *Strix leptogrammica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A large chocolate-brown owl with close barred underparts and a prominent white supercilium. Face disc white in the Himalayan race (*newarensis*) and rufous in peninsular race (*indrancee*). Tail tipped with white. A pure white patch on throat. Both sexes are alike.

Distribution: Himalayas from Pakistan eastwards. Resident in the evergreen and moist-deciduous forests of the Western and Eastern Ghats, Sri Lanka.

Food: Small mammals, birds and reptiles.

Nesting season – January to March.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Barn Owl**
Scientific Name : *Tyto alba*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A typical owl, golden buff, and grey above finely striped with black and white; silky white below tinged with buff and normally spotted dark brown. Large round head with a conspicuous ruff of stiff feathers surrounding a comically pinched white monkey-like facial disc. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pairs, about deserted buildings and ruins.

Distribution: The entire Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Two races chiefly in India. In numerous other races the Barn Owl has an almost world- wide range.

Food: Almost exclusively rats and mice.

Nesting season – undefined. Practically all year.



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Mottled Wood Owl**

Scientific Name : *Strix ocellata*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kuchegar

The mottled wood owl (*Strix ocellata*) is a species of large owl found in India. They are found in gardens and thin deciduous forests adjacent to dry thorn forests or farmland. They are easily detected by their distinctive tremulous eerie calls at dawn and dusk.

This large owl lacks ear tufts and is mottled and vermiculated in reddish brown and white. The face disc is marked with fine concentric black and white barring. The sexes are alike. The chin is white. The eyelid is orange and the iris is dark brown. The tail is barred narrowly in brown and black. The concentric barring on the face and mottled crown separate it from the brown wood owl in southern India.

There are three subspecies recognized and there are no sharp demarcations in their distributions.

1. *S. o. ocellata* (Lesson, 1839) is found in southern India and is shorter winged in the males (333–338mm) than *grandis*
2. *S. o. griseascens* (Koelz, 1950) is found in northern India south of the Himalayas, west to Pakistan and east to Bihar. The markings are pale above and the males have a wing length of 338–346mm
3. *S. o. grandis* (Koelz, 1950) from Gujarat is differentiated by the wing length of the males (360–372mm)



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Jungle Owlet**
Scientific Name : *Glaucidium radiatum*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

The Jungle Owlet is found in the Indian Subcontinent. The species is often found singly, in pairs or small groups and are usually detected by their calls at dawn and dusk.

This small owlet has a rounded head and is finely barred all over. There is no clear facial disk and the wings are brownish and the tail is narrowly barred in white. There are two subspecies, the nominate form is found in the plains of India and Sri Lanka while malabaricum of the Western Ghats is shorter tailed and shows more brown on the head. It has been suggested that this may warrant full species status.

The plumage on the upper parts is dark black brown barred with white. The wing coverts have white and rufous patches. The primaries and secondaries are dark brown and barred with pale chestnut. The lower side is whitish or pale rufous barred with black. There is a whitish patch on the chin, upper breast and centre of the abdomen. The iris is yellow, the bill and tarsi are greenish with black claws.

Their peak foraging hours are an hour before sunrise and after sunset. Their diet consists of insects, small birds, reptiles, and rodents.



Photographed by : H.G. Prashanthakumar

Common Name : **Spotted Owlet**
Scientific Name : *Athene brama*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The spotted owlet is a small owl which breeds in tropical Asia from mainland India to Southeast Asia. A common resident of open habitats including farmland and human habitation, it has adapted to living in cities.

The spotted owlet is a small and stocky bird, barely 21 centimetres in size. The upperparts are grey-brown, heavily spotted with white. The underparts are white, streaked with brown. The facial disc is pale and the iris is yellow. There is a white neckband and supercilium. Sexes are similar. The nominate form is darker than the paler forms such as indica of drier regions.

Food: Chiefly beetles and other insects; also young birds and mice and lizards, etc.

Nesting season – principally November to April.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Tree Pipit**
Scientific Name : *Anthus trivialis*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

The tree pipit, *Anthus trivialis*, is a small passerine bird which breeds in NW Himalayas; widespread in winter; unrecorded in Sri Lanka.

This is a small pipit, buffish-brown to greyish ground colour to upperparts, and buffish edges to wing feathers. Head pattern typically less prominent.

The call is a strong speck, unlike the weak call of its relative. The song flight is unmistakable. The bird rises a short distance up from a tree, and then parachutes down on stiff wings, the song becoming more drawn out towards the end.

This species is insectivorous, like its relatives, but will also take seeds.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Paddy Field Pipit**
Scientific Name : *Anthus rufulus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This is a large pipit at 15cm, but is otherwise an undistinguished looking bird, mainly streaked grey-brown above and pale below with breast streaking. It is long legged with a long tail and a long dark bill. Sexes are similar. Summer and winter plumages are similar.

The population waitei from north-western India and Pakistan is pale while the population malayensis from the Western Ghats is larger, darker and more heavily streaked with the nominate rufulus intermediate.

A widespread species found in open habitats, especially short grassland and cultivation with open bare ground. It runs rapidly on the ground, and when flushed, does not fly far.

It feeds principally on small insects but consumes larger beetles, tiny snails, worms etc. while walking on the ground, and may pursue insects like mosquitoes or termites in the air.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The paddy field pipit breeds throughout the year but mainly in the dry season.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Tawny Pipit**
Scientific Name : *Anthus campestris*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Hartuga

The Tawny Pipit is a medium-large passerine bird which breeds in much of temperate Europe and Asia, and northwest Africa. It is a migrant moving in winter to tropical Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

This is a large pipit, 16 centimetres long with wing-span 25–28cm, but is an undistinguished looking species on the ground, mainly sandy brown above and pale below. has shorter wings, tail and legs and a narrower dark bill. It is also less streaked.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Indian Pitta**
Scientific Name : *Pitta brachyura*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

The Indian Pitta is a passerine bird native to the Indian subcontinent. It inhabits scrub jungle, deciduous and dense evergreen forest.

Breeding in the forests of the Himalayas, hills of central and western India, they migrate to other parts of the peninsula in winter.

The name pitta comes from the Telugu word meaning “small bird”.

Indian pittas roost in trees. They feed on insects and other small invertebrates that they usually pick up from the ground or leaf litter. They have also been noted to take kitchen food scraps from the ground.

They breed during the south-west monsoon from June to August, with peaks in June in central India, and in July in northern India.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : Ashy Prinia
Scientific Name : *Prinia socialis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The ashy prinia or ashy wren-warbler (*Prinia socialis*) is a small warbler.

These 13–14cm long warblers have short rounded wings and longish graduated cream tail tipped with black sub terminal spots. The tail is usually held upright and the strong legs are used for clambering about and hopping on the ground. They have a short black bill. The crown is grey and the underparts are rufous in most plumages. In breeding plumage, adults of the northern population are ash grey above, with a black crown and cheek with no supercilium and rufescent wings. In non-breeding season, this population has a short and narrow white supercilium and the tail is longer.

Like most warblers, the ashy prinia is insectivorous.

This prinia is a resident breeder in the Indian Subcontinent, ranging across most of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and western Myanmar. It is a common bird in urban gardens and farmland in many parts of India and its small size, distinctive colours and upright tail make it easy to identify.

The non-migratory *Prinia* genus shows biannual moult which is rare among passerines. A moult occurs in spring (April–May) and another moult occurs in autumn (October–November).

The breeding season varies with locality and has been recorded breeding around the year but mostly after the monsoons. [13] In north India it is mainly June to September and in Sri Lanka mainly December to March or August to October. Breeds during May–June in the Nilgiris. Cuckoos *Cacomantis merulinus* and *Cacomantis passerinus* have been known to be brood parasites of this species.



Photographed by : **Vijesh Vallikkunnu**

Common Name : **Plain Prinia**
Scientific Name : *Prinia inornata*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

Same as Ashy Prinia, but rufous earthy brown above without terminal spots to tail. Winter plumage more fulvous and longer-tailed. Both sexes are alike. Pairs in open scrub-grass-country.

Distribution: The Indian Union south of Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Like most warblers, the plain prinia is insectivorous.

Nesting season – March to September, chiefly SW monsoon.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Grey Breasted Prinina**
Scientific Name : *Prinia hodgsonii*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

A dusky wren grey-warbler with rust-brown wings; underparts whitish with a brown diffuse ashy band across breast. A longish grey tail tipped with black white. In winter can be confused with Ashy Prinina, but is more gregarious. The sexes look alike in most populations except in *P. h. pectoralis* of Sri Lanka where the female can be told apart by the incomplete breast band.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union (except the arid northwest); Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka.

