22nd INDIAN BIRDING FAIR

7-8 February 2019, Man Sagar, Jaipur **Dedicated to Waders of India** A Citizens' Initiative



Black-winged Stilt family, illustration by Peter Elfman. Wildlife artist and illustrator, lives in Sweden (details on page 52).



Maharaja Gajsingh Marwar continues to be Patron of TWSI. Be recalled it was he who accorded decision to organize Indian Birding Fair while he was Chairman of WWF - India's Rajasthan State, and led the 1st Fair on 1-2 February 1997 at Man Sagar, Jaipur.



Mr. Samar Singh Dungarpur, to continue guiding TWSI.



Dr. Rajkumari W. Jones, TWSI's Advisor in Britain, leading the Red Squirrel reintroduction initiative in Wales.

Fair Approach

It is my pride privilege to take over as TWSI President from a conservation luminary and most experienced decision-maker, Maharaj Samar Singh Dungarpur. And serve a decision making organization that has had blessings of some of the most outstanding conservationists like late Dharmakumarsinhji, late Maharawal Lakshman Singh Dungarpur, late K.C.Kulish among others.

Support from Maharaja Gajsingh of Marwar continues to be available, and some most significant experts from abroad continue to lead our path, as briefly acknowledged in the new web site – www.birdfair.org

My green initiatives had been through my real estate business and managing some eco-hotels. Knowledge got suddenly deepened as I mixed with TWSI group, both in field and in office. Must I outline that the strength lies in being together and all colleagues are displaying unique abilities and capabilities. Congratulations to all Volunteers.

Waders? As we review literature, it is noted that this group of birds had never received attention barring what Dr. Balachandran had done through BNHS for ringing. I gather from experts across the country, it is not sufficient for a country of its large size and diversity of birds. It is an appeal to Government and non-profit groups to have a meeting on scientific experiments on threatened/endangered avifauna, in which bird banding, recovery and related topics should find priority. Let me know how to go ahead. My facilities shall be available.

The 22nd Indian Birding Fair is an example for all bird experts. Welcome to lead and enlighten us so that we attain the best. Best wishes.

Anand Mishra TWSI President



Mr. Anand Mishra at the Indian Birding Fair (Ayub Khan)

Waders of India R.G. Soni* and Harkirat Singh Sangha** **Ex PCCF and ex CWLW, Rajasthan, Ornithologist, Photographer, Movie-maker on avians, Writer*

**Ornithologist, writing a book on Waders of Indian subcontinent

Waders are birds commonly found along shorelines and mudflats that wade in order to forage for food (such as insects or crustaceans) in the mud, water or sand. They are called shorebirds in North America, where the term "wader" is used to refer to long-legged wading birds such as storks and herons.



R. G. Soni

Waders are members of the order Charadriiformes, which includes gulls, auks and their allies also.

Notes: 1. Serial Number followed by * indicates its occurrence in Rajasthan.

2. Letters R & M indicate Resident and Migratory respectively.

3. IUCN Status is indicated at the end of description of each species where it is of concern.

Sanskrit/Vernacular names have been borrowed from "Indian Scientific Nomenclature of Birds" by Prof Dr. Raghu Vira and Shri K. N. Dave; published by Sh. Lokesh Chandra for The International Academy of Indian Culture, Nagpur; 1949, courtesy Shri D. S. Chavda. Some names were borrowed from "Bhartiya Pakshi" by Suresh Singh, published by Hindi Samiti, Lucknow, 1974.



Ancient Indian Scholars/ Philosophers lived with nature and understood it deeply. They followed simple and systematic/logical procedure of naming birds. If there was an a n c i e n t n a m e for a species/subspecies, it was made the basis of the name of Genus and family. Thus Common

Harkirat Singh Sangha

House Crow काक, yields genus Corvus काक-प्रजाति

and Corvidae becomes काक-वंश. In trinomial system Corvussplendenssplendens is characterized by ashybrown nape, ear-coverts, head, upper back and breast भस्म-छवि ashy-brown shade (ashy is भस्म, colour is छवि) Corvus splendens is भस्म छवि काक nominate subspecies is सामान्य, others are appropriately prefixed according to Region.

Corvus splendens splendens is सामान्यभस्म छवि काक Corvus splendens zugamayeri सिन्धु भस्म छवि काक Corvus splendens insolens ब्राहम भस्म छवि काक Corvus splendens protegatus लंका भस्म छवि काक



Waders, waders, and waders all around (Harsh Vardhan)

Order CHARADRIIFORMES टिट्टिभरूप-गण (टिट्टिभ ancient word)

Family - IBIDORHYNCHIDAE कृकषा-वंश

Genus - IBIDORHYNCHA कृकषा-प्रजाति, (कृकषा occurs in पारस्करगृहयसूत्र)



1. Ibisbill *(Ibidorhyncha struthersii)* (41cm) (R, Himalayas higher reaches) गिरिकृकषा, कंकण-हारिका

The Ibisbill is sufficiently distinctive to merit its own family Ibidorhynchidae. It occurs on the shingle riverbanks of the high plateau of central Asia and the Himalayas.

Family - RECURVIROSTRIDAE कषिकानी-

वंश Genus HIMANTOPUS प्रवाल-पादप्रजाति,

(प्रवाल-पाद Occurs in पालकाप्य)



2*. Black-winged Stilt (Himantopus himantopus) (32cm) (R, common) काल-पक्षप्रवाल-पाद, गजपांव, टिन्धुर, लमगोड, लालगोन, लाल ठेन्गी (बंग), टिलुआ, लमरंगा, लालगोडी,कृष्णपक्ष स्टिल्ट, सरगनी.

Very long thin pink legs. Called stilt due to long legs.

Genus - RECURVIROSTRA कषिकानी-प्रजाति (कषिकानी occurs in चरक)



3*. Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)(46 cm) (M & R, breeds in Kuchchh) कषिका,कृष्णकषिका, कस्याचहा, सूजी (कषिका Occurs inउणादिसूत्र). Usually in pairs or small parties.

SUBFAMILY PHALAROPODINAE (चर्मपादान्वंश)

Genus PHALAROPUS (चर्म्पाद-प्रजाति)

(the toes are bordered throughout by a web divided into lobes). The phalaropes differ from all other waders in their love of swimming, often being seen floating lightly on top of the water.



4. Red Phalarope (Phalaropus fulicarius) (20cm) (M) काल-शीर्षधूसरचर्मपाद, (Earlier called Grey Phalarope). Migrating mainly on oceanic routes and wintering at sea on tropical oceans.



5*. Red-necked Phalarope (Phalaropus lobatus) (19cm) (M) रक्त-ग्रीवपद-जालिक, रक्त-

ग्रीवजल-प्रिय. Usually winters at sea on tropical oceans, rare in inland waters; was seen swimming near Bikaner around 1992.

Family DROMADIDAE (कर्कटाश-वंश)

Genus DROMAS कर्कटाश-प्रजाति (They feed chiefly on crabs कर्कट)

6. Crab Plover (Dromas ardeola) (41 cm) (M sea coasts) कर्कटाश, सिंहलकर्कटाश. Sufficiently distinctive to merit its own family.



Family BURHINIDAE (पाणविक-वंश) (पाणविक

occurs in चरक)

Bous in Greek is Ox and Rhis is nose, thus bullnosed, referring to large head and short, thick bill of birds of this family.

Genus BURHINUS पाणविक-प्राजाति



7*. Eurasian Thick-knee (Burhinus oedicnemus) (41cm) (R) करवानक, बडसिरी, अश्म कर्लू, नक्त कुर्री. Earlier called Persian Stone Curlew. Some occur in W. Rajasthan, Gujarat in semi-desert areas.

8.* Indian Thick-knee (Burhinus indicus) (42cm) (R) भारतरेखितपाणविक, भारतपाणविक, करवानक, बडसिरी, लम्बी, खरमा, छोटा शिला बाटन (बंग. Earlier called Indian stone-curlew.



Has large yellow eyes, nocturnal, usually calls (bursts of loud wails) at dusk and dawn. Though regarded as a wader, usually seen on land near water.

Genus ESACUS दीर्घशिर-प्रजाति (दीर्घशिर Ancient word)



9.* Great Thick-knee (Esacus recurvirostri) (51cm) (R) वक्र-चंचुदीर्घ-शिर, बड़ा करवानक, गंग टिटाई, बड़ा शिला बाटन (बंग). Latin "curvus" is curved (वक्र) rostrum is bill (चंचु). It has large head, Also called Great Stone-curlew or Great Stone Plover. It prefers gravel banks along rivers or large lakes, and also beaches.

10. Beach Thick-knee (Esacus magnirostris) (55cm) (R-found in Andaman Islands -कृष्णद्वीप) आवभुअसम-चंचु (brown=आवभु. Also called Australian Stone Plover.



Family GLAREOLIDAE (शार्कर-वंश). Glarea in Latin is gravel, reference to family frequenting dry stony places, deserts, ploughed land etc.

Genus CURSORIUS धावि-प्रजाति. Cursor in Latin is runner, they are remarkable runners, usually running to escape.



11. Jerdon's Courser (Cursorius Rhinoptilus) (27cm) (R in Godavari R valley AP), दक्षिण पट्टवक्षस, दक्षिण क्षिप्रचला. The bird was discovered by Thomas C. Jerdon in 1848 but not seen again until its rediscovery in 1986, by Bharat Bhushan. Critically endangered.



12*. Indian Courser (*Cursorius* coromandelicus) (26cm) (R)

जांगलधावी, भारतक्षिप्रचला, नुक्री, ठोंठ, जांगल. Found on relatively dry land running to feed on insects.



13*. Cream-coloured Courser (Cursorius cursor) (23cm) (M) सामान्यक्षिप्रधावी, पीताभक्षिप्रचला, छेनाबोरी (कच्छ). Usually found in small flocks in desert and semi-desert areas. Cream-coloured plumage, legs white. Not conspicuous in sandy areas. Insectivorous.

Genus GLAREOLA सैकत-प्रजाति (Lat glarea is

gravel सैकत) of Praticoles. Pratum in Latin is a meadow and incola is a dweller, alluding to their common habitat. They have short legs, long pointed wings and forked tail.



14*. Collared Pratincol (Glareola pratincola) (23 cm) (M) सामान्यश्वेतोदरसैकत, पट्टी-कन्ठहापुत्री (when it approaches the nest it makes sound हाहा). Also called Swallow Plover, Common Pratincole or Red-winged Pratincole. Breeds in W Pak, uncommon winter migrant in India.



15*. Oriental Pratincole (Glareola maldivarum) (24cm) (R, local migration) सामान्यलघु-पुच्छसैकत, वृहद्भारतहापुत्री, बड़ा बबुई बाटन (बंग) (also called Large Indian Pratincole, Eastern Collared Pratincole, Swallow-Plover or Grasshopper-bird). Found on dried up plains near rivers or lakes.

16*. Small Pratincole (Glareola lactea) (17cm)(R Local migrant) लघुसैकत, लघुभारतहापुत्री,उत्तेरण (सिंध), छोटाबाब्इबाटन (बंग). Also called

Small Indian Pratincole, Little Pratincole, or Swallow Plover. Found near water, often in small flocks.



17. White-faced Plover (*Charadrius dealbatus*) (17cm) (M). It is a subspecies of Kentish Plover, with which it has been much confused. Found in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

Family JACANIDAE (JACANAS) जलकोपि-

तंश. They have very long toes and nails, enabling them to walk on floating vegetation, hence also called Lily-trotter. Always found on or near water.

Genus HYDROPHASIANUS जलशिखन्डी-

प्रजाति (जलशिखन्डी ancient word). Genus name in Greek means "Water-Pheasant".



18*. Pheasant-tailed Jacana (Hydrophasianus chirurgus) (31cm) (R - local movements) तन्-

चंचुजल-शिखन्डी, असि-पुच्छजल-कपोत, पिहो, पिहुया, जल-मंजोर, चित्र-बिल्लाई (बंग) सुरदल, सकदल, मिवा, दल-कुकड़ा,रानीदीदावगोफिता. Its bill चंचु is much slender तनु than in metopidius. White and Chocolate coloured bird with long pheasant-like tail and extra-long toes. Also called Little white water princess.

Genus METOPIDIUS जलकपोत-प्रजाति

(जलकपोत ancient word) metopidios in Greek is on the forehead, reference to the frontal shield on the forehead.



