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The Hornbill's Beak

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Hornbills occur in Afro-tropical and Indo-Malayan regions occupying habitats ranging from arid savannas to humid tropical forests. Hornbills need large trees with natural tree hollows for nesting. In this issue of the EJFW, an unseal nest site of an Indian Grey Hornbill is reported. The felling of large trees is posing serious threats to hornbills with a premium on naturally available nest sites. Thankfully, some hornbills are accepting artificial nests deployed in their natural habitats.

The hornbills have attracted the attention of ornithologists for several reasons. They have unique long and heavy beaks that serve several functions such as dietary, thermoregulatory, sexual selection, defence, nest plastering, etc. The beak sizes of hornbills vary according to the species, regions and the habitats where they reside. The beaks of the hornbills and the closely related toucans of South America have been subject to studies centered on their thermoregulatory roles.

The network of blood vessels below the external sheath of keratin on the surface of the beak, the rhamphotheca, is capable of vasodilatation, depending on the ambient thermal conditions. This causes an increase in the surface temperature of the beak and the difference between the temperature of the air and beak-body can dissipate excessive body temperature through the beak leading to thermo-regulation in hornbills. This mechanism works over and above the evaporative heat loss mechanisms like gular panting.

Experiments conducted on hornbills and toucans in regulated lab conditions and using thermal imaging techniques have shown that the heat loss per unit surface area via the beak more than doubled at air temperature $> 30.7^{\circ}\text{C}$, compared to air temperature $< 30.7^{\circ}\text{C}$. The beaks may contribute up to 60% of total non-evaporative heat loss at air temperatures above 28°C . (Reference: T. M. F. N. van de Ven, R. O. Martin, T. J. F. Vink, A. E. McKechnie, and S. J. Cunningham (2016). Regulation of Heat Exchange across the Hornbill Beak: Functional Similarities with Toucans? PLoS One. 2016; 11(5): e0154768. Published online 2016 May 18. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0154768 PMID: PMC4871549).

Hornbills residing in humid and hot regions like coastal areas experience high water vapour pressures in summer, that reduce the potential for evaporative heat loss. Hence, the importance of promoting non-evaporative heat dissipation through bulky beaks can be appreciated. Simultaneously, hornbills also benefit from the adaptive significance of beaks for water conservation in dry and arid environments.

The role of thermoregulatory function of the beaks in various species of Indian hornbills needs to be examined. There are two guiding principles for such studies, Allen's rule and Bergmann's rule. In warm-blooded animals having distinct geographic populations, the limbs, ears, and other appendages (like the beak in hornbills, toucans, etc.) of the animals living in cold climates tend to be shorter than in animals of the same species living in warm climates. (Allen's rule named the American zoologist Joel Allen, 1838-1921). On a similar note, as per the Bergmann's rule, the body size of warm-blooded animals living in cold climates tends to be larger than in animals of the same species living in warm climates. (Named after German biologist Karl Bergmann, 1814-65). It is therefore encouraging to receive papers on intriguing birds like hornbills with unique beaks and unusual nesting habits. Serious urgent research needs to be carried out on the rapidly dwindling hornbills.

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Chief Editor





On Wildlife Conservation.

Jeet Singh*

Nature is very complex and may take us many more centuries to understand and decipher its intricate network. Nevertheless, very sincere efforts are being made by many of us to conserve and understand it before it is too late. In this issue of *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife*, wildlife experts have brought to us many hidden treasures of birds' life from remote areas of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. This will certainly help to understand the hitherto unknown facets of their life cycle and need for their conservation. Sharing of findings through common platform will enable others to know about their habitat and variations observed in it.

Maharashtra has a number of wild life National Parks and sanctuaries. But the greatest challenge is to study and unfold the inventory of its treasure. Most of the time, our entire energy gets utilized in the protection of large and few selected wild animals. Hence, general public understands little about the occurrence and importance of small but equally important wildlife.

I am sure, the perseverance and dedicated efforts of all of us to understand our wilderness will help in formulating the suitable strategies' for their long lasting conservation.

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Checklist of Birds of Amboli, Maharashtra



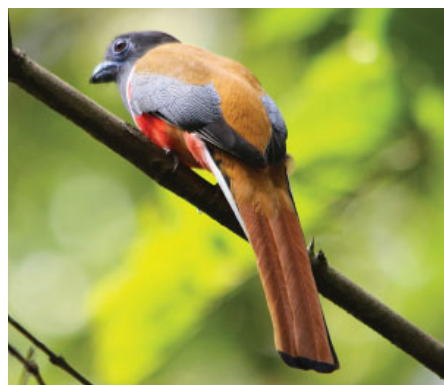
Great Pied Hornbill



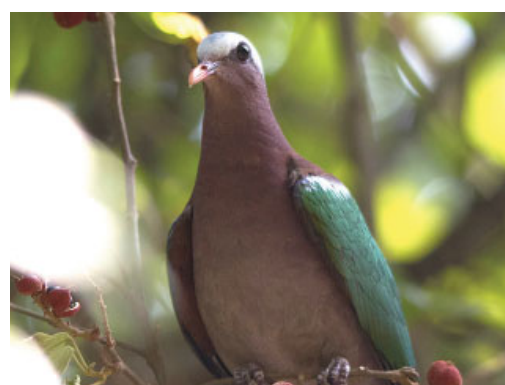
Vernal Hanging Parrot



Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher



Malabar Trogon (M)



Emerald Dove

Checklist of Birds of Amboli, Maharashtra

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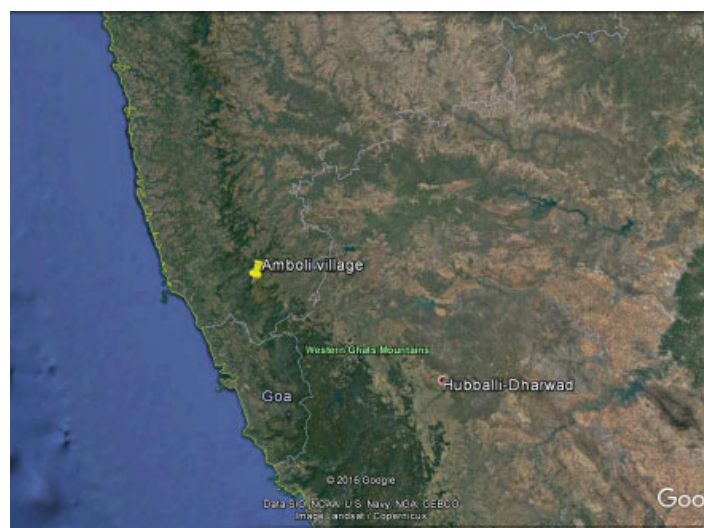
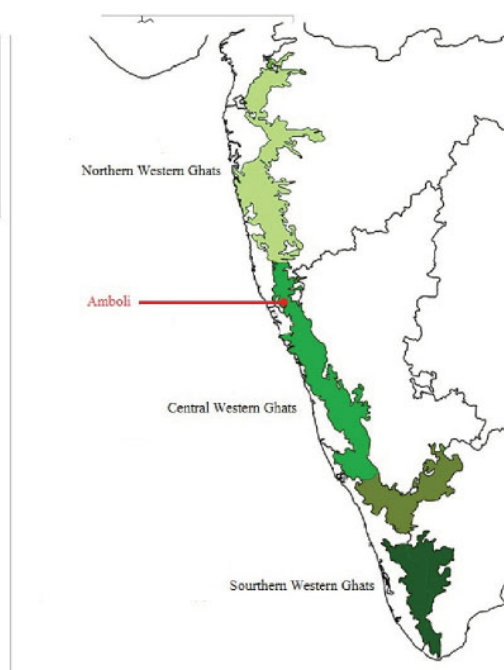
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Referee: Dr. Satish Pande