Like most warblers, grey-breasted prinias are insectivorous. They feed mainly on insects like ants, small beetles, caterpillars which are found among twigs and foliage of small trees. They also feeds on nectar from blossoms of trees like *Erythrina* and *Bombax* and during summer their forehead is sometimes sprinkled with pollen giving them an orange or yellowish head that can lead to mistaken identification.

Nesting season – June to October.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Indian Robin**
Scientific Name : *Saxicoloides fulicatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A sprightly black bird with a white patch on wing and rusty red under root of cocked tail. Female ashy brown without the wing-patch.

Several populations are named based on their plumage differences. The nominate subspecies refers to the population found across southern Peninsular India. Race leucopterus is found in Sri Lanka. Race cambaiensis of western India and erythrura of eastern India (south to around Sambalpur) have the males with brown backs.

It is widespread in the Indian subcontinent, and ranges across Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

They feed mostly on insects but are known to take frogs and lizards especially when feeding young at the nest. Individuals may forage late in the evening to capture insects attracted to lights.

Nesting season – April to June; earlier in the south. Nests are built between rocks, in holes in walls or in a tree hollow. Nests are lined with animal hair and it has been noted that many nests have pieces of snake sloughs.



Photographed by : Prashant A. Nayak

Common Name : **Oriental Magpie-Robin**
Scientific Name : *Copsychus saularis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A trim black-and-white bird with cocked tail as in Indian Robin. Black portions of male replaced by brown and slaty grey in female. Singly or pairs, they are common birds in urban gardens as well as forests.

This magpie-robin is a resident breeder in tropical southern Asia from Bangladesh, interior India, Sri Lanka and eastern Pakistan east to Indonesia, Thailand, south China, Malaysia, and Singapore. They have been introduced to Australia.

The diet of magpie robins includes mainly insects and other invertebrates. Although mainly insectivorous, they are known to occasionally take flower nectar, geckos, leeches, centipedes and even fish.

They are often active late at dusk. They sometimes bathe in rainwater collected on the leaves of a tree.

Magpie robins breed mainly from March to July in India and January to June in south-east Asia. November to august in Sri Lanka. They nest in tree hollows or niches in walls or building, often adopting nest boxes. They line the cavity with grass. The female is involved in most of the nest building, which happens about a week before the eggs are laid.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-rumped Shama**
Scientific Name : *Copsychus malabaricus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

An unmistakable cousin of the Magpie-Robin with chestnut underparts instead of white. Females are more greyish-brown, and are typically shorter than males. Both sexes have a black bill and pink feet. Juveniles have a greyish-brown colouration, similar to that of the females, with a blotchy or spotted chest.

Their habitat is dense undergrowth especially in bamboo forests. The white-rumped shama is shy and somewhat crepuscular but very territorial. The territories include a male and female during the breeding season with the males defending the territory, but each sex may have different territories when they are not breeding. The voice of this species is rich and melodious which made them popular as cage birds in South Asia with the tradition continuing in parts of Southeast Asia. It is loud and clear, with a variety of phrases, and often mimics other birds.

Distribution: Patchy but general in the in the forested tracts of the Indian Union, including Andamans; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Up to about 1200m elevation.

Food: Chiefly insects, picked off the ground or among bushes.

Nesting season – principally April to June.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike**
Scientific Name : *Hemipus picatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

A small black-and-white flycatcher-like bird with a characteristic hunchbacked profile when perched. Formerly placed in the cuckoo shrike family but probably closer to the wood shrikes.

The bar-winged flycatcher-shrike is black capped with black wings that contrast with the white of the body. A white slash across the wing and a white rump stand out in contrast. They sit upright on branches, flying around to glean insects. The nostril is hidden by hairs and the upper mandible of the beak has a curved tip. Males are velvety black while females tend to be greyish brown but the pattern varies across the geographic populations. Both males and females of the Himalayan *H. p. capitalis* have a brown back but the males have a black head. The Sri Lankan population *leggei* lacks sexual dimorphism in plumage. *H. p. intermedius* has only the females with a brownish back. The tail is black but the outer tail feathers are white while the non-central tail feathers are tipped with white.

The nominate race is found mainly in the Western Ghats of India but becoming very rare towards the Surat Dangs. They are also found in some parts of central and eastern India, extending into Bangladesh. The subspecies *capitalis* is found along the Himalayas from Simla, east to Manipur and Chittagong in India and extending into northern Thailand, Myanmar and Laos. Subspecies *leggei* found in the hill forests of Sri Lanka. Subspecies *intermedius* is found in Southeast Asia in Sumatra, Borneo, and parts of the Malay Peninsula.

Nesting season – overall March to June with local variations.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Brown Shrike**
Scientific Name : *Lanius cristatus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Brown Shrike is a bird in the shrike family that is found mainly in Asia.

This shrike is mainly brown on the upper parts and the tail is rounded. The black mask can be paler in winter and has a white brow over it. The underside is creamy with rufous flanks and belly. The wings are brown and lack any white “mirror” patches. Females tend to have fine scalloping on the underside and the mask is dark brown and not as well marked as in the male.

Winter visitor throughout the subcontinent including Andamans, Nicobars and Lakshadweep. Also Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka. The ringing studies show that they have high fidelity to their wintering sites, often returning to the same locations each winter. They begin establishing wintering territories shortly after arrival and their loud chattering or rattling calls are distinctive. The

timing of their migration is very regular with their arrival in winter to India in August and September and departure in April. During their winter period, they go through a premigratory moult.

They feed mainly on insects, especially Lepidoptera. Small birds and lizards are also sometimes preyed upon.

The breeding season is late May or June and the breeding habitat includes the taiga, forest to semi-desert where they build a nest in a tree or bush, laying two to six eggs.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Long-tailed Shrike**
Scientific Name : *Lanius schach*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Irpage

The long-tailed shrike is a typical shrike, favoring dry open habitats and found perched prominently atop a bush or on a wire. The dark mask through the eye is broad and covers the forehead in most subspecies and the whole head is black in subspecies tricolor and nasutus. The tail is narrow and graduated with pale rufous on the outer feathers.

The species is found across Asia from Kazakhstan to New Guinea. It is found mainly in scrub and open habitats. Many of the temperate zone populations are migratory, moving south in winter while those in the tropics tend to be sedentary although they may make short distance movements. Subspecies caniceps of southern India is found in winter in the dry coastal zone of southern India. Subspecies tricolor migrates south to Bengal in India.

Long-tailed shrikes take a wide variety of prey. On occasion, they have been noted capturing fish from a stream. They also take small snakes. It sometimes indulges in kleptoparasitism and takes prey from other birds. It also captures flying insects in the air. They sometimes impale prey on a thorny bush after feeding just on the head or brain. They have been reported to feed on the fruits of the neem in Kerala.

Nesting season – February to July, locally variable



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Bay-backed Shrike**
Scientific Name : *Laniu vittatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The smallest Indian shrike, having size 17cm, maroon-brown above with a pale rump and long black tail with white edges. The underparts are white, but with buff flanks. The crown and nape are grey, with a typical shrike black bandit mask through the eye. There is a small white wing patch, and the bill and legs are dark grey.

The bay-backed shrike has a characteristic upright “shrike” attitude perched on a bush, from which it sallies after lizards, large insects, small birds and rodents.

Prey may be impaled upon a sharp point, such as a thorn. Thus secured they can be ripped with the strong hooked bill, but its feet are not suited for tearing.

It is a widespread resident breeder in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, and has recently been recorded from Sri Lanka.

Nesting season – April to September, chiefly June/ July.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Southern grey shrike**
Scientific Name : *Lanius meridionalis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The Southern Grey Shrike is a member of the shrike family. The plumage is generally similar to great grey shrike apart from the differences noted below. It is closely related to the great grey shrike, *Lanius excubitor*, which it was previously considered conspecific; where they co-occur, they do not inter-breed and are separated by choice of habitat.

This medium-sized shrike eats large insects, small birds and rodents. Like other shrikes it hunts from prominent perches, and impales corpses on thorns or barbed wire as a “larder”



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Indian Silverbill**
Scientific Name : *Euodice malabarica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

The Indian silver bill is a small passerine bird found in the Indian Subcontinent and adjoining regions.