19*. Bronze-winged Jacana (Metopidius indicus) (30cm) (R) भारतजल-कपोत, कांस्य-पक्षजल-कपोत, दल-पीपी, जल-पीपी, करातिया (बंग), कालो जल मंजर (गुज). Polyandrous, female larger and more brightly coloured; male incubates. Female has harem of 4-5 males.

Family ROSTRATULIDAE (PAINTED-SNIPES) कुनाल-वंश (कुनाल occurs in Buddhist literature) Family of Painted Snipes.

Genus ROSTRATULA कुनाल-प्रजाति. Rostrum in Latin is beak and ulus is dim or small, they have smaller beaks than true snipes.

20*. Greater Painted-snipe (Rostratula benghalensis) (25cm) (R, local movement) सामान्यवंगकुनाल, चित्रितकुनाल, ओहारी, कोन,



बग्गरजी, राजाचहा, तिबद, पन-लवा (गुज). Unlike true snipes, not much shy.

Family HAEMATOPODIDAE शंखिनी-वंश (Oystercatchers)

Haimatos in Greek is blood and pados is foot, reference to pink coloured legs and feet.

Genus HYMATOPUS शंखिनी-प्रजाति (शंखिनी occurs in निघन्टू-रत्नाकर)



21. Eurasian Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) (42cm) (M)

सामान्यकाल-सितशंखिनी, शंखिनी, दरियागजपाँव, दोबाह (सिंध). (black is काल, rump and upper tailcoverts white सित), Ostreon in Greek is oyster and lego is I gather or pick up. However, they do not eat oysters, but do open and eat shell-fish. Found on seacoasts. **Family CHARADRIIDAE,** includes Plovers, Dotterels, and Lapwings. In general, larger species are called lapwings, smaller species plovers or dotterels. Most lapwings belong to the subfamily Vanellinae, most plovers and dotterels to Charadriinae.

Subfamily CHARADRIINAE टिहिभानुवंश

It comprises of Plovers and Dotterels, smaller birds than close relatives - Lapwings. They have smaller bills and hunt by sight, not by feeling with feet, running and pausing along water edge.

Genus PLUVIALIS स्वर्णटिट्टिभ-प्रजाति. Each feather with a golden tip and spots along the edges, giving the whole a spangled-gold appearance. Pluvialisin Latin is related to rain, it is believed their restlessness and flocking foretail rain.



22. Eurasian Golden Plover (Pluvialis
apricaria) (27cm) (M, winter vagrant)
सामान्यसित- कक्षस्वर्ण- टिट्टिभ, छोटाबाटन
(distinguished by its pure white सित axillaries
कक्ष). Also known as Golden plover or European
Golden Plover.

23.* Pacific Golden Plover (Pluvialis fulva) (24cm) (M, common W Bengal and Eastwards) प्राच्यधूसर-कक्षस्वर्ण-टिट्टिभ, प्राच्यस्वर्ण-टिट्टिभ, छोटाबाटन, सोन टिंटि, सोनाबाटन (बंग). Also called Eastern Golden Plover (distinguished by its



greyish-brown धूसर axilliaries कक्ष). It has fulvus plumage and is smaller, slimmer and relatively longer-legged than the European golden plover, which also has white axillary (armpit) feathers.



24.* Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) (31cm) (M, chiefly to sea coasts) सामान्यधूसरअति-जागर, पश्चिमोत्तरधूसरटिद्दिभ, बड़ाबाटन (also called Black-bellied Plover, Western Grey Plover) winter migrant to NW India, common on seacoast, rare on inland water. (अतिजागर is ancient word, it means very wakeful - very difficult to approach at close distance).

Genus CHARADRIUS सर्षपी-प्रजाति (सर्षपी Ancient word) Small Plovers usually with breast bands or collars and short bills.

25*. Common Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula) (19cm) (M, rare) भारतकाल-कर्णसर्षपी,



प्राच्यसर्षपी- टिट्टिभ, छल्लेदार बाटन. Also called Eastern Ringed Plover or Ringed Plover.



26. Long-billed Plover (Charadrius placidu) (23cm) (M, rare in Eastern India) दीर्घ-चंचुसर्षपी, दीर्घ-चंचुसर्षपीटिट्टिभ. Also called Longbilled Ringed Plover.



27*. Little Ringed Plover (Charadrius dubius)

(17cm) (R, race Jerdonii is Resident) (Jerdon's Little Ringed Plover) मलयकलघुसर्षपी, मलयकल घुसर्षपी-टिट्टिभ,ज़िर्या, मेरवा. Also called Indian Little Ringed Plover. Dubius in Latin is uncertain or doubtful as the two races are difficult to separate.



28*. Kentish Plover (Charadrius alexandrines) (17cm) (M, though occasionally breeds in some parts of India also) सामान्यसित-पद्दीसित-भाल, श्यावटिद्दिभ, भारत सित-पद्दी सित-भाल. (white band पद्दी on hind neck). Upper plumage sandy grey-brown; very similar to imm Little Ringed Plover, though its black legs v/s yellow of LRP may be a clue.



29*. Lesser Sand Plover (Charadrius mongolus) (9cm) (M, common winter visitor on seacoasts) कृष्ण-भाललघुपुलिन-चारी, कश्मीर लघुवालु-टिहिभ, छोटा भट बाटन. Also called Pamirs Lesser Sand Plover. (Earlier Genus Cirrepedesmus पुलिनचारी-प्रजाति).



30*. Greater Sand Plover (Charadrius leschenaultii) (22cm) (M chiefly sea coasts, uncommon on inland waters) वृहतपुलिन-चारी, वृहतवालु- टिट्टिभ, बड़ा भट बाटन. Also called Large Sand Plover.



31. Caspian Plover (Charadrius asiaticus) (19cm) (M vagrant) पश्चिमतीर-चारी, पश्चिमवालु-

टिट्टिभ. Found on the sea-coasts and shores तीर of big rivers and lakes. Also called Caspian Sand-Plover (Eupodella asiatica) (Genus Eupodella तीरचारी-प्रजाति).



32. Oriental Plover (Charadrius veredus) (24cm) (M vagrant) पूर्वीयतीर-चारी, पूर्वीयवालु-टिट्टिभ (Earlier Eastern Sand-Plover) (Eupodellavereda).



33. Black-fronted Dotterel (Elseyornis melanops) (17cm) (M Vagrant single record at Madras, presently called Chennai). Earlier called Australian Blackfronted Plover.



34. Eurasian Dotterel *(Eudrimias morinellus)* (21cm) (M Vagrant). Old name Charadrius morinellus. Also known as Dotterel, has brown and black streaks on head, a broad white eyestripe and an orange-red chest band when in breeding plumage. The female is more colourful than the male.

Family CHARADRIIDAE (Plovers) टिट्टिभक-अन्वांश(टिट्टिभक Occurs in धन्वन्तरि-निघंट्)

Genus VANELLUS कुयण्टि-प्रजाति (कुयण्टि Ancient word).

"van" in French is a winnowing fan, reference to the slow flapping of wings; some also allude to the lapping sound of its wings.



35*. Northern Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) (31 c m) (M) सामान्यकुयष्टि, कुयष्टिका, हरितटिद्दिभ, सबज़, टिद्दी, Also known as Peewit (from its call), Common Lapwing, Lapwing, or Green Plover. Prominent black crest, back dark green-bronze, legs reddish (only Lapwing with red legs).



36*. Yellow-wattled Lapwing (Vanellus malabaricus) (27cm) (R with local movements) पीत-मुख टिट्टिभक, केरलपीत-मुख, ज़िर्दी, जिथिरी, लावरी. The base of the bill and gape yellow. Endemic to the Indian Subcontinent; found

mainly on dry plains. (Earlier Lobipluvia malabarica).



37*. River Lapwing (Vanellus duvaucelii) (31cm) (R) भारतकंटपक्ष, भारतकंट-पक्षटिट्टिभ. Possesses a curved spur कंट on the bend of the wing पक्ष. Also called Spurwinged Plover (Vanellus spinosusduvaucelii). Usually found near water single or in pair. Good at swimming and diving. Near Threatened (Earlier Holopterus duvaucelii; Genus Holopterus - कंट-पक्षप्रजाति).



38*. Grey-headed Lapwing (Vanellus cinereus) (37 cm) (M). धूसर- शीर्षलघु- पीता, धूसर-शीर्षटिद्दिभक, सलंग (मणिपुर). Common in Eastern India, straggler elsewhere. Ash coloured head and neck, tail black. (Earlier Microsarcop scinereus Genus Microsarcops लघुपीता-प्रजाति).



39*. Red-wattled Lapwing (Vanellus indicus) (33 cm) (R) सामान्यमणि-मुखसदालूता, भारतमणि-मुखटिद्दिभक, टिटोरी, टिटूरी, टिटिहरी, टिट्टिभ, शरारी, मणि-मुखटिट्टिभक, टिटोडी (गुज), टिटाई. Our most common and vocal Lapwing; wattles and eyes red. Also called "Did-you-do-it bird" as it often calls. Earlier Lobivanellus indicus indicus. (Genus Lobivanellus सदालूता-प्रजाति (सदालूता ancient word).



40*. Sociable Lapwing (Vanellus gregarius) (33cm) (M) संघ-चरटिट्टिभक, कृष्नोदरसंघ-चर The habit of being gregarious gave it the name Sociable. Has white eye brow and black legs. Silent in wintering areas. Critically endangered. (lower breast black कृष्ण, during breeding season) Earlier Chettusia gregaria. Genus Chettusia संघचर-प्रजाति (it assembles in great numbers संघ). Critically Endangered.



41*. White-tailed Lapwing (Vanellus leucurus) (28 cm) (M) सित-पुच्छसंघ-चर, सित-पुच्छ टिट्टिभक, सफ़ेद-पूंछी टीटोडी (गुज Winters in NW India in small numbers. Bill black, legs yellow, tail pure white (specific name in Greek means white-tailed). Rarely calls while wintering. Earlier Chettusia leucura.

Family SCOLOPACIDAE आरामुख-वंश (skolopax in Greek is a bird of Snipe kind or Woodcock). Contains Snipes, Woodcocks, Dowitchers, Turnstones, Sandpipers, Ruffs, Phalaropes, Godwits, Curlews, Shanks.

Subfamily SCOLOPACINAE आरामुखानुवंश Contains Snipes, Dowitchers and Woodcock.

Genus SCOLOPAX आरामुख of Woodcocks.

42*. Eurasian Woodcock (Scolopax rusticola) (36cm) (R in Himalayan areas, migrates south in winter, rare in Raj, Guj etc.) सामान्यधूसरआरा-



मुख, भंडु-तित्तिर, सिमितितर, कभातू, भंडुतीतर, चिजरोल, तूतीतर, सिमकुकड़ा, विलायतीचहा. Plumage Cryptic red-brown-buff bill long, groved and swollen at tip (sensitive), eyes set quite back. Food chiefly worms and grubs. (भंडुतित्तिर ancient word, भंडु occurs in पालि language).

Subfamily GALLINAGININAE contains Snipes. Short legs, cryptic plumage. Earlier Snipes were kept in Genus Capella गोभंडीर-प्रजाति (गोभंडीर occurs in त्रिकाण्डशेष).



43. Solitary Snipe (Gallinago solitari) (30cm) (R in higher reaches of Himalayas, descends south in winter) एकलगोभंडीर, प्राच्यएकलपंक-कीर, बनचहा, भरका, चेक लोबी. Also called Eastern Solitary Snipe. (its call "chek"). It is usually found single.



44. Wood Snipe (Gallinago nemoricola) (30cm) (R in Himalayas descends south in winter) वनगोभंडीर, वनपंक-कीर, वनपंककीर, चहा, बन चहा. (पंक-कीर ancient word). As the name suggests, occurs in Woodlands (e.g. along streams) and dense tall herbage. Vulnerable.



45*. Pintail Snipe (Gallinago stenura) (26cm) (M, winters chiefly in S India, passage in N-C I n d i a) शंकुगोभंडीर, शंकुपंक- कीर, भरक, शंकुपंककीर, सींख-पूंछ चहा, चहाचिड़िया, पन-लवा (महा), चेग्गा, खोचा. Also called Asiatic Snipe. Has cryptic plumage, mottled black, brown, reddish-brown and whitish on the upper-parts.

46. Swinhoe's Snipe (Gallinago megala) (28cm) (M) चीनगोभंडीर, पृथुपुच्छपंक-कीर, चहा, चेग्गा, भरक. It breeds in N China, winters in small numbers in Eastern and Southern India. Distinguished by its broad tail-feathers. The common name commemorates the British naturalist Robert Swinhoe.