Amboli (15°57'N, 73°59'E) is a popular hill town in the Sindhudurg district, in the state of Maharashtra. The altitude of Amboli is 690 m (2,260 ft). The climate here is tropical. The average temperature in Amboli is 23.9 °C. About 3589 mm of precipitation falls annually. Vegetation around Amboli comprises semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forest, intermixed with some evergreen forest patches. Dominant trees include *Memecylon umbellatum*, *Actinodaphne*, *Syzygium cumini*, *Mangifera indica*, *Nothapodytes nimmoniana* and *Ficus*; moist deciduous forests merge into semi-evergreen and scrub forests along an altitudinal gradient (Jog 2009). It is an important biodiversity hotspot blessed with verdant valleys, lateritic plateaus, waterfalls and lush evergreen, semi evergreen and moist deciduous forest.

The present checklist is of 215birds from 66 Families. There are 10 Threatened and 21 Endemic species. The list is likely to grow over time with some additions because bird life is dynamic depending on habitat modifications and climatic changes. The records are a compilation of bird records from January 2014 to December 2016 spanning all the three seasons, summer, monsoon and winter. The various habitats encountered are semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forest, intermixed with some evergreen forest patches, lateritic plateaus, perennial water bodies, seasonal water bodies and agricultural cropland.



CHECKLIST

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Phalacrocoracidae	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>	R
Phalacrocoracidae	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	R
Anhingidae	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>	R, NT
Ardeidae	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	R
Ardeidae	Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>	R
Ardeidae	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	R
Ardeidae	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	R
Ardeidae	Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeo lagrayii</i>	R
Ardeidae	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	R
Ardeidae	Chestnut Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	R
Ciconiidae	Asian Woollyneck (Woolly-necked Stork)	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	R, VU
Ciconiidae	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>	RM, NT
Threskiornithidae	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	R, NT
Threskiornithidae	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	R
Anatidae	Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	R
Anatidae	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	M
Anatidae	Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>	R
Accipitridae	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	R
Accipitridae	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>	R
Accipitridae	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	R
Accipitridae	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	R
Accipitridae	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	M
Accipitridae	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	R
Accipitridae	White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>	R
Accipitridae	Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	R
Accipitridae	Short-toed Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	R
Accipitridae	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>	R
Accipitridae	Crested Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>	R
Accipitridae	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>	R
Accipitridae	Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>	R
Accipitridae	Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	M, NT
Falconidae	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	M
Falconidae	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrines calidus</i>	M
Falconidae	Shaheen Falcon	<i>Falco peregrines peregrinator</i>	R
Falconidae	Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>	M
Phasianidae	Painted Bush-Quail	<i>Perdica erythrorhyncha</i>	ER
Phasianidae	Jungle Bush-Quail	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>	R
Phasianidae	Red Spurfowl	<i>Gallus perdixspadicea</i>	ER
Phasianidae	Grey Junglefowl	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i>	ER
Phasianidae	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	R

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Turnicidae	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	R
Rallidae	Slaty-legged Crake	<i>Rallina eurizonoides</i>	R
Rallidae	Brown Crake	<i>Amaurornis akool</i>	R
Rallidae	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	R
Rallidae	Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	R
Rallidae	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	R
Charadriidae	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	R
Charadriidae	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	M
Scolopacidae	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	M
Scolopacidae	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	M
Sternidae	River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>	R, NT
Columbidae	Blue Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	R
Columbidae	Green Imperial-Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>	R
Columbidae	Nilgiri Wood-Pigeon	<i>Columba elphinstonii</i>	ER, VU
Columbidae	Oriental Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopeliaorientalis</i>	R
Columbidae	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	R
Columbidae	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	R
Columbidae	Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	R
Columbidae	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	R
Columbidae	Grey-fronted Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron affinis</i>	ER
Columbidae	Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i>	R
Psittacidae	Vernal Hanging-Parrot	<i>Loriculus vernalis</i>	R
Psittacidae	Malabar Parakeet	<i>Psittacula columboides</i>	ER
Psittacidae	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	R
Psittacidae	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	R
Cuculidae	Grey-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>	R
Cuculidae	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>	R
Cuculidae	Eurasian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	M
Cuculidae	Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>	R
Cuculidae	Southern Coucal	<i>Centropus parroti</i>	R
Tytonidae	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	R
Strigidae	Brown Wood-Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>	R
Strigidae	Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>	R
Strigidae	Indian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bengalensis</i>	R
Strigidae	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	M
Strigidae	Indian Scops-Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	R
Strigidae	Oriental Scops-Owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>	R
Strigidae	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>	R
Strigidae	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>	R
Podargidae	Sri Lanka Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus moniliger</i>	R

CHECKLIST

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Caprimulgidae	Indian Jungle Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>	R
Caprimulgidae	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>	R
Caprimulgidae	Jerdon's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus atripennis</i>	R
Caprimulgidae	Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>	M
Hemiprocnidae	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>	R
Apodidae	Asian Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	R
Apodidae	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	R
Apodidae	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	M
Coraciidae	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	M
Coraciidae	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	R
Upupidae	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	R
Trogonidae	Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>	R
Dacelonidae	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	R
Dacelonidae	Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>	R
Dacelonidae	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	R
Cerylidae	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	R
Alcedinidae	Blue-eared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>	R
Alcedinidae	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	R
Alcedinidae	Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher	<i>Ceyx erithaca</i>	R
Meropidae	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>	R
Meropidae	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	R
Bucerotidae	Malabar Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros griseus</i>	ER,
Bucerotidae	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>	R
Bucerotidae	Great Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>	R,, NT
Bucerotidae	Malabar Pied-Hornbill	<i>Anthraceroceros coronatus</i>	R, NT
Megalaimidae	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>	R
Megalaimidae	Malabar Barbet	<i>Psilopogon malabaricus</i>	ER
Megalaimidae	White-cheeked Barbet	<i>Psilopogon viridis</i>	ER
Megalaimidae	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>	R
Picidae	Heart-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Hemicircus canente</i>	R
Picidae	Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>	R
Picidae	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>	R
Picidae	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>	R
Picidae	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	R
Pittidae	Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>	R
Alaudidae	Malabar Lark	<i>Galerida malabarica</i>	ER
Hirundinidae	Dusky Crag-Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>	R
Hirundinidae	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	M
Hirundinidae	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	R
Hirundinidae	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	R