The adult Indian silver bill is 11–11.5cm long and has a conical silver-grey bill, buff-brown upperparts, white underparts, buffy flanks and dark wings. The tail is black and the wings are dark contrasting with a white rump. The sexes are similar, but immature have buff underparts and a shorter tail.

It frequents dry open scrub, fallow land and cultivation, sometimes near water. Although mainly found on the plains, they can be found up to about 1200 m in some sub-Himalayan regions. It occurs in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Iran and Israel. It has been accidentally introduced into many other parts of the world and has established itself in Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Puerto Rico (introduced), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United States.

It feeds mainly on seeds, but also takes insects and has been known to visit nectar bearing flowers, such as those of *Erythrina* trees.

They nest in winter in southern India and after summer in northern India.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **House Sparrow**
Scientific Name : *Passer domesticus indicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

It was once the most familiar bird in urban and rural area and widespread world over. But that status is now diminished due to its fall in population everywhere.

Male with grey crown, black lores and around eye. Behind eye, sides of neck and upper back chestnut. Back rufous-chestnut, black streaked. White shoulder patch on rufous wing. Tail dark brown. Female ashy grey-brown above, streaked with blackish and rufous, and with a pale fulvous supercilium; fulvous ashy white below. Inseparable from human habitations.

Distribution: Practically world-wide. Throughout India normally to about 2000m in the Himalayas. Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

The house sparrow is strongly associated with human habitations, and can live in urban or rural settings. Though found in widely varied habitats and climates, it typically avoids extensive woodlands, grasslands, and deserts away from human development. It feeds mostly on the seeds of grains and weeds, but it is an opportunistic eater and commonly eats insects and many other foods. Its predators include domestic cats, hawks, owls, and many other predatory birds and mammals.

Nesting season – practically all year, varying with locality.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : Chestnut-shouldered Petronia
Scientific Name : *Petronia xantibocollis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kadra

A pale earth-brown sparrow with a conspicuous chestnut shoulder-patch, two whitish bars in the wing, and a lemon-yellow 'thump impression' on the throat. Female lacks the yellow on throat, and her chestnut shoulder-patches are paler. Pairs or flocks, in open thinly-wooded country.

Distribution: Practically all India from about 1500m in the Himalayas to Kanyakumari and from Sind to W. Bengal. Also Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and parts of Myanmar. Resident and marked seasonal local migrant.

They feed mainly on grains but also on insects, nectar and berries. An unusual food item is the petals of flowers such as those of *Madhuca indica*.

Nesting season – April to June.

This species is said to have introduced Salim Ali (1896–1987) to ornithology. As a young boy he shot a sparrow that looked different, and it was identified for him by W. S. Millard, then secretary of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), who also introduced him to the literature and collections at the museum there. As a result, Salim Ali ultimately took up ornithology as a profession. In 2003 the BNHS published a tribute to him entitled *Petronia*



Photographed by : **Mahantesh Oshimath**

Common Name : **Little Spiderhunter**
Scientific Name : *Arachnotbera longirostra*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

An olive and yellow bird like a large female sunbird with very long and stout, curved bill. Tail dark brown tipped with white. Throat and breast greyish white. Belly yellow with orange tufts on flanks. Both sexes are alike

Distribution: Western Ghats from North Karnataka to Kanyakumari Dist, Eastern Ghats, NE States and Bangladesh Eastern Himalayas, Nepal.

Food : Nectar, insects, spiders.

They have been noted as good pollinators of wild banana species and several species of the ginger family and often visit *Loranthus* sp. Indian silk cotton tree and Indian coral tree for nectar. They are often seen in plantations in forest areas. Although they are more often seen in secondary forests or in clearings and appear to be tolerant of human activities.



Photographed by : **G. Mohandas**

Common Name : **Blyth's Starling**
AN: Malabar Starling
Scientific Name : *Sturnia malabarica (blythi)*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

Resident in South West peninsula and Western Ghats. Identified from male Chestnut-tailed starling by white head and white breast, contrasts strongly with grey of mantle and with rufous on belly and flanks. Female has white of head confined to forehead and fore crown; more similar to Chestnut-tailed starling but purer gray above, pale below. This species yet to be recognized by IUCN



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : Chestnut-tailed Starling
Scientific Name : *Sturnia malabarica*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A small, trim Myna, brownish silvery grey above, rusty brown below; blackish wing quills. Both sexes are alike. Flocks in thinly-wooded country.

Distribution: Throughout India east and south of a line from Mount Abu to Dehra Dun, NE States; Bangladesh; Myanmar; Pakistan; Sri Lanka. Subject to considerable seasonal local migration.

Two subspecies:

- (1) *S. m. malabarica*: North-eastern India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and north-western Burma
- (2) *S. malabarica nemoricola*: Southern China (incl. Taiwan), Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia

The Malabar starling (*Sturnia malabarica blythii*), formerly considered as a subspecies is now considered as full species.

Food: Ber, lantana, and other berries banyan and peepul figs, nector of *Salmalia* and other flowers, and insects. While feeding keeps up incessant squabbling and chatter varied by some pleasant musical notes.

Nesting season – March to June.



Photographed by : **K Harish**

Common Name : **Brahminy Starling**
Scientific Name : *Sturnia pagodarum*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

This myna is pale buff creamy with a black cap and a loose crest. The bill is yellow with a bluish base. The iris is pale and there is a bluish patch of skin around the eye. The outer tail feathers have white and the black primaries of the wings do not have any white patches. The adult male has a more prominent crest than the female and also has longer neck hackles. Juveniles are duller and the cap is browner.

The species name pagodarum is thought to be based on occurrence of the species on buildings and temple pagodas in southern India.

Distribution: It is a resident breeder in Nepal and India, a winter visitor to Sri Lanka and a summer visitor in parts of the western Himalayas and northeastern Himalayas. They are spotted in plains of Pakistan as well.

Like most starlings, the brahminy starling is omnivorous, eating fruit and insects. They have been known to feed on the fruits of *Thevetia peruvianawhich* are toxic to many vertebrates.

It builds its nest in tree holes or artificial cavities. The breeding season is March to September but varies with location, being earlier in southern India.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Rosy Starling**
Scientific Name : *Pastor roseus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

A rose-pink myna-like bird with glistering black head, neck and upper breast, wings, and tail. A long, recumber, pointed crest on crown and nape, sometimes erected. Both sexes are alike.

The breeding range of this bird is from easternmost Europe across temperate southern Asia. It is a strong migrant, winter visitor in West and South India, passage migrant in North India and Pakistan.

One of our earliest winter visitors. Begins arriving July-August, departs by mid April.

The observations were made on the feeding habits of rosy starling are: Fruits and berries: Ficus (many species), Lantana spp., Zizyphus oenoplia, Bridelia hamistoniana, Streblus asper, grapes, mulberries (Morus), dates, Salvadora persica, Capparis aphylla and chillies. Flower-nectar: Salmalia persica, Bombax insigne, erythrina indica and E.suberosa, Butea monosperma, Careya arborea. Cereal grains: Jowar

and bajra. Insects: largely locusts and grasshoppers, beetles of the families Lucanidae, Elateridae, Tenebrionidae, Buprestidae, Scarabaeidae and Curculionidae.

Nesting: Breeds in eastern Europe, Western and Central Asia on stony hillsides and amongst ruins, in May and June.

In Xinjiang, China, farmers used to use insecticide to eliminate locust, which is costly and polluting. In the 1980s, experts found that rosy starlings which fly to Xinjiang farms and feed on locusts could be used for control instead. The experts begin to build artificial nests to attract rosy starlings, an effort reported to be so successful that the number of locusts was insufficient to feed the birds, causing many juveniles die of hunger. By the 2000s many Xinjiang farms greatly decreased the usage of insecticide.



Photographed by : **G. Mohandas**

Common Name : **Black-winged Stilt**
Scientific Name : *Himantopus himantopus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A lanky black, greyish brown and white wading bird with a straight slender black bill and enormously long, thin reddish legs. The sexes differ in details of coloration, as also the summer and winter plumages. Pairs or flocks at jheels.

Distribution: The Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and locally migratory; also winter visitor.

Food: Worms, molluscs, aquatic insects etc

Nesting season – principally April to August.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Purple Sunbird**
Scientific Name : *Cinnyris asiaticus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Purple Sunbird is a small sunbird. Like other sunbirds they feed mainly on nectar, although they will also take insects, especially when feeding young. They have a fast and direct flight and can take nectar by hovering like a hummingbird but often perch at the base of flowers.