47*. Common Snipe (Gallinago gallinago) (26cm) (M partially Resident in Himalayas). सामान्यव्यजन- पुच्छगोभंडीर, प्रख्यातव्यजन-पुच्छपंक- कीर, सामान्यचहा, नाचनचहा, चहा, चहाचिड़िया, चेग्गा (बंग), पन- लावा (महा), गरखोद(गुज) लिकपखी, भरक, तिबुद, लिलपार्वी. Also called Fantail Snipe. Common winter visitor in India. Almost worldwide distribution, migrating South in winter. When disturbed it rises suddenly, with hoarse "scape" or "pench" note, and flies off in a lightning zigzag.



48. Great Snipe (Gallinago media) (28cm) (M vagrant in S India) सित-पुच्छगोभंडीर, वृहतपंक-कीर. Distinguished by its pure white (सित) three outer pairs of tail feathers (पुच्छ Earlier Capella media). Genus LYMNOCRYPTES पंकिल-प्रजाति



49*. Jack Snipe (Lymnocryptes minimus) (21cm) (M uncommon winter migrant) द्वि-पद्टीपंकिल, अर्धपंक-कीर, छोटाचहा, नानो गर्खोइ (गुज), तिबद, पन-कौवा (महा). There are two broad streaks running from the bill, the upper through the eye, the lower under the ear-coverts). It is the smallest snipe "minimus", with relatively shorter bill. Limne in Greek is a marsh and kruptos is secret, hidden referring to its habit of hiding in marsh reeds.

Subfamily TRINGINAE जलरंकानुवंश Tribe NUMENINI of Godwits, Whimbrel, Curlews, Shanks, Sandpipers.

Genua LIMOSA आरा-प्रजाति (आरा ancient word) Latin limus is "mud", they inhabit muddy flats and marshes. The English term "godwit" is believed to imitate the bird's call. Godwits are large waders with long and straight bill.



50*. Western Black-tailed Godwit(Limosa limosa limosa) (46cm) (M) सामान्यकाल-पुच्छआरा, काल-पुच्छआरा-मुखी, गुदेरा, गैरिया, जन्गरल, खग, जौराली (बंग), कालीपूंछ गदेरा, लम्बीचांच (गुज), सुसलिंग (सिंध). Winter migrant W India east to Bengal and also decreasingly in S India. Also called Blacktailed Godwit.



51. Eastern Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa l. melanuroides) (44cm) (M) प्राच्यकाल-पुच्छआरा, प्राच्यकाल-पुच्छआरा-मुखी, गुदेरा, गैरिया, जन्गरल, खग, जौराली (बंग. Winter migrant to Eastern Parts of India. Darker and smaller than Western Blacktailed Godwit).



52. Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) (39 cm) (M chiefly to seacoast) सामान्यपट्टी-

पुच्छआरा, पद्टी-पुच्छआरा-मुखी, गुदेरा, पद्टापूंछ गदेरा, लम्बीचांच (गुज), गैरियाजन्गरल, खग. It is smaller, has shorter bill and legs than Black-tailed Godwit. The specific name lapponica refers to Lapland, its breeding area in N Europe and N Asia.

Genus NUMENIUS नक्तकुरींप्रजाति (Often

gives a haunting cry of "curlew" at night नक्त)



53*. Whimbrel (Numenius phaeopus) (43 cm) (M chiefly on seacoasts, rarely inlands) सामान्यवभ्रू-शीर्षनक्त-कुर्री, छोटागौंघ, छोटागुलिंदा, नानी खलिली(गुज), छोटा गुन्यार, गोइयार, छोटा कर्लू, उपकुर्री. Distinguished by its brown वभ्रू crown. It is fairly gregarious outside the breeding season.



54*. Eurasian Curlew (Numenius arquata) (58 cm) (M chiefly on seacoasts, occasionally inlands). आनूपरेखित-शीर्षनक्त-कुररी, आनूपनक्त -कुररी, गोअर, गौंघ, बड़ागुलिंदा, छोपा, (बंग), बोरिन्दा (सिंध), खलिली (गुज), करलू, गुनियार. Also called Common Curlew or Curlew. The familiar call is a loud curloo-oo.



55. Far Eastern Curlew (Numenius madagascariensis) (53-66 cm) (M vagrant in Eastern India) आनूपरेखित-शीर्षनक्त-कुर्री, आनूपनक्त-कुर्री, गोआर, गौंघ, बड़ागुलिंदा, चोप्प, सदाकस्ताचुरा, बोरिंडा, खलिली (गुज). It is also called Australian Curlew. This is the largest wader in its range, differentiated from other curlews by its plain, un-patterned brown underwing.

Genus TRINGA नीररंक प्रजाति Waders like Shanks, Sandpipers and Tattlers, found more on inland lakes and swamps than sea-shore.



56*. Spotted Redshank (Tringa erythropus) (33 cm) (M) बिन्दुकितनीर-रंक, बिन्दुकितजलरंक, बाटन/बटान, गटनी, सूरमा, बिन्दुकितआराक्त पादजलरंक, (shank means leg, especially from the knee to the ankle). As the name suggests has red legs and white spots on upper plumage, more distinct in dark breeding plumage. Broad white eyebrow in non breeding plumage, long thin red bill.



57*. Common Redshank (Tring atotanus) (28 cm) (M) सामान्यवभ्रु- पृष्ठनीर- रंक, आरक्त-प्रादजल-रंक, छोटा बाटन, रातापग (गुज), लालपा (बंग).



58*. Common Greenshank (Tringa nebularia) (36cm) (M) हरिवर्षअम्बु-रंक, हरित-पादजलरंक, टनटना, टिमटिमा, गोटरा, तिम्बोला (महा), अम्बुरंक-प्रजाति (हरिवर्ष Europe). Bill long, faintly up-curved, legs greenish. Has characteristic sweet call. Shows white rump in flight and no wing-bars. Also called Greenshank.



59. Nordmann's Greenshank (Tringa guttifer) (33cm) (M rare winter visitor in Eastern India) ब्राहमअम्बु-रंक (found in Burma ब्राहम, also Assam, Bangladesh). Also called Spotted Greenshank.



60*. Marsh Sandpiper (Tringa stagnatilis) (25cm) (M common winter visitor) कच्छनीर-रंक, कच्छजल-रंक, छोटागोटरा, टिलुआ, छोटा टिमटिमा, बिलेरबालुबाटन (बंग), गन्दापग टुटवारी (गुज). Has needle-like thin long dark bill, white eye-brow; legs very long pale-green. Also called Little Greenshank.



61*. Green Sandpiper (Tringa ochropus) (24cm) (M) हरितनीर-रंक, हरितजलरंक,टट्आरी, लीलीटुटवारी (गुज), तिम्बला (मराठी). Whiterump, green legs and feet, bill greenish with black tip; frequently bobs tail.



62*. Wood Sandpiper (Tringa glareola) (21cm) (M) सित-कटिनीर-रंक, वनजलरंक, चुपका, चोबाहा, टिटवारी, टुटवारी, बालूबाटन (बंग). Distinguished by its white सित rump कटि). Also called Spotted Sandpiper, has white spots on upper plumage.



63*. Terek Sandpiper (Xenus cinereus) (24cm) (M chiefly seacoasts, rarely inlands) सामान्यभस्मीउन्नत-चंचु, वृहद्उन्नत-चंचुजलरंक. Has long upward उन्नत curved bill with red at the base, also called Avocet Sandpiper (Tringaterek). (cinereus in Latin is ash-coloured भस्म).



64*. Common Sandpiper (Actitis hypoleucos) (21cm) (M & R also breeds in NW Himalayas) श्वेतोदरनीर-रंक, प्रख्यातजलरंक, सामान्यबाटन, पनेवा, कोरान, सामान्यटुटवारी (गुज). White of under-parts extending to shoulder distinguishes it from similar sandpipers. Earlier Tringahypoleucos (hypo in Greek is under, and lekon is white श्वेत).



65. Grey-tailed Tattler (*Tringa brevipes*) (25cm) (M, vagrant) The English name for the tattlers refers to their noisy call. Breeds in higher reaches of Himalayas and Eurasia. Also called Grey-tailed Sandpiper.

Subfamily ARENARIINAE

Genus ARENARIA वालुक-प्रजाति.Latin arenariusis "inhabiting" sand.



66*. Ruddy Turnstone (Arenaria interpres) (22cm) (M mostly on seacoast, rare on f r e s h w a t e r) सामान्यरेखित- शीर्षवालुक, अश्मान्वेशी (crown and neck streaked रेखित with black). Also called Turnstone. It feeds on small crustacean, mollusks and worms hunting for them under the stones and heavy shale which it turns over with the bill.

Genus - LIMNODROMUS पंकचारि-प्रजाति

derived from Greek limne meaning "marsh" (पंक) and dromos, "racer" (चारि).



67*. Long-billed Dowitcher (Limnodromus scolopaceus) (29cm) (M, rare vagrant). The specific name Latin scolopacis, a snipe or woodcock, due to its long bill.



68. Asian Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*) (34cm) (M rare vagrant).

Genus CALIDRIS वारिरंक-प्रजाति. Smaller Sandpiper, Stints, Knots, Dunlin and Sanderlin. Greek kalidris or skalidris, some grey-coloured waterside birds.



69. Great Knot (Calidris tenuirostris) (27cm) (M uncommon) तनु-चंचुवारिरंक, प्राच्य पट्टीपुच्छल-जलरंक, गौर. Also called Eastern Knot. In India it occurs on the mud flats वारि on the sea-shore. (Lattenuis is slender-तन्, rostrum is bill चंच्).



70. Red Knot (Calidris canutus) (24cm) (M rare vagrant) सामान्यश्वेतवारिरिंक, पद्टीपुच्छ-जलरंक Also called Knot; upper tail-coverts white, strongly barred पद्टी with blackish (Latcanutus is white श्वेत).



71*. Sanderling (Calidris alba) (19cm) (M more on coasts) श्वेतसान्गुष्ठ, वालुजलरंक). बालू चहा (बंग), दरियाइ लगोठो (गुज. It possesses a hind toe सान्गुष्ठ). Short black bill, black legs. Earlier Genus Crocethia सान्गुष्ठ-प्रजाति, Latalbus is white श्वेत.



72*. Little Stint (Calidris minuta) (13cm) (M chiefly coasts, uncommon in inland waters during passage migration) सामान्यकृष्ण-शीर्षक्षुद्र-जलरंक, लघुजलरंक, छोटापन-लवा, बिरबिरी, रुन्नी

(बिहार). It is most restless, active, little क्षुद्र bird. It is our smallest wader. Has white throat and faint white eyebrow, legs black. Earlier Genus Erolia (Erolia minuta minuta). क्षुद्रजलरंक-प्रजाति.



73. Red-necked Stint (Calidris ruficollis) (14.5cm) (M winter migrant to Eastern parts of India) रक्त-ग्रीवकृष्ण-शीर्षक्षुद्रजलरंक, छोटालवा, पूर्वीय जलरंक, छोटा पन लवा. Red plumage is acquired during breeding season only, in winter resembles Little Stint, but it has prominent white eyebrow going behind eye. Earlier The Eastern Little Stint (Eroliaminuta ruficollis). (Latrufos is reddish रक्त, collum is neck ग्रीवा.



74*. Temminck's Stint (Calidris temminckii) (14cm) (M common winter migrant) उत्तरापथक्षुद्रजलरंक, लघुजलरंक, छोटापन-लवा.In India found all over in Northern parts (उत्तरापथ)

in great numbers. It may be confused with Little Stint but it does not have white on throat, nor the white eyebrow, legs are not black but greyish. Its name commemorates the Dutch naturalist Coenraad Jacob Temminck.



75. Long-toed Stint (Calidris subminuta) (14cm) (M winter migrant to Eastern parts of India) Earlier Erolia subminuta दिर्घान्ग्लीक्षुद्रजलरंक



76. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (Calidris acuminate) (19cm) (M rare Vagrant in winter) जंबुद्वीपक्षुद्रजलरंक, जंबुद्वीपवक्ष- पट्टीजलरंक. Breast streaked, white eyebrow, rufous on crown, legs greenish.

Earlier called The Asiatic Pectoral Sandpiper (Erolia acuminate) (Asia जंबुद्वीप)



77. Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*) (21cm) (M, vagrant).Yellow legs, has whitish eye-brow, long down curved bill with yellow at base.