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Motacillidae	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	M
Motacillidae	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>	M
Motacillidae	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	M
Motacillidae	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla madaraspatensis</i>	R
Motacillidae	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	R
Artamidae	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>	R
Tephrodornithidae	Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>	R
Tephrodornithidae	Malabar Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis sylvicola</i>	ER
Campephagidae	Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>	R
Campephagidae	Black-headed Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>	R
Campephagidae	Orange Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>	R
Campephagidae	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>	R
Pycnonotidae	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	R
Pycnonotidae	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	R
Pycnonotidae	Square-tailed Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes ganeesa</i>	R
Pycnonotidae	Flame-throated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus gularis</i>	ER
Pycnonotidae	Grey-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus priocephalus</i>	ER, NT
Pycnonotidae	Yellow-browed Bulbul	<i>Iole indica</i>	R
Aegithinidae	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	R
Chloropseidae	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>	R
Chloropseidae	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>	R
Irenidae	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>	R
Laniidae	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	R
Laniidae	Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	R
Monarchidae	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	R
Monarchidae	Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>	R
Rhipiduridae	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	R
Rhipiduridae	White-spotted Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albogularis</i>	ER
Muscicapidae	Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	M
Muscicapidae	Blue-capped Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola cinclorhynchus</i>	M
Muscicapidae	Malabar Whistling-Thrush	<i>Myophonus horsfieldii</i>	ER
Turdidae	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>	R
Turdidae	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>	R
Muscicapidae	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	M

CHECKLIST

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Muscicapidae	Ultramarine Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula superciliaris</i>	M
Muscicapidae	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	M
Muscicapidae	Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicica paceylonensis</i>	R
Muscicapidae	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>	M
Muscicapidae	White-bellied Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis pallipes</i>	ER
Sylviidae	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>	R
Timaliidae	Tawny-bellied Babbler	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>	R
Timaliidae	Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>	R
Leiothrichidae	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i>	R
Leiothrichidae	Rufous Babbler	<i>Turdoides subrufa</i>	ER
Timaliidae	Indian Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus horsfieldii</i>	ER
Pellorneidae	Brown-cheeked Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe poioicephala</i>	R
Pellorneidae	Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>	R
Cisticolidae	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>	R
Cisticolidae	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	R
Sylviidae	Blyth's Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	M
Sylviidae	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>	M
Sylviidae	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	R
Sylviidae	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	M
Sylviidae	Sulphur-bellied Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus griseolus</i>	M
Sylviidae	Tytler's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus tytleri</i>	M
Sylviidae	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	M
Sylviidae	Western Crowned Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus occipitalis</i>	M
Paridae	Great Tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>	R
Paridae	Black-lored Tit	<i>Parus xanthogenys</i>	R
Dicaeidae	Thick-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum agile</i>	R
Zosteropidae	Oriental Whiteeye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	R
Nectariniidae	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>	R
Nectariniidae	Crimson-backed Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia minima</i>	ER
Nectariniidae	Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>	R
Nectariniidae	Long-billed Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia lotenia</i>	R
Nectariniidae	Vigors's Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga vigorsii</i>	ER
Fringillidae	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	R
Estrildidae	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	R
Estrildidae	Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>	R
Estrildidae	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>	R
Estrildidae	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	R
Estrildidae	Black-throated Munia	<i>Lonchura kelaarti</i>	R
Passeridae	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	R

Family	Common English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Passeridae	Chestnut-shouldered Petronia	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>	R
Ploceidae	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>	R
Oriolidae	Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i>	R
Oriolidae	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	R
Oriolidae	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>	M
Dicruridae	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	R
Dicruridae	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>	R
Dicruridae	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	R
Sturnidae	Brahminy Starling	<i>Temenuchus pagodarum</i>	R
Sturnidae	Rosy Starling	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>	R
Sturnidae	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	R
Sturnidae	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>	R
Corvidae	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	R
Corvidae	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	R
Corvidae	Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus levaillantii</i>	R

R= Resident M= Migratory ER = Endemic Resident
VU= Vulnerable, NT= Near-threatened

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Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* nesting in a hollow with two openings

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A new observation was recorded in the nesting behaviour of the Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* at a nest situated in the forest campus, Navratanbagh Indore. While studying the Indian Grey Hornbill in 2015, I came across a nest located in a Silver Oak *Grevillea robusta* tree containing two nest openings, one above the other, with a distance of 12 inches between them and both cavities were interconnected from inside. The lower opening was sealed by the female hornbill once she entered for laying the eggs in the lower cavity, but the upper outer opening was kept open. It is not known if the inner communication between the upper and lower tree hollows was sealed from inside or not. The male was seen feeding the female and later the chicks from the lower opening and occasionally inspecting the upper opening during the nesting period.

Typically the nest of a hornbill is a cavity inside a tree trunk with a single external opening, where the female stays for almost a period of two months. The female traditionally seals the nest opening with faeces, pulp, and mud brought by the male. The female lays eggs and rears the chicks, while the male performs the duty of bringing food for all of them during this period.

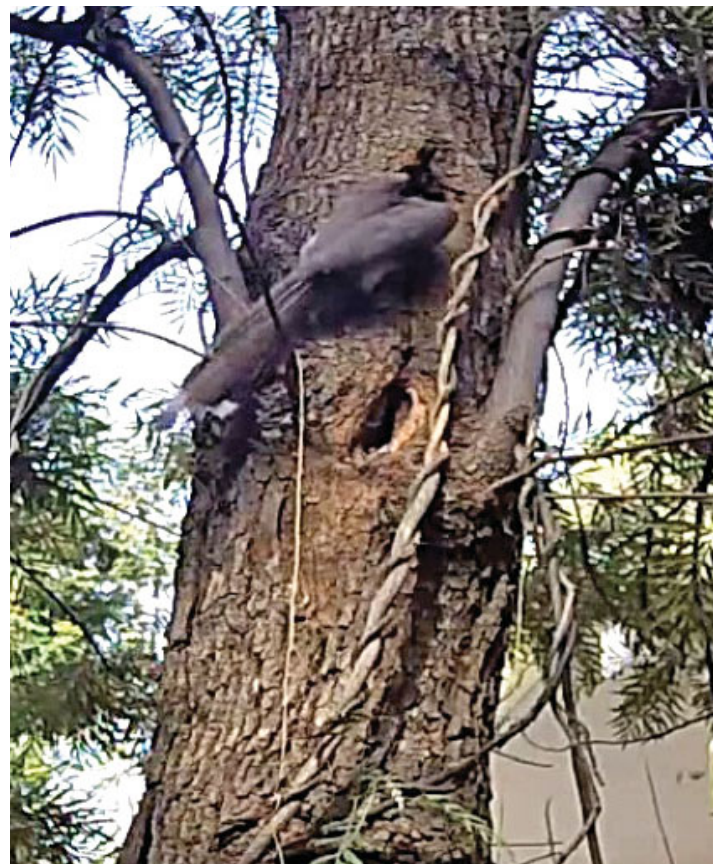
Hornbills choose elongated cavities relative to their body size and also display high nest fidelity, often returning to the same nest site year after year. They are secondary cavity nesters and use natural cavities. In the present case, when it was the time for female to come out of the nest, she did not break the lower sealed opening to exit instead she used the upper opening that was not sealed. Typically after the female breaks open the sealed wall, the chicks rebuild the nest wall again to safeguard themselves from predators, as they have to remain inside the nest for approximately 2-3 additional weeks. In this case the chicks did not seal the upper nest opening, while the lower opening remained sealed and both the parents fed the chicks from the lower sealed opening with a



Nest with two openings

central vertical slit.