This small sunbird has a relatively short bill, a dark and short square ended tail with distinctive sexual dimorphism. Less than 10cm long they have a down-curve bill with brush-tipped tubular tongues that aid in nectar feeding. The male is glossy metallic purplish black on the upper parts with the wings appearing dark brown. The breeding male has the underparts also of the same purplish black, but non-breeding males may show a central streak of black on yellow underparts, called eclipse plumage. Breeding males will sometimes show their yellow pectoral tufts in displays. There is a patch of bright blue on the shoulder of breeding males. The maroon shine on

the feathers of the collar around the neck is visible mainly during the breeding seasons.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Food: Insects and spiders, and very largely flower nectar. While feeding they flick their wings. They rarely hover at flowers and usually perch to forage for nectar. They are important pollinators of some plant species such as *Butea monosperma*, *Acacia*, *Woodfordia* and *Dendrophthoe*. But they sometimes steal nectar by slitting flowers such as *Hamelia patens* at the base. They are known to feed on small berries such as those of *Salvadora persica*.

Nesting season – elastic, mostly March to May.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Loten's Sunbird**
Scientific Name : *Cinnyris loteni*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The Loten's sunbird, is a sunbird endemic to peninsular India and Sri Lanka. Its long bill distinguishes it from the similar purple sunbird that is found in the same areas and also tends to hover at flowers.

The wings are browner and the maroon breast band is visible on the male under good lighting conditions. The males have pectoral tufts of yellow mixed with crimson that are used in displays. The adult male is mainly glossy purple with a grey-brown belly. The female has yellow-grey upperparts and yellowish underparts, but lacks Purple's faint supercilium.

Distribution: Found only in peninsular India and Sri Lanka. The main region is along the Western Ghats and into the southern peninsula. There are scattered records from central India and into the northern Eastern Ghats north until Orissa. Race *hindustanicus*, southern Peninsular populations of

which have a slightly shorter bill, is found in India while the nominate race is found in Sri Lanka.

While foraging for nectar they hover at flowers a lot unlike the purple sunbirds that prefers to perch beside flowers. Like other sunbirds, they also feed on small insects and spiders.

The breeding season is November to March in India, February to May in Sri Lanka. It often builds its nest within the nests of "social spiders" (Eresidae).



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Small sunbird**
AN: Crimson-backed Sunbird
Scientific Name : *Leptocoma (Nectarina) minima*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

The crimson-backed sunbird or small sunbird is a sunbird endemic to the Western Ghats of India.

Crimson-backed sunbirds are tiny, even by sunbird standards, and are only 8cm long. They have medium-length thin down-curved bills and brush-tipped tubular tongues, both adaptations for nectar feeding.

Similar to Purple Sunbird but back deep crimson brown or maroon and without metallic shoulder patch. Below collar broader covering breast. Belly yellow with bright lemon tufts. Flanks greyish white. Female: Above olive, lower rump distinctively deep crimson-brown.

They may be found in good numbers in flower-rich gardens at the edges of forests or plantations.

The crimson-backed sunbird is an endemic resident breeder in the Western Ghats of India. The peak nesting season is December to March but has been known to nest in nearly all months of the year in the southern Western Ghats.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Purple-rumped Sunbird**

Scientific Name : *Leptocoma zeylonica*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Virje

The Purple-rumped Sunbird is a sunbird endemic to the Indian Subcontinent.

Purple-rumped sunbirds are sexually dimorphic. The males have a dark maroon upper side with a blue-green crown that glistens at some angles, bright green shoulder patch and violet/purple rump patch which is generally hidden under the wings. The underparts are whitish with dark throat, maroon breast band and purple/violet patch in the throat which is visible in some angles. The iris is generally reddish in color. In the Western Ghats, it can overlap in some areas with the crimson-backed sunbird but the male of that species has reddish upperparts, a broader breast band and generally darker eyes. The female has a white throat followed by yellowish breast. The upper side is olive or brownish. The uppertail coverts are black and a weak supercilium may be visible.

The purple-rumped sunbird is a common resident breeder in southern India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. It is found in Gujarat to the west and extending into Assam and Meghalaya in the east.

Nesting season – is not well defined. All through the year.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : Red-rumped Swallow
Scientific Name : *Cecropis daurica*
Residential Status : Resident Migratory / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Red-rumped Swallow is a small passerine bird in the swallow family. It breeds in open hilly country of temperate southern Europe and Asia from Portugal and Spain to Japan, India and tropical Africa.

They resemble barn swallows, but are darker below and have pale or reddish rumps, face and neck collar. They lack a breast band, but have black under tails. They are fast fliers and they swoop on insects while airborne. They have broad but pointed wings.

The populations in mainland India, erythrogygia has the rump patch uniform dark chestnut without an dark shaft-streaks. The tail fork is shallow and the white patch on the inner web of the outer-tail feathers is indistinct. Populations of japonica breed in eastern Asia and winter in Thailand, Burma, India and northern Australia. They are heavily streaked on the underside and have faint streaks on the rump. The populations along the Himalayas nipalensis

migrate to peninsular India in winter and breed from Kulu in the west to Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh in the east. This population has the rump paler with dark shaft streaks. Subspecies rufula of Southern Europe, the Iberian Peninsula east to Baluchistan and Kashmir is resident and winters further south. The chestnut of rump fades to white towards the tail base. The nominate population breeds in Mongolia and Trans-Baikailia wintering in South and Southeast Asia.

Nesting season – April to August, varying locally.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Barn Swallow**
Scientific Name : *Hirundo rustica*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

The Barn Swallow is the most widespread species of swallow in the world.

Winter visitor. Commences arriving September/October; departs April/ May.

Glossy steel blue or purplish blue above, pale pinkish white below. Chestnut forehead and throat, the latter bordered by a broad glossy black pectoral band. Deeply forked 'swallow' tail, especially prominent in flight. Both sexes are alike. Gregarious. Usually seen huddled on telegraph wires or hawking midges over open country or marshland.

Distribution: In winter throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. There are six subspecies Chiefly two races are concerned us, differing slightly in size and coloration.

- (1) *H. r. rustica*, the nominate European subspecies, breeds in Europe and migrates on a broad front to winter in Africa, Arabia, and the Indian subcontinent.
- (2) *H. r. tytleri*, has deep orange-red underparts and an incomplete breast band. The tail is also longer. visits NE India; Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Food: chiefly flies and midges.

Nesting season – Only the Himalayas from Kashmir to NE India, 1000m to 2000m elevation.



Photographed by : Nagaraja Adiga

Common Name : **Ashy Woodswallow**
Scientific Name : *Artamus fuscus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

A rather dumpy but sleek slaty grey bird with paler underparts and a pale rump. When perched, the closed wings reach the end of the tail. Heavy, bluish, sparrow-like bill. Both sexes are alike. In flight very like swallow or crag martin, but heavier in build. Parties, huddled together on bare branches or telegraph wires in open country, or hawking winged insects in graceful sailing flight.

Distribution: India east and south of a line from Shimla to Gujarat; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and hills to 2000m. Patchy and locally migratory.

Although mainly feeding on insects, they may take nectar from flowers of trees such as Erythrina. They have been recorded feeding on toxic butterflies of the family Danaidae such as Common Indian Crow (*Euploea*) which are avoided by other birds.

Nesting season – April to June.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Wire-tailed Swallow**
Scientific Name : *Hirundo smithii (filifera)*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The wire-tailed swallow is a small passerine bird in the swallow family.

Glossy steel blue above, with a chestnut cap. Readily distinguished from other swallows by its glistening white underparts and two long, fine 'wires' in the tail. Both sexes are alike, but tail wires of female shorter. Pairs or parties, in open cultivation, near water.

Distribution: All India from about 3000m in the Himalayas south to the Nilgiris; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Myanmar. Mainly resident, but also locally migratory.

This species is more confined to the neighbourhood of water. Seldom encountered away from streams, tanks, reservoir, etc.

Nesting season – practically all year; principally March to September.



Photographed by : Kaushal Raj Prasad

Common Name : **Common Tailorbird**
Scientific Name : *Ortobotomus sutorius*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

A small restless olive-green bird with whitish underparts, a rust coloured crown and two elongated pinpointed feathers in the tail (more developed in breeding male) which is carried jauntily cocked. Both sexes are alike. Singly or pairs, in shrubbery.