78*. Dunlin (Calidris alpine) (19.5cm) (M chiefly on coasts, some inlands) सामान्यवभ्रु-पुच्छक्षुद्र-जलरंक, गिरि जलरंक, रूझनी. Earlier Erolia alpina alpina गिरि-जलरंक. Has faintly down-curved black bill, black legs and greyishbrown breast and head. An adult dunlin in breeding plumage shows the distinctive black belly which no other similar-sized wader possesses.



79*. Curlew Sandpiper (Calidris ferruginea) (21cm) (M winter migrant chiefly to coasts, some also inlands) सित-पुच्छक्षुद्रजलरंक, खुखरी पन लवा, वामन जलरंक. Bill long, black and downcurved like of curlew has white eyebrow, legs dark grey-plumbeous. Earlier called The Curlew Stint or Pigmy Sandpiper (Erolia testacea) वामनजलरंक.



80. White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*) (17cm). These are known collectively as "peeps" or "stints". These birds are not often spotted. Has reddish pointed bill.



81. Spoonbilled Sandpiper (Calidris pygmaea) (15cm) (M rare winter visitor to Eastern parts of India) लघु स्त्रुव-चंचु, स्त्रुव-चंचु जलरंका. Bill black, short, spoon-tipped. Non breeding has white under-parts, neck and face. Earlier Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus Spoonbill Stint (bill

is like a spoon स्त्रुव) Eurynorhynchus स्त्रुव-चंचुजलरंका



82. Buff-breasted Sandpiper (Tryngites subruficollis) (19cm) (M accidental vagrant. Breeds in Arctic coast). Stockier than Common Sandpiper, bill shorter, under-parts buff, has white wing-bar.

Genus LIMICOLA पंकवासि-प्रजाति

Gk-limene is pond, marsh पंक, Lat-incola an inhabitant वासी



83. Broad-billed Sandpiper (Limicola falcinellus) (17cm) (M, mostly on seacoasts of Eastern Indian subcontinent) (सामान्यपृथु-चंचुपंक-वासी, पृथु-चंचुजलरंक. Bill black, thick, faintly down-curved. Non breeding under parts and cheeks white. Genus Philomachus भट-प्रजाति (भट occurs in मत्स्यपुराण, noted for their pugnacity (भट) in breeding season).





Colour ringed Redshank by Emily Scragg. Such experiments are crucial for wader conservation, India should adopt soon. 84*. Ruff (Philomachus pugnax) (25cm) (M, common winter migrant) हरिवर्षभट, भट जलरंक, गेहवाला, बगबड, गेओवाला बाटन (बंग). (Found in Northern Europe हरिवर्ष).

Also called Ruff and Reeve. It seldom calls in wintering areas. It is highly gregarious; male has an erectile colourful neck-ruff in breeding season, often fight aggressively, for mate, crouching or taking a variety of postures with the ruff erected.

Note: It is first attempt on waders of the Indian subcontinent to create awareness for these species, observed by not many and talked least by experts and forest officials though they play consequential role in conserving wet-areas. The authors will welcome suggestions and additions of local or vernacular names in different regions of India, to be made for being incorporated in next edition, at email -

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Threats to Waders

Harkirat Singh Sangha*



Waders ringing (left) Harkirat Singh Sangha (second from left) Dr. Balachandran with trappers at Marine National Park, Pirotan by Harsh Vardhan

Centre for Advance Studies, 1998, said large declines in the populations of both Nearctic and Palaearctic waders have been observed (Geering et al 2007). Much of the recent growth in interest and understanding has been generated through the plight of the now Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper Eurynorhynchus pygmeus. Although the Spoon-billed Sandpiper may be the flagship wader in this system, studies throughout the flyway have revealed the population declines are affecting many species (Straw 2005, Moores et al 2008, Oldland et al 2008) leading to several recent revisions to the IUCN Red List. Great Knot Calidris tenuirostris and Far Eastern Curlew Numenius madagascariensis, until now considered of Least Concern, were both uplisted to Vulnerable in 2010, to join the Endangered Nordmann's Greenshank Tringa guttifer and the Near Threatened Asian Dowitcher Limnodromus semipalmatus, Black-tailed Godwit Limosa limosa and Eurasian Curlew Numenius arguata as species of real conservation concern.

Irreversible: Wetlands used by resident and migratory waders are threatened by environmental changes at regional and even global scale. Some of

the threats are more localized and conceivably reversible. If hunting of the waders is stopped, most species will probably recover as long as the population has not been reduced below a certain threshold. Polluted rivers and wetlands can be cleaned up allowing the re-establishment of biota. However, many threats are irreversible. Once an intertidal flat, the 'no-man's land' between the sea and the shore, has been reclaimed or a wetland drained, it is usually gone forever. Intertidal flats are filled-in for many reasons such as agriculture, aquaculture, urban development, industry, ports, airports, roads, tidal power schemes and oil exploration and extraction. The underlying reasons for land reclamation are the expanding human population and economic growth. These two basic driving forces are unlikely to disappear in the near future. In our region, land reclamation has and continues to occur on a massive scale and is far greater than can be compensated for by natural accretion. Patenga beach, Chittagong (22.29 N 91.76 E) formerly the most-watched wader site in Bangladesh has become heavily industrialized (Bird et al 2010).

Habitat loss: The greatest threat to waders in Indian



Lesser Sandplover trapped

subcontinent is habitat loss and degradation. With Indian subcontinent encompassing one of the most densely populated areas of the world and rapidly growing economies the growth of human population and the economies are bringing considerable pressure to bear on habitats essential to the survival of the waders. In the year 2020, the estimated population of Bangladesh will be 170 million and population density, 1118 per sq km (Source: The World Bank and Bangladesh).

Although monsoon was favourable in 2016 and sufficient water arrived in Bharatpur, the well known wetland, is now increasingly a parched dustbowl as local authorities refuse to release water from neighbouring dam due to pressure from the local population. In the past decade 40% of wetlands degraded or dried up in India. State-wise, the decline ranged from 17% in Andhra Pradesh to 96% in Gujarat. In some districts of Rajasthan wetland degradation is a startling 99.6%.

In Punjab, Pakistan, of the nine sites selected including the Uchalli Wetlands Complex (Jahlar, Khabbaki and Uchalli Lakes) which is a Ramsar Site, overall surface area of all nine lakes was found to have reduced by 46% between 1993 and 2003. The total number of birds recorded in 1993 was 177 671, but by 2003 this had reduced to 89 010.

Significant losses were observed at the Salt Range Wetlands Complex where the morphometry was reduced by 56%, and there was a reduction in bird numbers from 35 090 in 1993 to only 5 275 by 2003 (Ali & Akhtar 2006).

Contamination: Almost all the wetlands in India, once rich in biodiversity, are now heavily contaminated with pesticides and heavy metals. The

Coimbatore based SACON collected 1,694 fish samples representing 66 species from 173 wetlands in 14 states. Every single fish sample analysed was found to be contaminated with one or more pesticides and minerals

A growing body of evidence suggests that the poor productivity (perhaps due to increased nest predation and bad weather), large-scale conversion of key intertidal stopover sites, and hunting on the wintering grounds could all be contributing to the recent decline of wader population (Zöckler *et al.* 2008, Syroechkovski *et al* 2009, Zöckler *et al.* 2010).

Both migratory and resident wader species have declined in numbers in the Indian subcontinent. The decline has been noticed at many places. At Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu decline is very conspicuous not only to ornithologists, but also to laymen. The disappearnce of the 'clouds' of waders is a visible indicator of the decline.

The appearance of large mounds of salt on the mudflats, which were once thronged by thousands of waders is an indication of the habitat loss and degradation. In 1980s over 500,000 waders wintered at Point Calimere. This number dropped to 100,000 by 2008 (Balachandran & Thirunavukarasu 2009). The bird ringing data collected between 1980 and 1991 and the recent skeletal ringing data collected between 1998 and 2003 is helpful in estimating the scale of decline.

Alarming ringing data: The ringing and census data from Point Calimere indicate that there has been a decline of 70 % in certain species of waders since the 1980s. This decline is apparent from changes in the numbers.

Of birds caught per day, in the total number of birds caught per season, and in the numbers of birds counted in areas that were monitored in the 1980s and 1990s the number of birds caught per day has decreased for several species of wader, despite doubling of effort per day in recent years (Balachandran 2006).

Hodgson recorded no less than 28 wader species in the Kathmandu valley, five of which have not been found there since including the Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* and Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. Three species, the Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, have not been recorded in the country subsequently (Cocker & Inskipp 1985).

Hodgson and Scully found Jack Snipe, Common Snipe and Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* common in the valley and particularly numerous on migration. By 1947, however, all three species were much reduced (Ripley 1950). While Solitary Snipe *Gallinago solitaria* was not uncommon in the valley during winter, recent reports are few (Inskipp & Inskipp 1985). Hodgson found the Wood Snipe not uncommon, Dr John Scully who was in Kathmandu between 1876 and 1877 noticed it only twice. The only other record from the valley was in 1950 and it is now rare throughout Nepal (Inskipp & Inskipp 1985).

Monitoring: Ongoing monitoring programmes are helping to establish population trends at a few key sites but in many areas our understanding of species' distribution, seasonal movements and long-term trends remains poor. Several recent surveys around the coasts of India and Bangladesh (Bird *et al* 2010) provide the opportunity to compare 'historical' records all the way up to the early 1990s with recent observations from 2005 onwards (Bird *et al* 2010).

In some coastal parts of the Indian subcontinent waders are hunted for sale in markets as food, providing a secondary income for people. A survey between 22 and 27 September 2010 in five villages around Sonadia Island, Bangladesh found professional hunters trapping 10-30 birds per week besides semi professional (occasionally engage in fishing and casual labour) and occasional hunters (hunt opportunistically). The majority (80%) use noose traps to capture waders.

The traps are 200-500 mm long and capture both large and small shorebirds. Usually they are set up along the high-tide roosts, levees in saltpans, and small channels, but sometimes across mudflats. All the harvest is sold directly by the hunter and there is no specific marketplace for the birds, which are usually sold preferably still alive by simply hawking in village streets. Eight hunters claimed to have captured a total of 22 Spoon-billed Sandpiper between October 2009 and April 2010 (Chowdhury 2010). Trapping is also very common on Tamil Nadu coast.

Pollution: Wetlands and rivers are subject to pollution from industrial discharges, continuous inflow of sewage and runoff. Fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides from poorly managed suburban and

agricultural activities can have significant longlasting effects. Almost every river in our region is polluted. The Ganges flows for 2500 kilometers from the Himalayas through four states through to the east coast where it empties into the Bay of Bengal is the sixth most polluted river in the world.

As it passes through 100 towns and cities, it absorbs all their human and industrial waste. Experts estimate that more than 3000 million litres of untreated sewage from these towns along the Ganges are pumped into the river every day. (The Ganges: holy river from hell. The Sydney Morning Herald, 6 August, 2014. *www.smh.com.au* > News > National).

Waders are higher order predators and the concentrations of pollutants such as heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are magnified as they pass up the food chain (Geering *et al* 2007).

In many cases, the impacts of chemical pollutants are unknown but it is likely they effect the bird's health both directly by causing tissue damage and indirectly by affecting the abundance of prey and by predisposing the bird to infection by pathogens.

Today even the most wild habitat are not impregnable to human alteration and episodic pollution events such as oil spills also pose a significant threat to waders. In the recent years oil spills have occurred on the coast of Gujarat with increasing frequency. Due to ship breaking on the sea coast at Alang the soil and water of the surrounding area has become heavily contaminated threatening the marine eco-system. What was earlier a pristine beach is now seen among the most toxic and polluted stretches of coastline in India. Even if ship breaking stops at Alang today, it will take many decades for the environment to recover.

Sewri Bay/Thane Creek, Maharashtra area, roughly 26 km in length and covering an area of c. 12,200 ha is one of the largest creeks in Asia and one of the most important areas for wintering waders, estimated at up to half a million waders in winter (Woodward 2007) The site is heavily polluted by run-off from factories and oil spillages from the nearby port areas.

It is believed that algae levels at the site have increased with pollution run-off as the natural water flow has been interrupted and increasing industrialization has changed the acidity levels.