On further observation, even the chicks came out from the upper unsealed opening, while the lower opening remained in the sealed condition. However, it remains to be seen if the upper opening led in to an upper cavity that was connected with the lower cavity by another opening from inside, which the hornbill had sealed.



The lower opening leading to the nest was sealed and the male hornbill is seen inspecting the upper opening.

First Record of Western Crowned Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus occipitalis*) from Amravati District, Maharashtra.

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Amravati is a district of Maharashtra state in central India. Amravati city is surrounded by Pohara Malkhed Reserve Forest which supports very good avifaunal diversity. The area has tropical dry deciduous forest which appears dry in summer but support very good floral and faunal diversity. Near Pohara Malkhed Reserve Forest on one side of Wadali Lake a small garden is maintained for visitors.

On 13th of November 2015 during regular bird watching trip at Wadali forest garden area (20°92' N 77°79' E) at around 7:30 am we observed a warbler foraging in the middle canopy, but view was not clear due to leaves and twigs. The bird was continuously moving. It was busy picking insects from the leaves. We could finally photograph the warbler. The most peculiar features of that bird were two yellowish wing-bars, a distinctive crown stripe, light grey-brown legs, and bright yellowish orange lower mandible. When could identify it as Western Crowned Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus occipitalis*).

Western Crowned Leaf-warbler is a small to medium sized warbler measuring about 11 to 13 cm with a long supercilium, double bars on wings and indistinct crown stripe. It has prominent yellowish grey median crown stripe. The bird is not globally threatened and it is common in breeding area. Western Crowned Leaf-warblers breeds in North Pakistan hills and Western Himalayas, winter visitor to India, Nepal and Bangladesh Grimmett *et.al.* (2007). According to Ali & Ripley (1998) Western Crowned Leaf-warblers breed in the western Himalayas Safed Koh, Chitral and Swat, and Baluchistan, east to Garhwal and Kumaon, and winter in the Indian peninsula from southern Gujarat (Surat Dangs) and north-western Maharashtra (Dhulia), Madhya Pradesh (Raipur), and the Eastern Ghats (Visakhapatnam) south to the southern-most hills; more common on the western side of the peninsula.



Western Crowned Leaf-warbler in the canopy

As it is a winter visitor in peninsular India, particularly coastal peninsular area it may have migrated to central India however, its winter distribution is uncertain (Grimmett *et. al.* 1998). There are very few sighting records of this species from central India. The Western Crowned Leaf Warbler was first time reported from Sitamata Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan by Sangha & Bhardwaj (2011). It constitutes the first wintering record of this species in Rajasthan. It is shown as winter visitor to only peninsular coastal area (Grimmett *et. al.* 2007). Total absence of this species elsewhere in central India has been postulated (Grimmett *et. al.* 2007). In Central India, Western Crowned Leaf Warbler was sighted at Nagpur in September, October, and November 2015 (ebird). On 13 February 2015 sighted it was also sighted in Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve in Chandrapur district (ebird).

This bird was not recorded earlier from Amravati district and the present report is the first sighting record of this bird for this district. Amravati, Nagpur and Chandrapur are adjoining district and the Western Crowned Leaf-warblers may be a winter migrant or a passage migrant to Central India. Available sighting records also suggest that it can be seen in winter migration period only starting from October to February. These birds are always neglected by bird watchers due to their small size, amazing camouflage and high mobility. Sighting reports of such small species are very important as from this data we can predict their migration routes and hence further reports should be encouraged.

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Record of Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis* from Jalgaon, Maharashtra.

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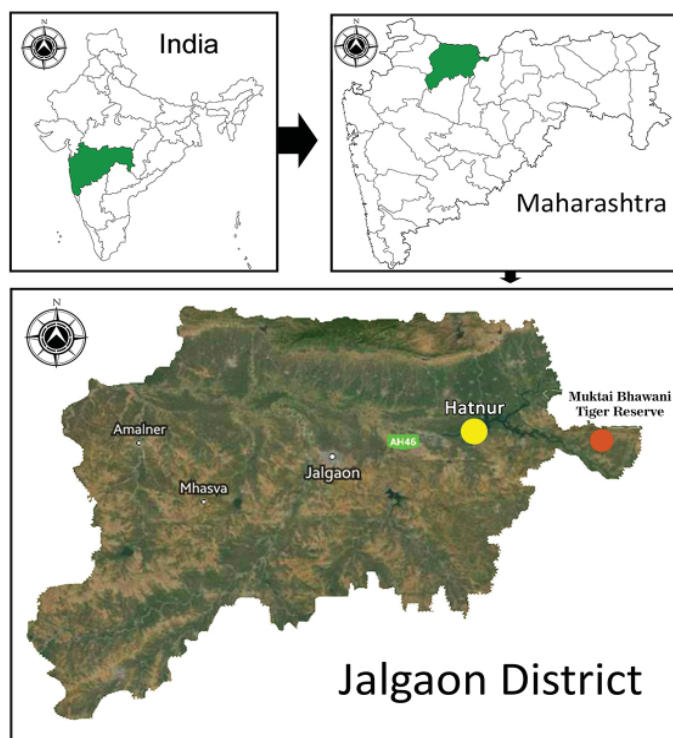
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Map depicting locality of Hatnur Reservoir in Yellow circle and Charthana Muktai Bhawani Tiger Reserve in Orange circle where the birds were spotted.

Abstract

Jalgaon district situated in the north of Maharashtra, is bordered by Satpuda forest ranges at north. Tapi river almost runs parallel to Satpuda ranges east to west through district in northern part. Near Chandev (Historical & religious place) there is confluence of Tapi and Purna rivers. Near this confluence a huge water reservoir (dam) is built for irrigation purpose which is known as Hatnur Dam. Back waters of Hatnur dam in many places are covered with evasive plant species like *Ipomoea carnea* (Besharam), *Ipomoea aquatica*, *Eichhornia crassipes* (Panderi) etc., these evasive sp. along with shallow waters on the banks, are providing hide and shelter to aquatic and wader birds. On the banks of back waters at some places dense thickets of trees are also present providing roosting places for many bird species. This has created a very good habitat for birds hence Hatnur back water is abode of migratory as well as resident birds. This is highlighted by the allotment of IBA status to Hatnur Dam by IBCN recently. Present paper adds another feather in the cap for Hatnur IBA. A new bird species is recorded by VJSS members in one of their Bird watching expedition.

Introduction

On the basis of molecular phylogeny study suborder Alcedines split recently into three families, i.e. Alcedinidae (river kingfishers), Halcyonidae (tree kingfishers), and Cerylidae (water kingfishers) (Moyle, 2006) from which total twelve species of kingfishers occur in Indian Subcontinent (Grimmett & Inskipp, 2008). Stork-billed Kingfisher (*Pelargopsis capensis*, Linnaeus, 1766) is very large species of tree kingfisher, easily distinguished from all other brightly coloured kingfishers by its large size and enormous, compressed blood red-bill (Ali, 1996). The global population size of Stork-billed Kingfisher has not been quantified. However, the species is reported to be widespread and generally sparse but locally common although the



Fig.1: Stork-billed kingfisher perching near water body at Hatnur, Jalgaon, Maharashtra.