Distribution: The entire Indian Union up to 1500m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

A number of subspecies are recognized within its widespread range in South Asia and Southeast Asia. The nominate race is from the lowlands of Sri Lanka. Race *O. s. fernandonis* is found in the highlands of Sri Lanka. Neighbouring India has *O.s. guzuratus* in the peninsula and west to Pakistan while towards the north *O. s. patia* is found in the Terai of Nepal along the Himalayan foothills until Myanmar. A small population of *O. s. patia* is also found in the northern Eastern Ghats (Wangasara). The hills of northeastern India have *O. s. luteus*.

Food: Tiny insects, their eggs and grubs; flower nectar of salmalia, Erythrina and other trees.

Nesting season – April to September, varying locally.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **River Tern**
Scientific Name : *Sterna aurasia*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kerwadi

A slender, graceful, grey and white tern with long, deeply forked 'shallow' tail; deep yellow bill and short red legs. In summer entire forehead, crown and nape glossy jet black; in winter greyish white flecked and streaked with black, especially on nape. Both sexes are alike. Gregarious, found on rivers and jheels, flying up and down.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Myanmar; Not in Sri Lanka.

As with other *Sterna* terns, the river tern feeds by plunge-diving for fish, crustaceans, tadpoles and aquatic insects in rivers, lakes, and tanks. Its numbers are decreasing due to the pollution of their habitat.

This species breeds from March to May in colonies in less accessible areas such as sandbanks in rivers. It nests in a ground scrape, often on bare rock or sand, and lays three greenish-grey to buff eggs



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Whiskered Tern**
Scientific Name : *Chlidonias hybrida*
Residential Status : Migratory / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

The whiskered tern (*Chlidonias hybrida* or *Chlidonias hybridus*) is a seabird of the tern family, Sternidae.

This bird has a number of geographical races, differing mainly in size and minor plumage details.

C. h. hybrida breeds in warmer parts of Europe and Asia. The smaller-billed and darker *C. h. delalandii* is found in east and south Africa, and the paler *C. h. javanicus* from Java to Australia.

The tropical forms are resident, but European and Asian birds winter south to Africa and the Indian Subcontinent.

This species breeds in colonies on inland marshes, sometimes amongst black-headed gulls, which provide some protection. The scientific name arises from the fact that this, the largest marsh tern, show similarities in appearance to both the white *Sterna* terns and to black tern.



Photographed by : **Jalil Bargir**

Common Name : **Indian Thick –Knee**
AN: Indian Stone Curlew
Scientific Name : *Burhinus indicus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kerwadi

They are medium to large birds with strong black or yellow black bills, large yellow eyes—which give them a reptilian appearance—and cryptic plumage. The names thick-knee and stone-curlew are both in common use, the preference among authorities for one term or the other varying from year to year. The term stone-curlew owes its origin to the broad similarities with true curlews (which are not closely related). Thick-knee refers to the prominent joints in the long yellow or greenish legs.

They are largely nocturnal, particularly when singing their loud wailing songs, which are reminiscent of true curlews. The diet consists mainly of insects and other invertebrates. Larger species will also take lizards and even small mammals.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Blue-capped Rock-Thrush**
Scientific Name : *Monticola cinclorhynchus*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Virje

The Blue-capped Rock Thrush is a species of chat. The male has a blue head, chin and throat. The upper parts are blue and black. The rump and underparts are chestnut brown. There is a white patch on the wing that is visible during flight. The female bird is brown with a brown and white underside.

It breeds in the foothills of the Himalayas and winters in the hill forests of southern India. During winter it is found throughout Pakistan, parts of Myanmar and India, especially in the Western Ghats region.

It is a summer visitor in parts of Afghanistan and along the Himalayas from Pakistan to Arunachal Pradesh. In summer it is found in pine forests and hill slopes. In winter it is found in dense canopied forests.

Nesting season – April to June.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Malabar Whistling-Thrush**
Scientific Name : *Myophonus borsfieldii*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A blue black thrush with patches of glistening cobalt blue on forehead and shoulders, and black bill and legs. Both sexes are alike. Due to its remarkable human whistling song in breeding season it is also known locally as 'Idle Schoolboy' or 'Whistling Schoolboy'.

The species is found all along the Western Ghats south of the Surat Dangs. They are also found along the Satpura range to northwestern Orissa (Surguja). Also locally in the Eastern Ghats. Populations are not migratory but have been known to disperse widely in winter. An individual that was ringed in Mahabaleshwar in the summer of 1972 was recovered in the winter of 1976 in Sampaje, Coorg. Although historically recorded twice from Mount Abu, more recent surveys have not recorded the bird or suitable habitat.

The species is omnivorous, eating a wide range of insects, crabs, frogs, earthworms and berries.

This is a bold species and is often found close to human habitation. The male sings its varied and melodious whistling song from trees during summer. They may sing for a long time around dawn but at other times of the day they often utter sharp single or two note whistles.

The birds breed from March to December and begin with the Monsoons.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Orange-headed Thrush**
(White throated Thrush)

Scientific Name : *Zoothera citrina (cyanotus)*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kodasally

A plump, short-tailed, long-legged thrush with yellowish brown head, neck and underparts. Rest of upperparts slaty blue. A large white patch on wing conspicuous in flight. Throat and sides of head white, banded obliquely with black. Female has the slaty blue portions suffused with olive-green. Singly, on ground in light forest, flying up silently into branches when disturbed.

Distribution: Resident and moves about a great deal locally, particularly during the monsoon, India from south eastern Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa south to Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Nesting season – June to July.

It was observed that this thrush roaming with its chick in the exclusion zone of KGS and feeding worms etc in the month of August. Though it is reported to lays 3 to 4 eggs, but always observed only one chick with it.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Great Tit**
Scientific Name : *Parus major*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

Great Tit is a distinct bird with glossy uncrested black head, glistening white cheek-patches, grey back and whitish underparts with a broad black band down the centre. Both sexes are alike.

Distribution: Practically throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and hills to about 2000m.

Great tits are primarily insectivorous in the summer, feeding on insects and spiders which they capture by foliage gleaning. Invertebrate prey that are taken include cockroaches, grasshoppers and crickets, lacewings, earwigs, bugs (Hemiptera), ants, flies (Diptera), caddis flies, beetles, scorpion flies, harvestmen, bees and wasps, snails and woodlice.

Nesting season – February to November. Varies with locality.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Rufous Treepie**
Scientific Name : *Dendrocitta vagabunda*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The Rufous Treepie is a treepie, native to the Indian Subcontinent and adjoining parts of Southeast Asia. It is a member of the crow family, Corvidae.

A long-tailed chestnut brown bird with sooty head and neck. Black-tipped grey tail and greyish white wing patches conspicuous in flight.

The widespread populations show variations and several subspecies are recognized. The nominate subspecies is found in the northeastern part of peninsular India south to Hyderabad. The desert form is paler and called pallida, vernayi of the Eastern Ghats is brighter while parvula of the Western Ghats is smaller in size. The form in Afghanistan and Pakistan is bristoli

The rufous treepie is an arboreal omnivore feeding almost completely in trees on fruits, seeds, invertebrates, small reptiles and the eggs and young of birds; it has also been known to take flesh from recently killed carcasses. It is an agile forager, clinging and clambering through the branches and sometimes joining mixed hunting parties along with species such as drongos and babblers. Like many other corvids they are known to cache food. They are known to feed on the fruits of *Trichosanthes palmata* which are toxic to mammals.

The breeding season in India is April to June. The nest is built in trees and bushes and is usually a shallow platform.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Malabar Trogon**
Scientific Name : *Harpactes fasciatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

A brilliantly coloured arboreal bird with relatively long, broad and curiously truncated graduated tail. Sexes dissimilar. Male: Head, neck, breast sooty black. Back yellowish brown, wings barred. Brilliant crimson below, separated from black breast by a white gorget. Female: has orange-brown underparts. Singly or widely separated pairs in evergreen or moist-deciduous forest and mixed foothills bamboo jungle.

Distribution: Peninsular India south of Gujarat, chiefly the more humid tracts of the Western and Eastern Ghats, and Sri Lanka. Locally up to 1800m.

Food: Caterpillars, beetles, cicadas and other insects. Also some leaves and berries.

Nesting season – overall February to June.