*Ornithologist



Wader migration map. There are several routes, many not yet deciphered

How to manage Waders? Dr. G.V. Reddy

PCCF and CWLW, Rajasthan

The world acknowledges that Sri Lanka has the unique distinction of maintaining a sanctuary which happens to be first wildlife sanctuaries in the world, set up in the third century BC by King Devanampiyatissa.

Ancient green-dictate: The credit should go to Chanakya (4th century BC), an ancient Indian teacher, philosopher, economist, jurist, royal advisor, and importantly an ecologist as well, who authored the ancient Indian political treatise, the Arthashastra, which also scripted watershed like norms on reserved forests, and sanctuaries meant as reservoirs of wild fauna and flora. Management of forests underwent changes as history passed through variety of upheavals ever since. Today's norms for sanctuaries and national parks in India, therefore, are a mix of old and new concepts, falling within purview of the Wildlife Protection Act, promulgated in 1972.

The forest department has the mandate to administer

this comprehensive legislation. It calls for cooperation and support of people who are the ultimate recipients of forest produce and who have to be face to face with wild denizens. The protected areas in the Indian subcontinent provide habitat and security to both threatened and non-threatened species, but there are many species whose habitat falls outside these areas.

Waders face ordeals: Wader group of birds fall in this category. Barring a few waders, found in some reserved forests, all others stand at edges of water, in inland areas and at sea shores. Only a few of them may find themselves under control of forest department. Therefore, their conservation measures shall need different approach. Look at Sociable Lapwing, a grassland species reaching India from overseas but not confined to sanctuaries though it has been photographed in Tal Chhapar sanctuary in Rajasthan.

Wetlands used by resident and migratory waders are getting increasingly threatened by environmental



Until 1999, Ramchandpura dam in Jaipur, today a dump yard (Harsh Vardhan)



Some waders prefer sewer drain too (Harsh Vardhan)

changes. Once an intertidal flat, the 'no-man's land' between the sea and the shore, has been reclaimed or a wetland drained, it is usually gone forever. And waders staying at such habitat are forced to seek pastures anew? Is not the micro-ecology fractured?

Too obvious that the greatest threat to waders in India is habitat loss and degradation. With Indian subcontinent encompassing one of the most densely populated areas of the world and rapidly growing economies the growth of human population and the economies cause considerable pressure to bear on habitats essential to the survival of the waders. The Coimbatore based SACON collected 1,694 fish samples representing 66 species from 173 wetlands in 14 states. Every single fish sample analyzed was found to be contaminated with one or more pesticides and minerals

Sewri an example: Mumbai is a glaring example. Sewri Bay/Thane Creek, is about 26 km in length and covers an area of about 12,200 ha. It is one of the largest creeks in Asia and one of the most important areas for wintering waders, estimated at up to half a million waders in winter. The site is heavily polluted by run-off from factories and oil spillages from the nearby port areas. It is believed that algae levels at the site have increased with pollution run-off as the natural water flow has been interrupted and increasing industrialization has changed the acidity levels.

Scientists believe that global warming is occurring as a consequence of increasing concentrations of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, primarily due to the combustion of fossil fuels, agriculture and landuse changes. As the temperature rises, the belt of boreal forest and sub-arctic shrub will advance northwards, while the arctic coastline, which will be subject to rising sea levels, will move southwards, squeezing the high arctic tundra where many species of waders breed.

The arctic region is responsible as largest geographic zone for most wader species to breed. Inevitably, their population will fall, already declined, I am tempted to say. Less number of waders will, therefore, reach countries like India, Bangladesh, Myanmar etc. How shall we quantify loss to our habitats with comparative decline of these birds – they contribute in various way to maintain water space all over. And need to be acknowledged as 'ambassadors of wetlandedges.'

Ringing data: The ringing and census data from Point Calimere indicate that there has been a decline of 70 % in certain species of waders since the 1980s. This decline is apparent from changes in the numbers. Such experiments will encourage decision makers to embrace science, so very essential for wildlife management, waders to benefit too.

Salty habitats, like Rann of Kutchh and Greater Rann and Sambhar, are renowned to host an incredible number of waders.

They are shrinking, notably Sambhar faces threat to its survival due to excessive exploitation of its water and underground water around it, by salt manufacturers. India's 84 odd species of waders, nearly 63 being migratory, face question mark mainly due to lack of any administrative cover over their wintering grounds and breeding habitats.

It is time the government reviews its conservation policy and modifies it to include such species and their habitats.

Why we need birds, far more than they need us

Can you imagine a world without birds? The benefits birds bring us aren't just cultural. Birds play an essential role in the functioning of the world's ecosystems, in a way that directly impacts human health, economy and food production - as well as millions of other species. Here's how...

Birds control pests

It might be a little extreme to say that we'd be wading knee-deep in invertebrates if birds disappeared – but maybe not that extreme. A recent study has shown that birds eat 400-500 million tons of insects a year. In China, two-thirds of the diet of House Swift Apus nipalensis consists of agricultural pests, and in forests across the Americas, Evening Grosbeak Hesperiphona vespertina becomes a super hero during outbreaks of Spruce Budworm, providing biological control worth \$1,820 per square kilometer. Birds are so efficient that nest boxes have become a pest control practice throughout Europe.

Birds pollinate plants

When we think pollinators, bees and butterflies flutter to mind – but bird pollinators such as hummingbirds and honeyeaters also make a big contribution, especially in high altitudes or hot climates. In South Africa, for instance, nearly a quarter of Salvia species are bird-pollinated. Such flowers are lacking in scent, since birds favour sight over smell.

Their role as pollinators benefits us directly – around 5% of the plants humans use for food or medicine are pollinated by birds. And when they disappear, the results can be drastic: 31 species of Hawaiian bellflowers appear to have gone extinct along with the birds that pollinated them.

Birds are nature's clean-up crew

The sight of vultures circling overhead may look foreboding, but it is both their speed of arrival (typically within an hour of death), and their thoroughness which makes them so valuable. It could be days before other less efficient scavengers, such as feral dogs or rats, arrive to pick at the remains, allowing deadly diseases such as rabies and tuberculosis to develop and spread. Over its lifetime, a single vulture provides waste disposal services worth around US\$11,600. Following the collapse of Asia's vultures, India's feral dog population surged by 5.5 million, spreading rabies.

Birds spread seeds

When birds travel, they take the seeds they have eaten with them and disperse them through their droppings. They bring plants back to ecosystems that have been destroyed, and even carry plants across the sea to new land masses. Birds have helped to shape the plant life we see around us – and around the world. In New Zealand's forests, 70% of the plants have seeds dispersed by birds such as Tui Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae. An even greater duty is borne by Micronesian Imperial-pigeon Ducula oceanica; as one of the largest birds in the Palau archipelago: it is one of the main seed dispersers across the entire island chain.

Birds transform entire landscape

Habitats like forests, marshes and grasslands affect people across the whole planet, even those living hundreds of miles away – they store carbon, keep the climate stable, oxygenate the air and transform pollutants into nutrients. But without birds, many of these ecosystems may not exist. Birds maintain the delicate balance between plant and herbivore, predator and prey.

A perfect example is the salt marshes of south-eastern USA, where cordgrass thrives, filtering local water and protecting the coast from sea erosion. The Salt Marsh Periwinkle *Littoraria irrorata* grazes upon cordgrass with gusto, and were it not for predators such as oystercatchers, curlews and plovers, these tiny snails would devour the entire marsh leaving only mudflats.

Birds keep coral reefs alive

Birds, especially seabirds, play a key role in cycling nutrients and helping to fertilise marine ecosystems such as coral reefs. Seabirds travel hundreds of kilometres to feed out in the ocean – and when they return, they deposit layers of highly pungent guano (seabird droppings) at their colonies. This guano leaches into the ocean and fertilises nearby communities such as coral reefs.

-Editor

Sariska tiger honey-trapped Gobind Sagar Bhardwaj*

It is all about this fugitive (ST 13) of Sariska. How it was brought back using honey trap method and now (December 2018) it has sired six cubs of two litters from two females viz. ST12 and St10...!!

Here are two maps showing the area occupancy of the said fugitive male tiger (ST 13) before and after managerial intervention by Sariska Team during late June 2017. The strayed young male tiger ST 13 outside the tiger reserve in hostile human dominated landscape of Rajgarh area, about 20 km south-east of Sariska and a human dominated landscape, was localized using lure (honey trap) method. Urine of an adult tigress was collected from Nahargarh Zoological Park, Jaipur, where some of the tigers are kept in captivity. Cotton was placed at the down slope of crawl meant for the tigresses and the urine was collected by squeezing the urine soaked cotton balls in a container. Some of the scat of same female tigress was also collected and mixed with stored urine. A track continuously used by cattle and also frequently by the fugitive tiger was identified and the mixture of urine and scat was sprayed at important points like large boulders lying along the track or at the boles of prominent trees along the tracks, thereby making a sort of trail of a marking tigress leading to open area where darting could be done. The animal was immobilized after two days with the help of Daninject Syringe Projector using Xylazine-Kitamine mixture. The animal was brought to the enclosure

already made in its natal area and soft release of the animal was done.

*Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Field Director, Sariska Tiger Reserve.

Scent-marking

On a conscious level, we're overwhelmingly visual creatures, so it's easy to overlook the olfactory landscape—a whole plane of sensory information. But for many animal species, scent is as important as sight and a primary means of communication.Scent markings work as animal billboards-at the most basic level, they say, "I'm here." Depending on the sender and the recipient, that can be read as "come find me" or "stay away." These messages can be left intentionally for members of the same species-tigers (like Avni in Maharashtra) deposit scent markings to draw territorial boundaries for rivals nearby, while "female pandas rub their butts against trees to leave a come-hither smell for males when they're sexually receptive. Other scent marks are inevitableeverybody poos-and reveal information competitors can easily exploit. Carnivores track rodents by following a breadcrumb trail of feces pellets, and predators. https://www.nationalgeographic.com /animals/2018/12/tiger-obsession-cologne-smellanimal-behavior-news/?cmpid=org=ngp::mc=crmemail::src=ngp::cmp=Editorial::add=Animals 201 81220::rid=43049879875



Making marking mixture

Marking



Spraying with pump, Dr. Bhardwaj's unique device



What is the point of Wader Conservation World Watch?

Rick Simpson* and Elis Simpson**



Elis and Rick watching Ibisbill in Kosi river bed at Corbett

On the weekend of the 4th and 5th of November many people helped Wader Quest to celebrate its anniversary by participating in Wader Conservation World Watch (WCWW5). Wader Quest turned six this year, and 2018 is the fifth of those years during which a WCWW has taken place.

The joy of this event is that participation is simplicity itself; if you can watch waders and send an email, you have all you need. There is no registration, no counting (although we wouldn't stop you if that is your thing). Easy reporting through a simple email takes all the work out of making a contribution.

But what is the point of WCWW?

I have been asked this question time and again while I have been trying to encourage people to participate in the event.

Science is the bedrock of effective conservation, of that there is no doubt, however conservation is not science standing alone, no matter how much research and scientific discovery you undertake, the results have to be used in a meaningful way and, without non academically trained people to carry out the work at the coalface, all the research becomes, well, academic.

There are many projects, global and otherwise, which are designed for citizen scientists to add to our knowledge of bird populations by counting them.



Yellow-wattled Lapwing by Elis Simpson

However, by their very nature they exclude part of the bird watching population, and I count myself among them, those that cannot or have no wish to count birds. Citizen science is an essential tool for conservation but it ignores a swathe of people who care about waders, and their plight, but who have, perhaps, a simpler take on their birding.

To understand this better it might be useful to draw an analogy with the world of medicine.

Scientists undertake a lot of research to create new medicines and diagnostic methods. Doctors then take the science created by the researchers and use this to diagnose individual patients and then select the correct treatment. However, from that point on it is not the academics that are required, but people to administer the treatment, to make sure the medicines are taken as prescribed and to care for the patient; it is the nursing staff that does this. Nurses are not necessarily scientific although obviously they need to understand the science behind the treatment to some extent and have to be trained in that area to have the confidence to carry out their role. But then there is another layer, which all too often gets forgotten, the auxiliary staff. Where would a hospital be without the people that make sure the environment in which the patient is treated is clean, warm and safe to allow for the full recovery of the patients? Once the patient has left the hospital then the after care in the community

takes place and again it is the workforce at the coalface who need to be acknowledged and celebrated as much as any scientific researcher.

Our message is simple. Ignore the nurses, auxiliaries, volunteers and local supporters and celebrate only the science is doing an injustice to a vital and massive group of people who are equally involved in the process of conserving and protecting our waders.