Fig.2: Stork-billed kingfisher perching near water stream at Charthana Muktai Bhawani Tiger Reserve, Jalgaon, Maharashtra.

population is suspected to be in decline owing to ongoing habitat destruction (del Hoyo et al. 2001). Stork-billed Kingfisher occurs mostly below 800m but occasionally up to 1200m (Rasmussen & Anderton, 2005). Though recognised as Important Bird area this site has potential to be declared as bird sanctuary. Addition of new bird species to the checklist of Hatnur dam IBA will help in claiming status of Bird Sanctuary to it, which is our larger objective.

Materials and Methods-

Data was gathered by birdwatchers through field surveys. Field observations were made using binoculars and digital camera was used to take record shots. Field guides and literature were used to confirm identity of the bird and to confirm known range of its distribution. Nearest GPS co-ordinates were fixed using Google maps and GPS enabled digital cameras. Time and Date of discoveries were recorded by observers and were also extracted from photographic data. Present Bird Survey were carried on 1st November 2015 at Hatnur dam IBA, (21°05'24.0"N 75°58'12.0"E) and 24 January 2016 at

Charthana, Muktai Bhawani Tiger reserve, Vadhoda Range Jalgaon (21° 3' 24.5628" N 76° 15' 32.5152" E).

Result-

1. On 1st November 2015, we were on bird monitoring event along with the members of Vanyajeev Sanrakshan Sanstha at Hatnur, Jalgaon (21°05'24.0"N 75°58'12.0"E). Hatnur (**Fig.3**) is also designated as a parcel of land for IBA (Important Bird Area) programme. Walking on nature trail an unidentified bird was seen, perching on riverside tree in a shaded area. One of us i.e. AG took some photographs furiously and observes the bird (**Fig.1**) having brown head, Greenish blue upperparts, dusky yellowish underparts with blood-red bill. Following Ali (1996); Grimmett & Inskipp (2008) the bird was identified as Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis* (Linnaeus, 1766). We took follow up of bird up to next fortnight in which we succeeded to document pruning, calling, feeding and foraging behaviour of species. Literature study shows that the species is sparsely distributed in Indian subcontinent except Bengal, Odisha and where it is common (Ali, 1996). Also information obtained by searching online

species database from E-bird.org shows that species is uncommon within Maharashtra state and only reported from few districts like Amravati, Chandrapur, Nagpur, Pune, Ratnagiri and Thane ([E-bird species link here](#)). The nearest locality of spotting of Stork-billed kingfisher is from Kolkas (21°29'53"N 77°12'17"E) in Melghat Tiger Reserve, Amravati (Kothari, 1998) which is 200 kilometres away from Hatnur. But since the species was not reported from Jalgaon district current record hold noteworthy spotting.

2. Second bird was spotted on 24th January 2016 at Charthana, Muktai Bhawani Tiger Reserve (**Fig 2**) (Vadhoda Forest Range, Jalgaon) while bird watching across the water stream, and our youngest team member Prasad Sonawane spotted the individual of Stork-Billed Kingfisher over water stream in shaded area, which was a second photographic record from Jalgaon due to it later on we decided to monitor the bird's activity without disturbing and we found that this bird was mainly feeding on Crabs (<90%) instead of freshwater fishes & frogs which were available in abundant quantity.

Conclusion-

We have gone through all available literature published till today on Avi-Fauna of Jalgaon district to find out the occurrence, distribution and habitat of Stork-billed kingfisher (*Pelargopsis capensis*). We found that, no thorough study of Avi-Fauna of entire district has taken place. There have been some sporadic reports from some bird watchers of Jalgaon district (Mahajan et al, 2013) (Sonar G et al, 2014) and checklists published by some birdwatchers Mahajan Anil (Avifauna of Hatnur dam and its adjoining forest 2013), Patil Ashwin (Checklist of birds of Jalgaon district). This species is not reported in any of the checklist of birds of Jalgaon district. Also after multiple field visits we have found that the Stork-Billed Kingfisher from these areas are mostly feeding on crabs. This clearly reveals that, this species is rare to Jalgaon district and to the Maharashtra. There have been no recent records except the above mentioned of this species, hence this is a new record to the Avi-Fauna of Hatnur dam IBA, Charthana Muktai Bhawani Tiger Reserve and Jalgaon district of Maharashtra State.

Acknowledgement

We are thankful to the members of Vanyajeev Sanrakshan Sanstha, Jalgaon for their persistent motivation and support. Ravindra Sonawane, Sagar Khedkar and Satish Kamble for accompanying in field survey. In our deepest gratitude, we acknowledge senior wildlife researcher Ashaharaza Khan for his valuable comments and reviewing the manuscript. We thank the Forest Department Jalgaon for allowing us to conduct survey.

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A case of partial albinism in Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* from Bejjur Reserved Forest, Telangana, India

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Figure 1. Google earth map showing record location of Lodapally village

On 31 July 2016 while conducting bird survey at Lodapally village (19° 15.532'N, 79° 46.091'E), Bejjur forest range, Asifabad district, Telangana state (Fig.1) we sighted a single Red-vented bulbul perched and feeding on ripe fruits of *Lantana camara* and uttering peculiar frequent calls over a period of 15 minutes. After photographing the bird we found that it had an unusual coloration at chin, throat, abdomen, thighs, and shoulders (including mantle, scapulars, lesser coverts and median coverts). The dorsal part till rump was white in colour. The ear coverts and nape had speckled black and white markings. In general, crown, beak wing feathers, upper tail coverts and tail feathers had normal colour. This was a clear specimen of partial albinism (Fig.2).

In peninsular India, albinisms in most avian families is regularly reported. Albinism can be derived from a number of causes including genetic mutations, diet, living conditions, age, disease, or injury (Narayana et al. 2015). The character of albinism can vary; individuals are usually classified as true albinos, partial albinos, or leucistic (McCardle 2012). Genetically albinism is plagiastic from a recessive gene which inhibits the enzyme tyrosinase. Tyrosine, an amino acid, synthesizes melanin that is the basis of several avian colours (Holt et al. 1995). However, albinism in birds has been grouped into four categories; **Total albinism**: a simultaneous complete absence of melanin from the eyes, skin, and feathers, **Incomplete albinism**: when melanin is not simultaneously absent from the eyes, skin, and feathers, **Imperfect albinism**: when melanin is reduced in the eyes, skin, and feathers and **Partial albinism**: when albinism is localized to certain areas of the body (Mueller and Hutt 1941).

In India we found one albinism record in Red-vented bulbul by Baker (1919) and one record of incomplete



Figure 2. A view of a partial albino Red-vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*)

albinism by Mestri, Mahabal and Pande (2011) from Raigad district, Maharashtra. However, there are several reports of albinism in various other bird species in Bibliography of South Asian Ornithology <http://www.southasiaornith.in> (Pittie 2016). Albino birds in Telangana state have been reported by Srinivasulu (2004) for White-breasted kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*; Adimallai et al. (2012) Large Grey Babbler *Turdoides malcolmi*; Surender et al. (2014) Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*; Surender et al. (2015) House Crow *Corvus splendens* and Narayana et al. (2015) Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*.