Photographed by : K.V. Rajeev

Common Name : **Forest Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Dendronanthus indicus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

The Forest Wagtail is a medium-sized passerine bird in the wagtail family Motacillidae. It has a distinctive plumage that sets it apart from other wagtails and has the habit of wagging its tail sideways unlike the usual up and down movements of the other wagtail species. It is the only wagtail species that nests in trees.

The forest wagtail is 18cm in length, a slender bird with a long tail. The back and crown are olive brown, and the wings are black with two yellow wing bars and white tertial edges. There is a white supercilium, above a dark stripe through the eye. The underparts are white, apart from a black double breast band. The upper breast band is bib-like while the lower band is often broken. Sexes are similar. Young birds are more yellowish on the underside.

Distribution: Mostly winter visitor to NE. India , Andhra Pradesh and Andamans. Disjunctly to the Western Ghats complex from Mahabaleshwar south through Kerala and Tamilnadu. Also Bangladesh; Sri Lanka. First Migrant arrives by end August; autumn passage mostly September and October; spring passage end March to early May. Has straggled to Kutch, Gujarat, Simla and Suru Valley.

Food: Insects, spiders and other invertebrates

The breeding areas are in eastern Asia, parts of Korea, parts of China (Kansu, Anhwei, Hunan) and parts of Siberia. Southern records of breeding from Assam have been questioned. It migrates to the warmer parts of Asia in winter and it has been suggested that they reach southern India and Sri Lanka via the Andaman Islands.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Yellow Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Motacilla flava*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

A slim, lively, long-tailed bird chiefly yellowish or olive-green above, yellow below, seen running about in marshy fields and pastureland, constantly wagging its tail up and down. The five races wintering in India are:

1. *M. f. lutea* (S. G. Gmelin, 1774) – yellow-headed wagtail
 Head yellow with green neck in males, females like a somewhat more vivid flava female.
 Breeding: Lower Volga to Irtysh River and Lake Zaysan. Winter: Africa and Indian subcontinent.
2. *M. f. beema* (Sykes, 1832) – Sykes' wagtail
 Like flava but head lighter grey, ears washed white; sexes often similar.
 Breeding: North of lutea, east to Ladakh area. Winter: Indian subcontinent, also east Africa and adjacent Arabia.
 This race also visits Kaiga region
3. *M. f. melanogrisea* (Homeyer, 1878) – Turkestan black-headed wagtail

Similar to feldegg, but white malar stripe and sometimes green neck.

Breeding: Volga Delta east around Caspian Sea to northern Afghanistan. Winter: Pakistan and north-west India to western Nepal, possibly also north-eastern Africa.

4. *M. f. plexa* (Thayer & Bangs, 1914) – north Siberian yellow wagtail
 Males like thunbergi but ears darker, top of head lighter, vestigial supercilium. Females like dull males.
 Breeding: Siberia between Khatanga and Kolyma Rivers. Winter: India, southe-east Asia.
5. *M. f. leucocephala* (Przevalski, 1887) – white-headed yellow wagtail
 Male like flava, but grey of head very pale, almost white. Female like flava females, but head somewhat darker.
 Breeding: North-west Mongolia and adjacent PRC and Russia. Winter: probably India.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

The white wagtail is a slender bird, 16.5–19cm in length, with the characteristic long, constantly wagging tail of its genus. In non-breeding or winter plumage the black bib is much reduced or wanting, the chin and throat being white like the underparts. Both sexes are alike. Scattered parties of or flocks running about and feeding on open grassland. Winter visitor arriving about September/October; departing March/April.

Distribution: In winter the greater part of Indian Union, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Occasional straggler to Sri Lanka (*dukhunensis*). The two races common over most of this area are the Indian *dukhunensis*, and the masked *personata*. Both very similar, but the former has white ear-coverts at all seasons as against black in *personata*. A third race, the NE. Siberian *ocularis*, with a black streak running backward through eye, visits NE.India and Myanmar.

Nesting: Within our limits only *personata* breeds in Kashmir ad NW. Pakistan between 2000m and 4000m. Season – May to July.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Citrine Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Motacilla citreola*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant /Common
Place : Irpage

In summer plumage male's bright yellow head diagnostic. Female and male in winter, have crown and back grey, underparts yellowish white. Differentiated at all times from other similar coloured wagtails by presence of broad yellow supercilium and more or less yellow forehead. Scattered parties, sometimes large swarms, on marshland and grassy tank margins.

Distribution: In winter all India south to about Kerala; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Myanmar. Not in Sri Lanka. Three races, difficult to differentiate in winter plumage.

Nesting: Hodgson's Yellowheaded Wagtail (*M.c.calcarata*), the black backed race, breeds in Kashmir between 1500m and 4000m. season – May/June .



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White-browed Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Motacilla madaraspatensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A large wagtail of black-and-white plumage, resembling in pattern that of the familiar Magpie-Robin, but with a prominent white eyebrow. In the female the black portions are duller and browner.

Distribution: Resident throughout the Indian Union, excepting the NE. states, from about 700m in the Himalayan foothills; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka. Not in Myanmar.

Nesting season – elastic, chiefly March to September.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Grey Wagtail**
Scientific Name : *Motacilla cinerea*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

This slim wagtail has a narrow white supercilium and a broken eye ring. The upperparts are grey and the yellow vent contrasting with whitish underparts makes it distinctive. The breeding male has a black throat that is edged by whitish moustachial stripes. They forage singly or in pairs on meadows or on shallow water marshes. They also use rocks in water and will often perch on trees.

Distribution: In winter throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Nesting: Within our limits breeds only in the Himalayas between 2000m and 4000m elevation.
Season – May to July .



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Clamorous Reed Warbler**
AN: Indian Great Reed-Warbler
Scientific Name : *Acrocephalus stemptoreus*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

Clamorous reed warbler is a large song thrush-sized warbler at 18–20cm. The adult has an unstreaked brown back and whitish underparts. The forehead is flattened, and the bill is strong and pointed. The sexes are identical.

It breeds from Egypt eastwards through Pakistan, Afghanistan and northernmost India to south China, southeast Asia and south to Australia. There is also an endemic race in Sri Lanka.

Most populations are sedentary, but the breeding birds in Pakistan, Afghanistan and north India are migratory, wintering in peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

There are a number of races differing in plumage shades. The migratory northern race has the richest brown upperparts, and the endemic Sri Lanka subspecies is the darkest form.

Like most warblers, clamorous reed warbler is insectivorous, but will take other small prey items.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Paddyfield Warbler**
Scientific Name : *Acrocephalus agricola*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

The Paddy field Warbler is a species of marsh warbler, 13cm long with a wingspan of 15–17.5cm. Rufous-brown above with a paler, brighter rump. An indistinct pale supercilium. Throat whitish, rest of underparts ochraceous buff.

Distribution: Breeds in Pakistan. Widespread winter visitor from October to March. Bangladesh; not Sri Lanka.

Affects standing rice, reed beds, sugarcane and elephant grass in water or on wet ground. Singly in thick cover; when flushed skims over the vegetation and dives into the cover, spreading its tail when the rufous rump shows up prominently.

Food: Insects



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Blyth's Reed-Warbler**
Scientific Name : *Acrocephalus dumetorum*
Residential Status : Migrant / Common
Place : Irpage

This is a medium-sized warbler, 12.5-14cm in length. The adult has a plain brown back and pale underparts. It can easily be confused with reed warbler, marsh warbler. It is most like reed warbler but is greyer on the back, the forehead is less flattened and the bill is less strong and pointed. The sexes are identical, as with most warblers, but young birds are yellower below.

Like most warblers, Blyth's reed warbler is insectivorous, but will take other small food items, including berries.

Distribution: It breeds in temperate Asia and easternmost Europe. It is migratory, wintering in India and Sri Lanka. It is one of the most common winter warblers in those countries.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Booted Warbler**
Scientific Name : *Iduna caligata*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Hartuga

Pale olive-brown above. A short whitish supercilium. Buffish white below. Both sexes are alike. Easily confused with the darker and slightly larger Paddy field and Blyth's warblers.