So this is what WCWW is all about, it is designed to be inclusive and encourages people from all areas of conservation to take part, from local volunteers to the most erudite of academics. This is why we do not insist on counting - however, we encourage those that wish to do so to send their results to a citizen science project such as BirdTrack or eBird. There is no registration and the only task, other than the enjoyment of observing our beloved waders, is to send a message to us with what has been seen, where, and by whom; simplicity itself.

There are over nine billion people in this world and many of them would be astounded by what is happening, if not downright aggrieved, but the simple fact is the vast majority of them are unaware and therefore cannot be expected to care. The idea of WCWW is to bring everyone together, to get people mobilised on an international, national, regional, local and individual basis, to pass on the word to encourage others to care.

The greater the number of people that are aware, the greater the number that will care. The greater the number that care the greater the chance of changing things for the better.

Foot note: India is a magnificent country, in so many ways, not least among them is the fact that it has such a great diversity of bird life. Among these birds there are many species of wader. Some are resident and can be found year round, others are visitors that breed to the north. But these migrants could be more properly called Indian birds as they spend more time in India than they do in the north where they breed. Waders as a family are not doing well across the world and their plight seems to be going virtually unnoticed.

India too has a huge number of birders, bird photographers and naturalists as well as researchers and ornithologists, and so it would be very productive to get all these people talking, co-operating to build a wide ranging and effective wader conservation movement within India involving everyone from local communities to top scientific centres.

To raise awareness about this issue it would be wonderful if those interested in waders and their conservation within India were to get behind Wader Conservation World Watch to highlight the issue of wader conservation. India is woefully under represented at present, but we hope that 2019 will be the year that India becomes involved in wader conservation, and what better way to show it than by joining WCWW6 in November.

*Rick Simpson: Chair. **Elis Simpson: Treasurer. Wader Quest Board of Trustees. www.waderquest.org waderquest@gmail.com https://twitter.com/waderquest https://www.facebook.com/WaderQuest





WCWW6 will take place 2nd and/or 3rd November 2019

Once more we will be looking for **national or regional co-ordinators**.

Are you willing to help **encourage people** in your area to join in?

Can you coordinate observers looking for all the species available in your locality?

For more details of what's involved email us at **waderquest@gmail.com**

Waders need more attention all over

Stephen Dean*

India's place in the world, its enormous size and sheer variety of habitats make it a wonderful place to see spectacular birds and other wildlife. Perhaps wading birds as a group do not strike you as one of the principal attractions, but in six trips to India and Sri Lanka in last 20 years the 34 species that I have seen have given me some of my most memorable encounters.

One that springs to mind was when our driver/guide pulled off the road between the Little Rann and the Great Rann of Kutch, in Gujarat, where I

was delighted to look into a field and see four Indian Coursers. Quite how I had managed not to see this species on four previous trips I don't know, but seeing them then was a real treat.

Other highlights that will linger long in my memory are wonderful views of six Ibisbill, from an inflatable, shallow-draft boat, on the fast-flowing river near Nameri in Assam, flocks of hundreds of Small Pratincole in Goa and again at Nameri and Great Thick-knee on the same stretch of the Chambal River, near Dholpur, as Indian Skimmers and Gharial and again from the Kamleswar Dam at Sassan Gir, the home of the Asiatic Lion, in Gujarat.

For non-Indian birders, these exotic species are really exciting, but waders are phenomenal globe trotters and what is also wonderful is the sight of more familiar birds that are in India on their wintering grounds. For example, I'd never seen more than a few Temminck's Stints together at any one time in Britain and so on seeing a flock of over 30 of them, against a backdrop of one-horned rhinos, buffaloes and elephants at Kaziranga, in Assam, it took a while to realize what they were. Strangely, it is also reassuring to see familiar birds, such as Common Redshank, Pied Avocet and Black-tailed Godwit, albeit in very different conditions and habitats.

The non-birder may not consider waders in the same bracket as better-known endangered animals, but wading birds all over the world are under threat and they need our protection. This means protecting the



Stephen Dean

places where they nest, the places they stop off on their migrations and the places where they spend the winter. They have quite enough to contend with without us adding to their problems and we need to give them the space and look after the places they rely on.

If we are to look after these wonderful birds (and many other species) we need to understand them and appreciate their place in the wider natural world. If we can learn to value waders, appreciate their astonishing variety and the way they have adapted to a wide variety of

habitats, admire their beauty and revel in the sight and sound of them, we can begin to care about them.

If we can learn to care about these creatures then we will want to look after them and our world will be all the richer for that effort. This why initiatives that raise people's awareness, such as this year's Indian Birdfair, are so important.

As you look out over Man Sagar Lake see how many waders you can spot around its edges. Last time I was here I saw Common Snipe, Marsh, Green, Wood and Common Sandpiper, Ruff, Black-winged Stilt and Red-wattled and White-tailed Lapwing.

Enjoy the Bird Fair and thank you for being part of it.

* Birder, wildlife enthusiast and amateur wildlife writer and broadcaster in Britain



Small Pratincole

Identifying Waders Govind Yadav* Nishant Shukla** and Sumit Bari***

TWSI Volunteers and Leaders of Step Out for Birds (SOB)

Waders can be a very frustrating group at times, but they are likely the most enjoyed group as they can be easily visible for long periods unlike perching birds or raptors who disappear soon after being spotted once! But extreme distance, huge flocks, similar habitat, identical behaviour, and similar appearance can pose their identification a challenge.

Before we start how to identify let us first discuss what are these birds. Waders or shorebirds are small, predominantly brown and white birds with longish legs which scuttle around on mudflats at low tide. That is a simple unscientific but hopefully easy-tounderstand definition.

So how to go ahead? Perhaps we can do it by narrowing down the possibilities, by categorising them based on their (i) Group (ii) Size/shape (iii) Pattern/plumage (iv) Behaviour and (v) Habitat.

Group: Knowing their group is the key point. Through this not only can we narrow down our possibility but also can compare with other waders like colour, size patterns etc.

Knowing the common group one should know before trying to identify the specific species like – Lapwing (medium size around 25-40cm with short and thick bill), Curlews (medium size bird 50-70cm with very long bill), Godwits (medium size around 35-50cm with long bill), Shanks (medium size bird 20-35 cm with medium size bill), Plovers (small size 15-20cm with short bill), Sandpipers (small to medium size with short to medium bill), etc.

Size/Shape: It is very important in identifying a wader as size and shape remain relatively constant despite the many changes in plumage which waders go through in a year, so they are useful in providing the clue for identification. Assess size and shape of the body, its bill length and shape, length of legs, length of its neck, etc. Observe if the bird has thin bill or thick, long bill or short, if the bill is curved or straight, is the bill curved upwards or downwards, is the neck long or short, are the legs long or short.

Pattern/plumage: Next one should try and observe features of its body such as its body colour, legs' colour, colour of its beak and patterns over its body. Does it have spots, blocks, stripes on its body? Any collar pattern around its neck, over breast, side ways, belly, over or below tail, etc.? How is the supercilium? Once such details are assessed, identification will get simplified.

Almost all waders go through different plumage throughout year and it can be difficult to identify them if one is not aware of such changes. The above steps can narrow down identification. Did you know that Ruff assumes nearly 5 different plumages during a year.

Behaviour: Wader behaviour can provide some good 'short cuts' to identification, yet it is something which







is invisible in a field guide illustration and photos, and therefore often goes ignored or unnoticed. Observe the very different ways the waders feed, try to observe what

are they feeding on (and where is their prey – in water, across mud, over surface, below surface, etc.,? Check how they try to exploit their feed, by sight, hearing, touch, scratch, dig, etc? Learning the typical feeding behaviour of each group can enable to quickly tell different groups apart. It can even be useful in identification of similar pairs of species in the same group.

Habitat: Habitat may not always be conclusive (or even very helpful) for waders but it can help what species is more likely than the other in certain cases. Check if it is observed in open wetlands, mud flats, tanks, canals, pools, small puddles, sea shore, etc? Is it running over mud-flats, or wading in wader, or in between the two micro-habitats at one water body? They are extremely busy feeding and hence one can distinguish one from another species.

Little is required for observing waders since they are invariably present at all water bodies. Some species may be around water, seldom entering in to deep water, others always in their knee-deep water only, some always found running across mud-flats.

A pair of binoculars is the minimum one should sport. Lucky if one can boast of a spotscope. A notebook with pen are must. Do buy an established 'field guide' (Birds of the Indian Subcontinent by Grimmett, Inskipp and Inskipp, is in vogue in India).

What about a camera with tele-lens? Like to carry snacks, water bottle and similar stuff. Waders are found feeding endlessly, so one is likely to feel inspired to eat in their company.

Maintain distance from birds if you wish to have prolonged and satisfying sightings. Go closer to them preferably squatting and then moving forward so that they get accustomed to your presence. Hope you enjoy your aspired wader-session.

Happy Birdwatching!

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Birds feed at sewage drains!

Nishant Nath Shukla,* Durga Lal Verma,** Sumit Bari*** Govind Yadav****

Exploiting tiny crustaceans, worms, mollusks, insects, larvae, tadpoles, microscopic snails and similar prey....



Long-billed Dowitcher tongue

It was November 2018. We undertook a survey of Amanisha-ka-Nalla an open drains running for nearly 45 km north-south across city of Jaipur. It was to assess what birds are present in such a foul-smelling flow. Following were in or at edges of this drain.

Black-winged Stilt, Little-ringed Plover, Kentish Plover, Red-wattled Lapwing, Common Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit, Spotted Redshank, Common Redshank, Common Greenshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Little Stint, Temminck's Stint, and Ruff.

The drain water finally enters Chandlai lake and within sewage-impacted water spread, we could observe these birds feeding at ease:

Pied Avocet, Great Painted Snipe, Eurasian Curlew (Kishan Meena reported it there). In adjoining areas, not far away from the lake edges, were found Red-wattled Lapwing. By side of open grassland (near Nevta lake), were observed Yellow-wattled lapwing and Indian Coursers, both in breeding plumage. Most common to be found across drains is Black-winged stilt.

There could be more species in such a habitat. Of the 23 species we observed, 14 happened to be migratory. Their presence meant that their feed was available in plenty in such foul quality of water too. ".... they push



Whimbrel feeding (Graham Parry)

their bills into mud to probe for worms, bivalve mollusks and other invertebrates. This is an enormously abundant, protein-rich resource – provided you can reach it" states Discover Wildlife (www.discoverwildlife.com).

Wader aficionado, Graham Appleton says: "These waders have high-set eyes, perfect for spotting predators, rather than for looking down their beaks."

Twelve varieties of bird-feeding groups have been detailed in https://www.thespruce.com/bird-diettypes-386612: "Avivorous, Carnivorous, Frugivorous, Granivorous, Insectivorous, Molluscivorous, Mucivorous, Nectivorous, Ophiophagous, Palynivorous, Piscivorous, and Omnivorous.

Leo Zwarts, Anne-Marie Blomert, *and* Roel of Hupkes (www.bioone.org) say: "In order to increase body mass before their departure back home, some waders, such as Dunlin and Godwit increase the total time they spend feeding. They fed more at night and at high temperatures, circumstances in which feeding activity was depressed in winter. In other species, however, such as the Little Stint, feeding time did not increase during the pre-migration period. In winter, feeding time and body mass in the 14 wader species studied were negatively associated, but this trend



Wood Sandpiper feeding



Common Sandpiper picking up feed

disappeared during the pre-migration period. Nocturnal feeding was particularly important in the smaller waders, but the larger waders also began to feed at night later in the season."

The niche that these birds have carved out in our environment is a hard place to live.

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Dunlins in flight

Step Out for Birds (SOB)

Sumit Bari* and Nishant Nath Shukla**

Coordinators for Birding Excursions

It is an incredible experience any morning to observe chirping birds and breathe fresh air away from hectic city life so as to learn better about nature and enjoy life.

TWSI has taken a unique initiative called 'Step Out for Birds' (SOB). It is an excursion, usually undertaken as a group with an expert leader, to observe and study birds in their natural habitat.

SOB aims at supporting beginner birders of all age to go birding in a relaxed, informative, non-taxing environment. This fun filled activity allows people to visit new wonderful places, increase own birding skills and understand nature.

Go to unique forest areas, wetlands, scrub forest, grasslands, and human impacted areas to explore if birds are there, if so which ones. It is to let people develop avian-citizen-science and relate birds with own efficiency of life.