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Recent sighting of Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* in Maharashtra

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Fig.1. Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* at Kumbhargaoon Bird Sanctuary, Bhigwan, Pune

Introduction

Greater white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons* is the most numerous species in Eurasia. The species is a part of grey goose complex (De-lacour, 1954). The limits of breeding range, especially in eastern Asia, are not exactly known and the traditional division into subspecies is questionable (Mooij&Zookler, 2000). Although the species is been reported causing crop damage from various Neotropical countries across the globe (Amano, et al., 2004; Somers, CM & Morris RD, 2002).

Published records stated that Greater *Anser albifrons* is dominantly winter visitor to North and North-East India and known to be visited only nine states in India viz. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujrat, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand (Abdulali, 1996; Craven, 1949; Fulton, 1908; Grewal et. al., 2008; Higgins, 1931; Higgins, 1948; Khan et. al., 2014; Manakadan, 1995 and Montagnon, 1943).

Greater white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons* is placed in vagrant category and has not been recorded from Maharashtra (Grimmett et. al, 2009) It was Khan et.al., (2014), who published the first record of *Anser albifrons* from Maharashtra State. His team spotted an immature *Anser albifrons* lacking belly barring at Kekatpur reservoir (21°5'36.7"N 77°57'7.4"E), Amravati District. On next year an adult *Anser albifrons* is been spotted at Khapri Lake (21°19'26"N 78°30'21"E), Nagpur (Avinash Londhe and Nitin Marathe per. comm.) near about (~150kms) from previous locality. We assume it is a same individual using same flyways for its migration routes.

Result

On 09th Dec. 2015 AG and GB were at Kumbhargaoon Bird Sanctuary (18°17'58"N 74°45'16"E), Bhigwan, Pune. Among the gaggle of *Anser indicus* (n=33), a single adult *Anser albifrons* (Fig.1) was seen, foraging with comfort among sister species. Grazing cattle came

for water; the flock flew off and never returned up to dusk. On dated 25th Dec. 2015, we visited Kavdipat, a locality on upper front water of same river and near about 15kms away from the previous locality. Same bird also noticed there with the same number of *Anser indicus*.

Discussion

Published literature and Current records of Greater White-fronted Geese does not assigned to specific race, since Indian radiation is completely unknown about its migration route in Indian Subcontinent. Thus we proposed Telemetric and tagging study for species to understanding its ecological behaviours, preferable wintering grounds and protecting habitat of such ecosystem.

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Sighting of Long Legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*) in Paud, Pune District, Maharashtra.

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Citation: Kulkarni, Kushal, Gaurav Kulkarni, Sandeep Bapat. Sighting of Long Legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*) in Paud, Pune District, Maharashtra. *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 6(2): 391

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Referee: Pramod Deshpande



- **Name of species-** Long Legged Buzzard
- **Status-** Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)
- **Date of sighting-** 31st October 2012
- **Time of sighting-** 1:30 p.m
- **Weather parameters-** Harsh light clear sky. A hot October day
- **Number of times sighted-** 1.
- **Number of birds-** 1.
- **Gender of bird-** Adult male.
- **Locality-** Paud.
- **Habitat description-** A patch of scrubland around 15-20kms from a fort
- **Distance from human habitation-** Around 30-40 kms.
- **Any other bird/animal associates-** Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Blue Rock Thrush, Crested Bunting, Black Eagle.
- **Bird Behaviour-** Spotted it perched on a big boulder by roadside. Flew after 20-25 minutes over a small hill nearby.
- **Threats-** Habitat destruction.
- **Photographs-** Attached.



Sighting of Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) in Mulshi Taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra.

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Citation: Swapnil K. Thatte (2017). Sighting of Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) in Mulshi Taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra.

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Referee: Pravin Kawale



- **Name of species-** Pied Avocet.
- **Status-** Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)^[1]
- **Date of sighting-** On 4th December 2016.
- **Time of sighting-** 4:30 p.m.
- **Weather parameters-** Bright sunny.
- **Number of times sighted-** 1.
- **Number of birds-** 1.
- **Gender of bird-** Unknown.
- **Locality-** Mulshi Lake.
- **Habitat description-** Reservoir surrounded by Semi Evergreen Forest.
- **Distance from human habitation-** Around 5-7 kms.
- **Any other bird/animal associates-** Saw a Eurasian Curlew, Malabar Lark, Indian Roller, European Roller.
- **Bird Behaviour-** Probably was in migration. Very unusual/unrecorded sighting from a crest line region of Western Ghats. It was foraging in shallow water along the bank.
- **Threats-** Habitat modification.
- **Photographs-** Attached.
- **Previous records** –No previous records from the locality.



Sighting of Rufous-bellied Eagle (*Lophotriorchis kienerii*) in Mulshi Taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra.

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Citation: Bapat, Sandeep and Kushal Kulkarni (2017).
Sighting of Rufous Bellied Eagle (*Lophotriorchis kienerii*)
in Mulshi Taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra.
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Referee: Niranjan Sant



- **Name of species-** Rufous Bellied Eagle.
- **Status-** Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)[1]
- **Date of sighting-** On 31st August 2013 and followed by on 1st September 2013.
- **Time of sighting-** 9-9:15 a.m. on both the days
- **Weather parameters-** Monsoon. However both the days had completely different weather conditions. It was cloudy and overcast on 31st August and we had clear skies n bright sunlight on 1st September.
- **Number of times sighted-** 2 (On two consecutive days).
- **Number of birds-** 1.
- **Gender of bird-** Unknown.
- **Locality-** Mulshi/Tamhini.
- **Habitat description-** Semi Evergreen Forest.
- **Distance from human habitation-** Around 30-40kms.
- **Any other bird/animal associates-** Shaheen Falcon and a Black Eagle in the same area for 15 minutes either side of this sighting.
- **Bird Behaviour-** Soaring for 10-15 minutes on both the occasions.
- **Threats-** Deforestation and habitat modification.
- **Photographs-** Attached.
- **Previous records -** This is the second record from Pune and the 1st photographic record. Previous record was at Mula-Mutha (1 immature) in 1993-94 (AP pers.obs.) in Annotated Checklist of Birds of Western Maharashtra, Buceros Vol. 8, Nos. 2&3. May-Dec.2003. Pp 33).