Distribution: Two races- while race rama breeds in Sind, Baluchistan, and W. Punjab, the nominate race breeds central Russia to western China, and migrates to winter in the Indian subcontinent as far south as Sri Lanka, has expanded its breeding range westward in recent decades and nests now as far west and north as Finland.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Greenish Warbler**
 Scientific Name : *Phylloscopus trochiloides*
 Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
 Place : Irpage

This is a typical leaf warbler in appearance, grayish-green above and off-white below. The single wing bar found in the southern and western populations distinguishes them from most similar species

It breeds in lowland deciduous or mixed forest; non-breeding birds in the warmer parts of its range may move to montane habitat in summer. Individuals from southeast of the Himalayas are for example quite often seen in Bhutan during the hot months, typically in humid Bhutan Fir (*Abies densa*) forest up to about 3,800m ASL or more, but they do not breed there and return again to the adjacent subtropical lowlands in winter

It has a number of subspecies, of which *P. t. viridianus* is the most familiar in Europe.

Eastern group: greenish warblers

Phylloscopus trochiloides trochiloides: greenish warbler

Southern rim of the Himalaya eastwards from Nepal into W China.

Dusky greyish green above, often traces of second wing bar.

Phylloscopus trochiloides obscuratus: dull-green warbler

Intermediate between *trochiloides* and two-barred warbler.

Gansu and surroundings, China.

Western group: green warblers

Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus: western greenish warbler

Breeds Western Siberia to north-east Europe; at east of range south to NW India.

Dull green above, with yellowish supercilium, throat, breast and faint wing bar.



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Green Warbler**
Scientific Name : *Phylloscopus nitidus*
Residential Status : Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Irpage

It is most closely related to the greenish warbler but is brighter in colour, and the underside is much more yellow. It has one strong and one faint wing bar, especially in young birds. Passage Migrant to Sri Lanka



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Hume's Leaf Warbler**
Scientific Name : *Phylloscopus humei*
Residential Status : Resident Migrant / Uncommon
Place : Hartuga

Hume's leaf warbler is one of the smallest "Old World warblers". Like most other leaf warblers, it has greenish upperparts and off-white underparts. With its long supercilium, crown stripe and yellow-margined tertial remiges, it is very similar to the yellow-browed warbler (*P. inornatus*). However, it has only one prominent light wing bar, just a faint vestige of the second shorter wing bar, and overall duller colours. It also has a dark lower mandible and legs.

Distribution: This is a common bird of mountain woodlands at altitudes of up to 3500m ASL. It occurs from the Hindu Kush and Karakoram east and north to the Tien Shan in China and the Altay Mountains in Mongolia. The completely allopatric subspecies *mandellii* (Mandell's leaf warbler or eastern Hume's warbler) – sometimes separated as a full species, in which case the nominate subspecies is called western Hume's warbler – occurs on the eastern Tibetan Plateau. Both populations migrate over the Himalayas to winter in India and adjacent regions. The species has also been recorded in the Kutch region.



Photographed by : **Puttaraju K.**

Common Name : **Oriental White eye**
Scientific Name : *Zosterops palpebrosus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

A tiny, square-tailed greenish yellow and bright yellow bird with a conspicuous white ring round eye and slender, pointed, slightly curved bill. Gregarious; in trees in gardens and wooded country.

Distribution: Practically throughout the Indian Union; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka and Myanmar, excepting actual desert. Resident and locally migratory. About eleven subspecies are well recognised. These include the nominate form. The population in the Western Ghats and hills of southern India is placed in *nilgiriensis* while *salimalii* of the Eastern Ghats hills (Shevaroy, Chitteri, Seshachalam, Nallamala) is sometimes subsumed into the nominate race. The population of the plains of India, Laccadives and Sri Lanka are sometimes placed in *egregius*. The Nicobar Islands form is *nicobaricus* and is sometimes also used for the population on the Andaman Islands which are however distinctive and a distinct unnamed population. *Race occidentis*

(now often subsumed into the nominate race) of the Western Himalayas has the upper side dark green and the flanks are tinged in brown. In Sri Lanka, *race egregia* is smaller and has a brighter back and throat than the endemic Sri Lanka white-eye, *Zosterops ceylonensis* found in the central hills.

Though mainly insectivorous, the Oriental white-eye will also eat nectar and fruits of various kinds.

The breeding season is February to September but April is the peak breeding season



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Common Woodshrike**
Scientific Name : *Tephrrodornis pondicerianus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The common wood shrike is dully ashy brown and like other wood shrikes has a large head with a strong hooked beak. They have a broad creamy brow above a dark cheek patch and white outer tail feathers contrasting with their dark tail. The Sri Lankan species is similar darker on the underside, with the dark cheek bordered below by a buffy sub-moustachial stripe and a white rump.

Several subspecies have been named for the populations within the wide range of this species. The northwestern dry region form is paler and given the name of pallidus while the nominate population is found in peninsular India. The population affinis of Sri Lanka has been elevated to a full species C. Rasmussen and Anderton (2005) on the basis of distinctive plumage and variation in calls apart from the disjunct distribution. The populations in Southeast Asia are placed in orientis

They feed on insects and berries in mainly in vegetation but sometimes descending to the ground.

They nest in summer before the rainy season, building a cup nest on a bare fork.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Malabar Woodshrike**
Scientific Name : *Tephradornis (virgatus) sylvicola*
Formerly Large Wood rike (Tephradornis gularis)
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Halaga Ulaga

Crown and nape ashy grey, back and square-cut tail ashy brown, the last tipped blackish and rufous. A broad black band through eye to the white ear-coverts. Beak stout, strong hooked and notched. Female with crown concolorous with back and eye-band brown instead of black. Separated from the Common Woodshrike by its larger and brown rufous-tipped outer tail feathers.

Distribution: Two races: the northern race distributed from Western Nepal eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur, south to Bangladesh, Bihar, Orissa, E.Ghats and NE Andhra Pradesh. Western Ghats race from Narbada (Gujarat) south to Karnataka, Kerala and the adjacent hills of Tamil Nadu. Not in Sri Lanka.

Food: Large insects and caterpillars.

Nesting season – December to June.



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : **Greater Flame Back
Woodpecker**

Scientific Name : *Chrysocolaptes guttaeristatus*

Residential Status : Resident / Common

Place : Kuchegar

The greater flameback is a large woodpecker, at 33cm in length. It is of typical woodpecker shape, has an erect crest and a long neck. Coloration is highly variable between subspecies; it always has unmarked golden-yellow to dark brown back and wings. The rump is red and the tail is black. The underparts are white with dark markings (chevrons, stripes, or bands), or light brown. The head is whitish with a black pattern, or it is yellow, brown or red. The straight pointed bill is long. The eyes' irides are whitish to yellow. The adult male greater flameback always has a red crown. Females have a crown color varying between subspecies, such as black spotted with white, yellow, or brown with lighter dots. Young birds are like the female, but duller, with brown irides.

It occurs widely in the Indian subcontinent, eastwards to southern China, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, western and central Java and northeast Borneo

Like other woodpeckers, the greater flameback uses its bill to dig out food from trees and its zygodactyl feet and stiff tail to provide support against tree trunks. The long tongue can be darted forward to extract wood-boring arthropod prey; while mainly feeding on small invertebrates, greater flamebacks will also drink nectar. They nest in tree holes, laying three or four white eggs



Photographed by : A.L.V. Vikram Reddy

Common Name : Lesser Golden back
Woodpecker
AN: Black-rumped Flameback

Scientific Name : *Dinopium benghalense*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The black-rumped flame back is a large species at 26–29cm in length. It has a typical woodpecker shape, and the golden yellow wing coverts are distinctive. The rump is black and not red as in the greater flame back. The underparts are white with dark chevron markings. The black throat finely marked with white immediately separates it from other golden backed woodpeckers in the Indian region. The head is whitish with a black nape and throat, and there is a greyish eye patch. Unlike the greater flame back it has no dark moustachial stripes. The adult male has a red crown and crest. Females have a black fore crown spotted with white, with red only on the rear crest. Young birds are like the female, but duller.

The nominate populations is found across India in the low elevations up to about 1000m. Southern Peninsular form puncticolle has the throat black with small triangular white spots and the upper parts are a bright golden-yellow. The subspecies found in the

Western Ghats is sometimes separated as *tehminae* (named after the wife of Salim Ali) and is more olive above, has fine spots on the black throat and the wing-covert spots are not distinct.

This flame back is found mainly on the plains going up to an elevation of about 1200m in Pakistan, India south of the Himalayas and east till the western Assam valley and Meghalaya, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It is associated with open forest and cultivation. They are often seen in urban areas with wooded avenues. It is somewhat rare in the Kutch and desert region of Rajasthan.

The breeding season varies with weather and is between February and July. They frequently drum during the breeding season.