What does SOB offers?

Knowledge about birds, wildlife and environmental conservation.

Appreciation for nature.

Mental alertness.

Peace of mind.

Keeping one more fit and healthy etc.

Wild beasts and birds are by right not the property merely of people today, but the property of the unborn generations, whose belongings we have no right to squander."

--Theodore Roosevelt

SOB records are outlined here, averaging about 50+ species each time, including many migratory.

Kulish Smiriti Van, Jaipur on 17 December 2017. Participants: H.N Ghiya, Anand Chordia, Bhakti Rawat, Neha Agarwal, Rajendra Agarwal, Surbhi Pilani, Manav Pilani, Charvi Rawat, Nishant Nath Shukla, Durgalal Verma, and Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Indian Peafowl, Grey Francolin, Eurasian Collared Dove, Laughing Dove, Yellowlegged Green Pigeon, Greater Coucal, Whitebreasted Waterhen, Common Moorhen, Common Coot, Indian Pond Heron, Cattle Egret, Red-wattled



Forest personnel at a bird trail at Man Sagar (Rakesh Sharma, Dec 2018).

Tips on being more satisfied.



TWSI Volunteers trying to locate a new bird.

Lapwing, Shikra, Black Kite, Spotted Owlet, Common Hoopoe, Lesser golden-backed woodpecker, Green Bee-eater, White-throated Kingfisher, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Common Iora, Black Drongo, White-browed Fantail, Bay-backed Shrike, Long-tailed Shrike, Rufous Treepie, House Crow, Purple Sunbird, Indian Silverbill, House Sparrow, White Wagtail, Grey-headed Canaryflycatcher, Cinereous Tit, Ashy Prinia, White-eared Bulbul, Red-vented Bulbul, Common Chiffchaff, Greenish Leaf Warbler, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Large Grey Babbler, Jungle Babbler, Indian Robin, Oriental Magpie Robin, Red-breasted Flycatcher, and Black Redstart.

Man Sagar lake, Jaipur, 7 Jan 2018. Participants: H.N. Ghiya, Sameer Meerchandani, Surbhi Pilani, Manav Pilani, AvdeshVashishtha, Rahul Sharma, Saurabh Kalia, Pulkit Tak, Nishant Nath Shukla, HimanshuAgarwal, Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Knob-billed Duck, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Indian Spot-billed Duck, Greenwinged Teal, Indian Peafowl, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Laughing Dove, Little Swift, Eurasian Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Black-winged Stilt, Pied Avocet' Red-wattled Lapwing, Greater Painted-Snipe, Ruff, Temminck's Stint, Little Stint, Common Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper, Common Redshank, Pallas's Gull, River Tern, Little Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Indian Cormorant, Great White Pelican, Dalmatian Pelican, Gray Heron, Purple Heron, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Little Egret, Cattle Egret' Indian Pond-Heron, Blackcrowned Night-Heron, Black Kite, Eurasian Hoopoe, Common Kingfisher, White-throated Kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Plum-headed Parakeet, Common Woodshrike, Black Drongo, House Crow, Dusky Crag-Martin, Wire-tailed



Hume's Warbler

Swallow, Cinereous Tit, Red-vented Bulbul, Common Chiffchaff, Common Tailorbird, Ashy Prinia, Lesser Whitethroat, Jungle Babbler, Indian Robin, Rosy Starling, Asian Pied Starling, Brahminy Starling, Common Myna, Bank Myna, Purple Sunbird, Citrine Wagtail, White-browed Wagtail, House Sparrow, Chestnut-shouldered Petronia, and Indian Silverbill.

Nevta Dam, Jaipur, 4 March 2018. Participants: Rajendra Kumar, Murari Singh, Sameer, Meerchandani, Manav Pilani, Rahul Sharma, Nishant Nath Shukla, and Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Lesser Whistling-Duck, Graylag Goose, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Greenwinged Teal, Greater Flamingo, Little Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Eurasian Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Black-winged Stilt, Pied Avocet, Redwattled Lapwing, Kentish Plover, Little Ringed Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Ruff, Temminck's Stint, Little Stint, Common Snipe, Common Redshank, Pallas's Gull, Little Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Indian Cormorant, Great White Pelican, Gray Heron, Cattle Egret, Indian Pond-Heron, Eurasian Marsh-Harrier, Eurasian Hoopoe, Black Drongo, Dusky Crag-Martin, Streak-throated Swallow, Red-vented Bulbul, Plain Prinia, Indian Robin, Bluethroat, Siberian Stonechat, Brahminy Starling, Gray Wagtail, Citrine Wagtail, White Wagtail and House Sparrow.

Ramgarh Dam, Jaipur, 30 September 2018. Participants: Harsh Vardhan, Sanjay Chauhan, Govind Yadav, Abhishek Soni, Parakh Vijay, Pulkit Tak, Abhishek Singh, Bhoomika Tiwari, Krishna Raiser, Durgalal Verma, Sandeep Verma, Saurabh Kalia, Nishant Nath Shukla and Sumit Bari.



Dusky Warbler

Birds observed: Rufoustreepie, Greenish warbler, Black redstart, Jungle babbler, Indian peafowl, White eyed buzzard, Lesser white throat, Greater coucal, Brown Rock chat, Sulphur bellied Warbler, Cinereous Tit, Plum headed parakeet, Grey breasted Prinia, Asian Koel, Shikra, Spotted Owlet, Red breasted flycatcher, Oriental white eye, Black francolin, White browed fantail, Tailor Bird, House Crow, Common Myna, Baya Weaver, Green Bee-eater, and Crested Serpent Eagle.

Maila Bagh, Jaipur, 28 October 2018. Participants: Harsh Vardhan, Saurabh Kalia, Gourang, Lakshit Sharma, Sagar, Sameer Meerchandani, Rakesh Sharma, Durgalal Verma, Ajay Singh, Manvi Khandelwal, Rahul Sharma, Nishant Nath Shukla, and Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Indian Peafowl, Grey Francolin, Oriental Turtle Dove, Eurasian Collared Dove, Greater Coucal, Indian Cuckoo, Cattle Egret, Indian Pond Heron, Red-wattled Lapwing, Black-winged Kite, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Shikra, Black Kite, Spotted Owlet, Common Hoopoe, Black-rumped Woodpecker, Coppersmith Barbet, Green Bee-eater, Indian Roller, White-throated Kingfisher, Roseringed Parakeet, Alexandrine Parakeet, Scarlet Minivet, Black Drongo, Rufous Treepie, House Crow, Purple Sunbird, Baya Weaver, Indian Silverbill, House Sparrow, Cinereous Tit, Whitenaped Tit, Zitting Cisticola, Plain Prinia, Common Tailorbird, Ashy Prinia, Red-vented Bulbul, Greenish Leaf Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Large Grey Babbler, Common Myna and Indian Robin.

Taal Chappar, Churu, 24 November 2018. Participants: Harsh Vardhan, Govind Yadav, Durgalal Verma, Sandeep Verma, Rakesh Sharma, Rajaram, Sogan, Naveen Singh, Rahul Sharma, Ishan Sharma, Nishant Nath Shukla, and Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Bar-headed Goose, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Indian Spot-billed Duck, Northern Pintail, Indian Peafowl, Gray Francolin, Greater Flamingo, Little Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Laughing Dove, Chestnutbellied Sandgrouse, Greater Coucal, Eurasian Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Common Crane, Blackwinged Stilt, Red-wattled Lapwing, Ruff, Green Sandpiper, Little Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Intermediate Egret, Little Egret, Cattle Egret, Indian Pond-Heron, Black-winged Kite, Egyptian Vulture, Tawny Eagle, Steppe Eagle, Imperial Eagle, Black Kite, Eurasian Hoopoe, White-throated Kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, Indian Roller, Eurasian Kestrel, Laggar Falcon, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Long-tailed Shrike, Great Gray Shrike, Black Drongo, Rufous Treepie, House Crow, Rufous-tailed Lark, Indian Bushlark, Crested Lark, Dusky Crag-Martin, Redvented Bulbul, Common Chiffchaff, Zitting Cisticola, Lesser Whitethroat, Large Gray Babbler, Jungle Babbler, Indian Robin, Black Redstart, Desert Wheatear, Isabelline Wheatear, Rosy Starling, Asian Pied Starling, Gray Wagtail, Richard's Pipit, Paddyfield Pipit, House Sparrow, Chestnutshouldered Petronia and Indian Silverbill.

Keoladev National Park, Bharatpur, 29 December 2018. Participants: Naveen Singh, Nishchay Gupta, Praveen Lalwani, Mahesh Tiwari, Ishan Singh, Sameer Meerchandani, Rahul Sharma, Nishant Nath Shukla, Ramesh Singh and Sumit Bari.

Birds observed: Lesser Whistling-Duck, Bar-headed Goose, Graylag Goose, Knob-billed Duck, Ruddy Shelduck, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Greenwinged Teal, Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Indian Peafowl, Greater Flamingo, Little Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Laughing Dove, Yellow-footed Pigeon, Greater Coucal, Eurasian Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Whitebreasted Waterhen, Black-winged Stilt, Red-wattled Lapwing, White-tailed Lapwing, Bronze-winged Jacana, Common Snipe, Common Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper, Asian Openbill, Woolly-necked Stork, Painted Stork, Oriental Darter, Little Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Indian Cormorant, Great White Pelican, Dalmatian Pelican, Gray Heron,

Purple Heron, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Little Egret, Indian Pond-Heron, Striated Heron, Glossy Ibis, Black-headed Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill, Egyptian Vulture, Oriental Honey-buzzard, Indian Spotted Eagle, Greater Spotted Eagle, Booted Eagle, Steppe Eagle, Imperial Eagle, Eurasian Marsh-Harrier, Spotted Owlet, Indian Gray Hornbill, Common Kingfisher, White-throated Kingfisher, Coppersmith Barbet, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Black-rumped Flameback, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Common Woodshrike, Brown Shrike, Bay-backed Shrike, Long-tailed Shrike, Black Drongo, White-browed Fantail, Rufous Treepie, Large-billed Crow, Graythroated Martin, Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher, White-eared Bulbul, Hume's Warbler, Dusky Warbler, Common Chiffchaff, Greenish Warbler, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Ashy Prinia, Plain Prinia, Oriental White-eye, Jungle Babbler, Indian Robin, Oriental Magpie-Robin, Bluethroat, Black Redstart, Pied Bushchat, Asian Pied Starling, Common Myna, Bank Myna, Purple Sunbird, Gray Wagtail, Citrine Wagtail, House Sparrow, Chestnut-shouldered Petronia, Indian Silverbill, Graylag Goose, Sarus Crane, Barred Buttonquail, Osprey, Indian Vulture, Brown-headed Barbet, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Orange-headed Thrush, Sind Sparrow, Streaked Weaver, and

Scaly-breasted Munia.

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TWSI Volunteers busy birding beyond Ramgarh lake.

Your attention, Mr. Forest Minister: GIB

Shriman SUKH RAM BISHNOI Saheb

14 January 2019

Hon. Minister for Forest and Environment, Rajasthan, Jaipur

Sir,

- 1. Hon. Rajasthan Chief Minister, Shriman Ashok Gahlot Saheb had launched "Project Bustard" (10 June 2013, clipping enclosed) after observing Great Indian Bustards at Sudasuri, Jaisalmer, and also allocated some funds, to conserve this critically endangered species, 98 % of its global population is confined to Jaisalmer region in the world.
- 2. The Government authorized Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to undertake Conservation Breeding of this species and provided huge funds to it. A meeting of experts took place in Jaipur on 28 April 2017 to decide about Bustard Breeding Centre. WII and Forest be questioned, what actions were taken forward to set up the Breeding Centre. The bird number has declined to precariously less than 50 in Jaisalmer (2018-19).
- 3. It is an S.O.S. request to kindly convene a meeting of WII, Forest Department and this Group, within a week. We are ready to offer an emergency action-plan. <u>Your prompt intervention shall solve this pending project else the species shall be extinct</u> within tenure of this government. And it shall be a blot on State as a whole.
- 4. Waiting for your response, enclosing letters, clippings etc., as old records.

Yours sincerely

Harsh Vardhan (Bustard Expert Since 1978) **Dinesh Durrani** (Secretary, Sariska Foundation) **R.N. Mehrotra** (Ex-PCCF-HOFF and Ex-Chief Wildlife Warden, Raj.