© Sandeep Bapat (both photographs)



Recent Sighting of Tickell's Thrush (*Turdus unicolor*) in Guhagar Taluka, Dist Ratnagiri, Maharashtra

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Citation: Khare, Akshay R. (2017). Recent Sighting of Tickell's Thrush (*Turdus unicolor*) in Guhagar Taluka, Dist Ratnagiri, Maharashtra
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Referee: Dr. Satish Pande



- **Name of species**-Tickell's Thrush.
- **Status**- Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)[1]
- **Date of sighting**- 27th November, 2016.
- **Time of sighting**- 09:41 a.m.
- **Weather parameters**-Clear Skies and Bright Sun.
- **Number of times sighted**-Throughout from mid November to almost February.
- **Number of birds**- 1.
- **Gender of bird**-Female.
- **Locality**- Guhagar town (near coast)
- **Habitat description** – In mixed man made natural Arecanut and Mango plantations .
- **Distance from human habitation**- 0.
- **Any other bird/animal associates**-Oriental Magpie Robin, Golden-fronted Leafbirds, Rufous Treepie.
- **Bird behaviour**-Daily visitor to the bird feeder in the property.
- **Threats**- Hunting.
- **Photographs**- Attached.
- **Previous records**- No documented record from the region



Recent Sighting of Little Bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*) in Pune, Maharashtra

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Referee: Dr. Satish Pande



- **Name of species-** Little Bunting.
- **Scientific Name-** *Emberiza pusilla*.
- **Status-** Least Concerned (IUCN Red List, 2016-3).
- **Date of sighting-** 19th February 2017.
- **Time of sighting-** 12:09 PM.
- **Weather parameters-** Sunny.
- **Number of times sighted-** Once.
- **Number of birds-** Single.
- **Gender of bird-** Unidentified.
- **Locality-** Rareshwar Plateau, which is located in Bhor Taluk of Pune District in Maharashtra state. The co-ordinates are 18°03'N 73°44'E, approx. 1400 m above sea level. The area of Rareshwar Plateau is about 6 sq. km. and is surrounded by many hills and forts.
- **Habitat description-** Evergreen vegetation, shrubs. There are many farms, owned by the local residents.
- **Distance from human habitation-** Within human habitation
- **Any other bird/animal associates-** Malabar Lark.
- **Bird behaviour-** Saw a single individual sitting at a distance of about one meter from the Malabar Lark on the same electric line. Sighted for less than a minute and then it took off and vanished in trees located at a distance of about 50 m.
- **Threats to the habitat-** Pesticides and insecticides.
- **Photographs-** Attached.
- **Previous records-** There are many records from north eastern states of India (Meghalaya, Arunachala Pradesh, Sikkim, Nagaland, Assam). Other than this, one record from West Bengal (16/12/2012) and one from Kerala (26/02/2016). No previous record for Maharashtra.



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Recent Sighting of White-capped Bunting (*Emberiza stewarti*) in Aurangabad district, Maharashtra

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Citation: Shakkarwar, Rupali, Pankaj Shakkarwar (2017). Recent Sighting of White-capped Bunting (*Emberiza stewarti*) in Aurangabad district, Maharashtra *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 6(2): 396

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Referee: Dr. Satish Pande



- **Name of Species:** -White Capped Bunting
- **Scientific Name.** *Emberiza stewarti*
- **Status:** - Least concern
- **Date of sighting:-** From February 26th, 2017 to March 8th 2017
- **Time of sighting:-** 7.00 am to 12:00 pm.
- **Weather parameters:** - Sunny.
- **Number of times sighted:** - Eight
- **Number of birds:** - One pair.
- **Gender of bird:** Male & Female.
- **Locality:** - Chauka Hills, near Sawangi, District Aurangabad. – the exact GPS coordinates are withheld for conservation purpose.
- **Habitat description:** -; Rocky, scrubland and hillside with euphorbia, grass, bushes and low trees. A small stream runs in a deep dense valley.
- **Altitude:** - 800 to 830 m.
- **Distance from human habitation:-** 0.75 km and in a gorge.
- **Any other bird/animal associates:** Mainly with Grey-necked Bunting but mostly by itself.
- **Bird Behaviour:** - Found in pair. Unobtrusive and easily overlooked. Feeding quietly on ground (grass-seeds) for some time and repeatedly resorting to selected euphorbia bushes. Occasionally preening. Shy and alert - quickly flew away in typical bunting style. Sitting on leafless trees and sometimes on electricity transmission wires.
- **Threats to the habitat:** - Illegal cutting of trees, encroachment and stone quarry
- **Photographs:** - Attached – Male & Female.
- **Previous records:** - None from Aurangabad. There was only one reference in Handbook of Birds of India & Pakistan by Salim Ali & S.D. Ripley citing D'Abreu (in Nagpur). But no subsequent record from Maharashtra.

Sighting of Madras Tree Shrew (*Anathana ellioti*) in Tamhini, Pune District, Maharashtra.

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Citation: Thatte, Swapnil K. and Rohit Jogalekar. (2017) Sighting of Madras Tree Shrew (*Anathana ellioti*) in Tamhini, Pune District, Maharashtra. *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 6(2): 397

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Copyright: © Thatte, Swapnil K. & R.Jogalekar. (2017)

Referee: Dr. Shyamkant Talmale



- **Name of species-** Madras Tree Shrew/Indian Tree Shrew.
- **Scientific name of species-** *Anathana ellioti*. (Waterhouse, 1850)
- **Status-** Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)
- **Date of sighting-** On 11th January 2017.
- **Time of sighting-** 8:30 AM.
- **Weather parameters-** Foggy winter morning.
- **Number of times sighted-** Four.
- **Number of Individuals-** Two.
- **Gender of Mammal-** Unknown.
- **Locality-** Tamhini, Pune district, Maharashtra.
- **Habitat description-** Stream and canopy of semi evergreen forest.
- **Distance from human habitation-** Around 10 km.
- **Any other bird/animal associates-** Square-tailed Bulbul, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Indian Blue Robin, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Indian Giant Squirrel and Barking Deer.
- **Animal Behaviour-** The Madras Tree Shrew was shy and was moving stealthily in the canopy. After some time a single individual descended to drink water but quickly disappeared in the bushes because of bulbuls. I also observed courtship behavior of a pair of shrews. They were chasing and scratching each other in the high canopy. They were silent. No mutual feeding was observed. Photographs of the pair could not be obtained due to the canopy cover and height.
- **Threats-** Deforestation.
- **Photographs-** Attached.
- **Previous records** – Pune District (Khandala, Bhimashankar)

Rescue of an Indian Eagle Owl (*Bubo bengalensis*) at Jhalaria, Madhya Pradesh

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Citation: Gadikar, Ajay (2017). Rescue of an Indian Eagle Owl (*Bubo bengalensis*) at Jhalaria, Madhya Pradesh. *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 6(2): 398-399

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Referee: Nitin Kakodkar



- **Common Name of species-** Indian Eagle Owl
- **Scientific Name of species-** *Bubo bengalensis*
- **Status-** Least Concerned.
- **Date of rescue request call-** 13 January 2016.
- **Time of sighting-** 8:55 am.
- **Weather parameters-** Cold day.
- **Number of animals needing rescue-** One.
- **Gender of animal** – Unknown.
- **Locality-** Jhalaria Village, Indore District.
- **Habitat description-** School building at the city outskirts and many agriculture fields nearby.
- **Distance from human habitation-** 500 meters.
- **Animal behaviour-** Exhausted..
- **Animal examination findings-** No injury..
- **Animal measurements if taken-** Not taken.
- **What was actually done to rescue the animal-** The just fledged chick was harassed by House Crows so it went in a room to get shelter where it got stuck in pipes, and it was difficult to rescue it. Being a raptor its talons were very sharp and it was very aggressive, but Mr. Abhilash the coach got hold of it, later we kept it in the room, provided water and hen-eggs and

© Ajay Gadikar (All photographs)



The juvenile owl stranded in a room



It was rescued and examined



The rescued Indian Eagle Owl was released on the same day

tried to look for the parents. At dusk, we saw one the adult owl nearby and we immediately released the rescued owl. It flew to the nearby perch and later flew with the parent.