Photographed by : **A.L.V. Vikram Reddy**

Common Name : **Yellow crowned Woodpecker**
Scientific Name : *Dendrocopos mabrattensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

Medium-sized, pale-headed, pied woodpecker. Upperparts black, heavily spotted and barred white. Underparts dark, streaked dingy white with red belly patch. Irregular brown check and neck patches. Female has yellowish crown and nape. In male nape scarlet and fore-crown yellow.

Distribution: Practically throughout the Indian Union from about 1000m in the Himalayas southward. Also Sri Lanka; Bangladesh; Pakistan; Myanmar

Food: Insects and insects larvae.

Nesting season – principally January to May.



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **White Bellied Woodpecker**
AN: Great Black Woodpecker

Scientific Name : *Dryocopus javensis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kodasally

A magnificent, large black woodpecker (Adults range in size from 40 to 48cm) with conspicuous white rump and white underparts. Forehead crown, crest and cheeks brilliant crimson in the male, crimson confined to nape in female.

Subspecies *hodgsonii* has whitish under wing coverts and a white rump. The face lacks white but juveniles of the nominate race can have white streaks on the throat.

They feed mainly on insects such as ants [8] or grubs obtained mainly from under bark but sometimes take fruit.

Nesting season – January to March



Photographed by : Creative Commons

Common Name : **Common Goldenback**
AN: Common Flameback

Scientific Name : *Dinopium javanense*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

A medium-sized, golden-backed woodpecker with long and solid black moustachial stripes. Both sexes have black eyestripes joined to black rear neck stripe. Male has red, female black crown. Black-scaled white underparts and red rump contrasting with black tail. Rather small bill and only three toes. The greater flame back (*Chrysocolaptes lucidus*) looks quite similar.

Food: Ants, insect larvae; also small scorpions (Scorpiones), cockroaches (Blattodea), other insects.

Nesting season – Jan–Jun, mostly Feb–Apr, in India



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker**
Scientific Name : *Dendrocopos nanus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga

A small brown and white woodpecker with distinctive pink-rimmed white irises. Barred brown and white above, lightly streaked dirty white below. Tail spotted white. Paler brown crown (edged red in male) and eyestripes contrasting with white supercilia and cheeks.

Distribution: Practically the entire Indian Union and Bangladesh. Himalayan foothills and terai (including Nepal and Sikkim), and peninsular plains and hills. Also Sri Lanka.

Food: Insects, flower-nectar, and soft pulp of berries and banyan and peepul figs.

Nesting season – February to April, varying locally in the different parts of its range.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Rufous Woodpecker**
Scientific Name : *Micropternus Brachyurus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Virje

It is a medium-sized, rufous-coloured woodpecker with a short crest and a short, weak and slightly curved black bill. It has black vermiculations on its rufous body and a dark eye stripe. The upperparts are finely barred black. The male has small red patches at the eyes.

Distribution: Practically the entire Indian Union; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Plains and hills up to about 1500m locally.

Food: largely the eggs, pupae and adults of tree ants (*Crematogaster*) obtained by digging with its bill into the arboreal carton-like nests of these insects. Occasionally eats the pulp of ripe banyan and other wild figs, and nectar of Silk Cotton and coral flowers.

Nesting season – Chiefly February to April



Photographed by : Vijesh Vallikkunnu

Common Name : **Lesser Yellownape Woodpecker**
Scientific Name : *Picus chlorolophus*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Hartuga

A medium-sized yellowish green woodpecker with golden nuchal crest. Forehead, supercilia which extend and meets at nape, and a moustachial streak crimson. Female similar but crimson on head confined to a short broad line behind head and nape.

Distribution: Entire Indian Union including NE. states and the peninsula in three races are known. Himalayan nominate, Peninsular chlorigaster, Sri Lanka wells.

Nesting season – overall January to July, chiefly April – May



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Heart-spotted Woodpecker**
Scientific Name : *Hemicircus canente*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Irpage

A small, uniquely shaped, black and buff woodpecker with a large crest making the head look large for the short body and tail. Both males and females are predominantly black with heart-shaped black spots on white shoulders with broad white scapular patches and barring of flight feathers. The female has the forehead and crown buffy white while it is black on males. The throat is whitish and the underparts are dark olive grey.

Distribution: Peninsular India from Kerala north to Gujarat and east to West Bengal, NE hill states, Eastern Ghats and Bangladesh. Plains and foothills up to 1300m.

Nesting season – Chiefly November to April.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Speckled Piculet**
Scientific Name : *Picumnus innominatus*
Residential Status : Resident / Uncommon
Place : Kaiga Township

A petite woodpecker with soft, rounded black and white tail. The male and female birds look alike. They have olive-green backs, with two white stripes on the side of their heads. The male bird has orange and brown on the fore crown. They have a creamy-white coloring below, with black spots. There is a dark green band near the eyes.

Distribution: Most of the Indian Union and NE.states, up to 2000m. Pakistan; Bangladesh. Two races.

Nesting season – April and May



Photographed by : K. Harish

Common Name : **Plum-headed Parakeet**
Scientific Name : *Psittacula cyanocephala*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

Distinguished from Rose-ringed Parakeet by smaller size, bluish red head and maroon shoulder-patches. In female, head greyer with a bright yellow collar round neck, and no maroon shoulder-patches. White tips to the two long central tail feathers diagnostic in flight.

Distribution: Throughout the Indian Union from about 2000m in the Himalayas; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Myanmar. Resident and local migratory.

They feed on grains, fruits, the fleshy petals of flowers (*Salmalia*, *Butea*) and sometimes raid agricultural fields and orchards.

The breeding season in India is mainly from December to April and July to August in Sri Lanka.



Photographed by : **K. Harish**

Common Name : **Rose-ringed Parakeet**
AN: Ring necked Parakeet
Scientific Name : *Psittacula krameri*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kuchegar

The rose-ringed parakeet is sexually dimorphic. The adult male sports a red or black neck ring and the hen and immature birds of both sexes either show no neck rings, or display shadow-like pale to dark grey neck rings. Both sexes have a distinctive green colour. Rose-ringed parakeets measure on average 40 cm in length, including the tail feathers, a large portion of their total length. Their average single-wing length is about 15–17.5cm. In the wild, this is a noisy species with an unmistakable squawking call. It is herbivorous and not migratory.

Distribution: Practically the entire Indian Union, from the Himalayan foothills to south. Plains and locally up to 2000m in the peninsular hills. Bangladesh; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Myanmar.

Nesting season – chiefly February to April, varying locally.



Photographed by : **R. Byanna**

Common Name : **Malabar Parakeet**
AN: Blue-winged Parakeet

Scientific Name : *Psittacula columboides*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

The blue-winged parakeet, also known as the Malabar parakeet (*Psittacula columboides*) is a species of parakeet endemic to the Western Ghats of southern India.

The blue-winged parakeet is bluish grey with a long yellow-tipped tail. The black neck ring is complete in both males and females. The male has a bluish-green lower edge to the black collar and the upper mandible is red with a white tip while the female has an all black bill and has only the black collar.

This parakeet is restricted to the Western Ghats south of about 19°N (north of Bombay) to Kerala, extending into the hills of the Palnis and Nilgiris as well as the adjoining Eastern Ghats including the Biligirirangan range.

They breed in the dry season after the northeast Monsoon and the chicks fledge before the southwest Monsoon in June.



Byanna R

Photographed by : R. Byanna

Common Name : **Vernal Hanging-Parrot**
Scientific Name : *Loriculus vernalis*
Residential Status : Resident / Common
Place : Kaiga Township

This is a small, mainly green hanging parrot, only 14cm long with a short tail. The adult male has a red rump and bill, and blue throat patch. The female has a green patch. Vernal hanging parrot is a bird of dry jungle and cultivation.

Distribution: Eastern Himalayas from Sikkim, through Arunachal and NE. hill states. Western India from about Mumbai to Kanyakumari, including the Nilgiri and associated hills. The Visakhapatnam area of the E. Ghats, Andaman and Nicobars. Bangladesh; Myanmar. Resident and locally migratory.

In Sri Lanka, it is replaced by the very similar endemic Sri Lanka hanging parrot, (*L. beryllinus*).

This bird is unique among Indian birds for its habit of roosting at night like a bat, hanging head downwards.

Nesting season – January to April

Birds of Kaiga

A Field Guide For Birds Around Kaiga

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