- **Persons involved in rescue-** Mr. Ajay Gadikar and Mr. Abhilash T.
- **Was anyone injured during rescue-** No.
- **If medical treatment was given-** No, only eggs and chicken were fed.
- **Animal survived or died-** Survived.
- **Date of release-** 13 January 2016.
- **Locality and habitat of release-** Released at the same place.
- **Did you have previous experience of rescue of this species-** No.
- **Did you re-sight the released animal-** Probably yes, It was seen in the vicinity for the nest one week.
- **Did you inform the local Forest Department-** No.
- **Photographs-** Yes.
- **Previous record of the same animal in nearby locality-** No

Successful rescue and treatment of Brown Fish Owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*) in Karad, Maharashtra

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Citation: Bhate, Rohan (Shah), Anniruddha Dikshit (2017). Successful rescue and treatment of Brown Fish Owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*) in Karad, Maharashtra *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* 6(2): 400-401

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Referee: Sunil Limaye



© Rohan Bhate

The Brown Fish Owl (BFO henceforth) *Ketupa zeylonensis* is a common species of owl usually found close to riverine habitats and waterbodies. It inhabits the warm subtropical and humid tropical parts of continental Asia and some offshore islands. This species is an all-year resident throughout most tropical and subtropical parts of the Indian Subcontinent to Southeast Asia and adjoining regions. It inhabits mainly the lowlands, from open woodland to dense forest as well as in plantations. Regardless of habitat, it rarely strays far from larger bodies of water such as rivers and lakes.

On the 16th April 2017, the first author received a call from local news reporter Mr. Sanjog Patil of Lokmat to brief that some different kind of injured bird has been found by a farmer. After seeing the picture of the bird, the first author immediately identified the bird to be a BFO and contacted the farmer. The farmer narrated that the bird was lying in his sugarcane field since the day before. He had seen it but thought the bird might fly away so neglected it. Next day again when he saw the bird limping and was not able to fly he caught the bird and then contacted the newspaper reporter who is from his village. This reporter further contacted the first author.

This village where the bird was found is a village called TAMBAVE, and comes in the Tehsil of Karad in District Satara. Tambave is situated on the banks of river Koyna and the area in and around this village is majorly covered with sugarcane. Also the river banks are well-wooded. The first author has created a checklist of birds in and around Karad and previously the BFO has been reported in various areas around river Koyna and Krishna.

The farmer was asked to gently keep the BFO in one cardboard box and hand over to Girish Kulkarni, who



is a naturalist and a snake rescuer. Girish further rushed to the spot and took the BFO in a box.

On initial observation the bird was active, alert, and attacking us. We identified it to be a young BFO and assumed that it possibly fell from the nesting tree when trying to fly. We physically checked all its wings and legs and other parts. It was seen that bird was limping by its left leg. It was not able to lift or rest properly on its left leg either. Overall the bird looked healthy with no other external injuries.

The bird was fed with 200 g of soft boneless chicken pieces with a pair of forceps in front of its mouth, which it grabbed and swallowed. After this we gave the bird some water with a dropper, followed by 5 drops of Paediatric Ibuprofen Paracetamol drops and kept it in a basket for the night.

Next morning, the second author, was called. X-Rays revealed that the left Tibia Fibula in the middle third were fractured. The fracture was plastered with a splint to immobilise the limb.

The bird was kept in a basket so as to give it minimum space to move thereby making the bird immobile for resting.

The treatment of the bird was started, based on the first author's previous experience with rescue of wild animals and birds, as follows:

- Ibu / Para IMOL 5 drops BD (two times a day)
- Multi Vitamin 5 drops BD (two times a day)
- Calcium 5 drops BD (two times a day)
- Along with feeding of fresh boneless chicken and fresh water fish 250 g in a day. Fresh water was also fed 4 to 5 times a day as it was peak summer season and temperature was around 40 °C

- The basket which contained the bird was kept in cool environment surrounded by plants in a shady place.

After three weeks of complete immobilization, it was observed that the bird was responding very well to the treatment. After one week Ibu / Para drops were discontinued. The bird was growing rapidly in size due to systematic treatment and good feeding. The BFO was active and sharp all these days. At night this bird would give repeated calls, while in the day time it would sleep, pointing to its nocturnal activity patterns. During feeding, it used to make a sound Wut... Wut... Wut... with its beak and show its aggression.

After 3 weeks, the plaster slab was removed and it was left without the slab freely. And to our surprise, it started walking and hopping freely.

We were confident it would fly looking at its condition, so we immediately put it in a basket so it to be set for its release from where it was captured. At dusk by 18.00 hrs, it was taken to the river bank area where it was found.

On opening the basket near the riverside farm, the BFO moved out and hopped for a while and then immediately flew on the nearby small tree.

The release took place on May 7th May 2017, and we waited for the night to fall and were watching the owl from a distance. At around 19.20 hrs the BFO flew away from the tree branch across the river on the other bank and disappeared into the darkness.

Corneal opacity with cataract in the left eye of Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

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The Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*): Family Strigidae, is a widespread owl occupying open habitats, such as grasslands, marshes, heaths, and tundra (Wiggins et al. 2006). The Short-eared Owl is a winter migrant to India (Blanford 1894) where it prefers grassland and open country (Ali & Ripley 1987). It is reported from many regions of India, such as, Maharashtra (Jamdar & Shrivastava 1988; Chandrasekaran 1995), Madhya Pradesh (Pasha et al. 2004), Tamil Nadu (Thyagaraju 1933), Kerala (Jayson & Mathew 2002; Chandrasekhara & Nameer 2003), Gujarat (19 November 1993 specimen: The Field Museum), Rajasthan (5 January 1949 specimen: The Field Museum; Singh 1997), Karnataka (20 January 1941 specimen: The Field Museum), Uttar Pradesh (Grewal 2000), and Andhra Pradesh (Kanniah & Ganesh 1993). In Gujarat It is common to uncommon winter visitor (Ganpule 2016).

On 20 November 2015, Kuldipsinh Mori, Bhotu Mori, and I were searching for a Merlin *Falco columburius* near Bajana wetland in Little Rann of Kachchh, Gujarat India. After our futile search for this raptor, on our way back, we observed a movement in a Babhul tree *Acacia* sp. When we observed carefully, we saw three Short-eared Owls perching under the tree. They flew away and perched in an open area. On closer approach, two out of the three flew and perched under another Babhul tree. But the remaining owl flew a short distance and perched closer to us. Its flight appeared normal but it was not taking long flights. Black Drongos *Dicrurus macrocerus* were disturbing it but this owl was apparently not even able to defend itself. On closer approach by us it subsequently refused to fly. We took photographs of this owl. Our observations and subsequent expert opinion from ophthalmologist (Dr. Shrikant Kelkar) revealed that this owl had a corneal opacity and a cataract in the left eye. The



size of the pupil of the left eye was smaller, possibly due to trauma. Since the owl was not captured and our observations were limited to photographic data, this was interpreted as a case of corneal opacity with hyper-mature cataract due to previous injury. A case of cataract in both eyes of a rescued Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* kept in a bird orphanage in Pune is known (Personal communication with Dr. Satish Pande). On my subsequent visits to the same place I could not see that individual Short-eared Owl again. This report is a rare but interesting finding in a wild free living Short-eared Owl.

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