(left) Y.D. Singh with a male Great Indian Bustard at Jodhpur zoo in 1983 when the Bustard bred there, a fact not being recognised.

(right) Mr. Sukhram Bishnoi, Rajasthan Minister for Forest and Environment, reading a petition submitted to him on 13 January 2019 by TWSI and Sariska Tiger Foundation. Mr. R.N. Mehrotra and Mr. Dinesh Durrani (right) are seen interacting with him (Harsh Vardhan).

Volunteers



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Greetings from George Archibald



Well done Forest Department

Some positive developments, first ever, have cropped up through the Department of Forest's Wildlife Wing in Rajasthan though all cannot be outlined here. Most perceived are its publications: "Wildlife Matters" which carried success stories of programmes for conservation of wild species;



Mr. Sudarshan Sharma birding at 21st Fair

another was a convincing hard-cover book, "Jhalana, A Leopard Forest of the Pink City" which has all about this baby-reserve dotted with this wild mammal.

The Department also launched Jhalana as a separate project. So tourism, which it loves, is over flowing for leopards and birds. Being managed well like a private sector unit – an interpretation centre has been set up at its main gate, worth a visit. However its cafeteria is yet to be switched on.

The Department almost owned the 21st Indian Birding Fair, dedicated to White-naped Tit, as though to add a new feather in its cap. The 21st Fair publication was

financially supported and some other aspects were catered to. The 22nd Fair is, likewise, being supported. Dr. G.V. Reddy, PCCF and CWLW, took keen interest in this venture and ably encouraged Mr. Sudarshan Sharma, DCF (WL), Zoo, to take charge of the event.

The authorities know that such publications and events can only add value to their prestige through which their delivery to society will be faster, greater and carry trustworthy weight. They need to continue with them with enhanced thrust and continued commitment.

TWSI Volunteers staged six bird watching sessions for Forest Guards, Foresters, Range Forest Officers, Assistant Conservator of Forest, and even DCFs at various destinations during 2018-09, voluntary as it had been.

Matter of partnership, the Tourism Department is likely to take a cue from its forest cousins. - Editor



(right to left) Dr. G.V. Reddy, PCCF-CWLW, Rajasthan, Sajal Jugran, and Mohita V. Tiwari (extreme left) at 21st Fair, interacting with visitors.

Wild with Pride

A new start-up for birds, mammals etc: Fascinating Badges/Pins, T-shirts, Caps and other items are available.

> A conservation appeal. A classical initiative by one of the TWSI Volunteer, Rakesh Sharma



Great Indian Bustard





Indian Pitta

Welcome for any query: **Rakesh Sharma (Rocky)** Email:wildcornerind@gmail.com Tel: (00.91) 93093 03695 and (00.91) 95292 41359



Peter scores 9,000 birds



Mr. N.R. Kothari (left), founder of Man Sagar restoration, and Mr. Peter Kestner at the 8th Fair.

Upon returning to the USA in October, 2018, Peter Kestner flew to the Lesser Antilles to find the last nine birds he needed to bring his life list up to 9,000. Now, he is planning how to see the next 1000 birds to bring his list up to 10,000. (Ten people have seen 9,000, but no one has seen more than 9,600.)

Peter is presently posted in Frankfurt. He serves Government of USA's diplomatic corps. He was Consul General at the US Embassy in New Delhi. Visiting a wedding in Jaipur, met me to ask – any birds around? I took him next morning to Man Sagar – he was delighted to look at the restored lake and birds.

He later attended the Indian Birding Fair. He wanted to see Great Indian Bustard. Visit was facilitated to Shonkalia, GIBs were there then. Best wishes, good friend and thanks for sharing news with us.

BIRD FESTI

18-20 January 2

Fair-spread

Several Bird fairs have cropped up after the Indian Birding Fair tried to keep its avian flag fluttering with pride, thanks to all volunteers and supporters.

Came in Udaipur Fair led by an enthusiastic, Mr. Rahul Bhatnagar, Chief Conservator of Forest. It is taking place annually involving shades of decision makers and citizens of the region. This January witnessed a new slot, Wildlife Writers' Session. Bravo Rahul for having given a new noun to conservation.

It shows Forest Officers are most capable and can do wonders if one of them can decide. This editor had attended one of Udaipur Fairs and found the spirit of doing as an outstanding quality.

Dungarpur did it thanks to then Collector and District Magistrate, Mr. Vikram Singh Chouhan. He is a spirited soul. He did a Fair at



Sariska Tiger Reserve held a few Bird Fairs as led by

Mr. R.S. Shekhawat, then CCF there, and held at Siliserh lake too. Ajmer did it in 2019 in association with Rajasthan Patrika, a daily which supported TWSI's Vulture Census in a novel way.

Long live Bird Fair culture.

Be remembered all those, government or non government personas, who create niche. There may be other Fairs too but not being acknowledged owing to lack of information.

Thanks Tim Appleton, organiser of British Bird Watching Fair (Rutland, Lecis) for having coined a unique Fair-Culture and getting it spread all over world, he led the 20th Indian Birding Fair in Jaipur.

- Guest Editor

Mr. Rahul Bhatnagar, CCF, Udaipur, at 2019, Udaipur Bird Fair

⁻ Editor

What next for Man Sagar?

The 400-year-old heritage lake, Man Sagar at Jaipur had been stinking (1970-2000) that the Rajasthan Government floated a PPP to re-use land by its southern flank.

The lake was restored and a palace, Jal Mahal, amidst water, was renovated. Beyond recognition. Becoming a rate example.

A new tourism promenade thus created in Jaipur. Envy of all.

The envy was too heavy. Work was stopped. Court cases followed. Strange in India as it is.

The lake is alive.

So is Jal Mahal. So are promoters, led by Mr. N.R. Kothari and associates.

So is the Government.

The annual Indian Birding Fair is an attempt to eulogize the lake and monument, as the citizens' initiative.



Mr. Viabhav Gahlot has love for wildlife, here he is observing birds at Man Sagar assisted by Mr. Harsh Vardhan.

Citizens performing Government's chores.

What next Government of Rajashan?

For Man Sagar, Jal Mahal and the project? Tourism is priority here.

And these outstanding destinations will add another feather in Rajasthan, nay India's cap. - Editor



17 Jan., 2009, Rajasthan Chief Minister, Mr. Ashok Gahlot observing birds at Man Sagar, assisted by Mr. Harsh Vardhan

Peter Elfman supports Fair

Born 1966. Lives in Väggarp north of Lund, Sweden.

Wildlife artist, illustrator and MSc in Chemical engineering, works at Emmace Consulting AB at Medicon Village in Lund.

My passion for nature and birds has always been deep. I am autodidact and have never attended any art courses. I mostly work in watercolours and sometimes in oil.

I like sketching birds and other animals while I watch them in the field and I think the sketching is very important for the understanding of the balance, structure and anatomy. I think all birds are fascinating although my favorites are perhaps raptors, owls and waders.

I was selected 1991 as "Bird painter of the year" in Sweden. During the last 20 years my paintings have been featured in exhibitions in Sweden and abroad several times a year.

I have been elected 12 times for the juried, prestigious exhibition "Birds in Art" at the Woodson Art Museum



Peter Elfman

in Wausau, Wisconsin, USA. My paintings have also been selected for the Museum's "Birds In Art Tour" in USA. Woodson Art museum has purchased two of my paintings for their permanent collection. "Birds in Art" is the biggest exhibition for bird art in the world. It is a "World Championship" in bird art where top artists from around the globe show their art.

I am a signature member of Society of Animal Artists SAA in USA and I have

been selected 5 times to their juried annual exhibition "Art and the animal".

I sometimes work with illustrations for nature information and books. I'm also a field trip leader for the local ornithology club in southern Sweden.

Peter Elfman

mail: peter1.elfman@gmail.com www.facebook.com (view Peter Elfman photos) Homepage: http://elfmanart.weebly.com/

Thank you Peter for connecting with TWSI



Black-winged Stilt family



Some thoughts about Environmental Education

Suniti Sharma*



The writer birding at Man Sagar (Harsh Vardhan)

The essence of learning about the environment is observation. A practice that is rare among students scrambling to prepare for and write exams. So the challenge in environment education is how to take children beyond their textbooks and urge them to construct meaningful connections between what they see and the underlying concepts and relationships that constitute our complex environment.

Besides, children in urban areas today grow up quite far removed from nature in air-conditioned, high-rise apartments and hooked on to electronic gadgets. My own childhood, on the other hand, was spent in a large government bungalow set in a sprawling gardencum-wilderness with trees to climb and shady corners to explore.

When in Gwalior, I introduced the subject Environmental Studies in classes III to VI which entailed nothing more than taking the children out for a 40-minute walk in the wilderness on the Fort. The only condition was that the children had to be quiet enough not to disturb the animals and birds that would be lurking in the undergrowth. We observed nature in all its seasons: the monsoons when seedlings sprouted miraculously on the dry ground and the dung beetles came out busily rolling balls of dung with their hind legs into their burrows, winter when migratory birds flew overhead in V-formations, the acacia shrubs that flowered in great in pink-and-yellow profusion, the semi-parasitic vines that draped the tall trees, a treepie eating figs off the banyan tree and later cleaning its beak on another tree, a rat snake crossing the path, a mother squirrel transporting her tightly rolled-up baby in her mouth, the dandelions and the red silk cotton tree dispersing their seeds in the wind and colonies of ants and termites busy with their assigned roles. It was a feast of sights and sounds that the children began to get better at noticing with every passing week, and soon,I no longer had to point out what to look at.

If you're lucky enough to be in a bit of open space, it does not require lessons in the classroom to make children aware of the magical world of nature. Field trips, talks and films have limited impact if they remain one-time events. Far more important to take up something that children can revisit regularly and watch as a work in progress. One such campaign in school was a vermicomposting pit that taught important lessons on the nature of organic matter, the



MGD students with House Sparrow nest boxes, their success with this bird

process of decomposition, the nitrogen, oxygen and carbon dioxide cycles and most important, made children look at earthworms with more respect! Another was the House Sparrow campaign initiated with the help of an NGO where nesting boxes and feeders were placed all over campus and children would excitedly cluster around those areas during break to monitor whether the number of sparrows was increasing.

Another interesting activity that met with success was the celebration of National Science Day on 28 February by placing small brightly coloured flags at strategic points all over the school, and asking children across all age groups to observe and figure out the 'science in it'. So we had 5-year-olds excitedly discussing seed dispersal and pollination, while older children identified photosynthesis, levers, energy transfer, waste management and dozens of other processes. And equally important, they were exploring the entire campus with a sense of purpose and fun.

Appreciation and understanding of environmental issues can start at any age, the younger the better. It emerges out of direct experience (supported by more formal methods of information transfer) and needs little intervention since 'exploring' and 'figuring out' is far more important. A child whose curiosity has been sparked will seek out resources herself/himself to learn more. As adults we need to provide the opportunity for these experiences, and to send out the right messages through everyday practices. For example, project work needs to have guidelines in place to prevent the projects from becoming exercises in generating large quantities of non-biodegradable waste. Conservation of resources and recycling need to be visible to children. The message of individual responsibility does not need to be spelled out; it merely needs to be demonstrated unobtrusively.

*Educationist, former principal, MGD Girls' School, Jaipur, and the one who led students attain success with House sparrows' recruitment, email: sunyas@gmail.com



MGD's Radhika Paliwal shaking hands with Ms. Faith Singh as Tim Appleton from British Bird Fair looks on -- eco-edu session in progress at 20th Birding Fair (Ayub Khan).

Bangladesh Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation Project (BSCP)

Sayam Chowdhury*

--- Bangladesh has done what India is unable to initiate – through a non-government group fully supported by its Forest authorities, a stunning wader conservation example ---



Spoon-billed by Elis Simpson

The first specimen of the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*) was collected in the mid-19th century from Bangladesh, which still retains the record for the highest single count anywhere in the world – 202 birds in 1989 from Moulevir Char. Since then a count of more than 100 has never been recorded and numbers have fallen over the years.

Mindful of its current global status and being motivated to play a significant part in the battle to save this species, I, along with my friends in Bangladesh, took up the challenge to save the last remnants of this species, with a small grant from The Explorers Club. Since then regular surveys have been conducted throughout the winter season in all historical and possible sites of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper with support from different international organisations and the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force.

Habitat-management: In March 2010 the team counted a minimum of 25 Spoon-billed Sandpipers on Sonadia Island at Cox's Bazar, and 23 on Domar Char on the central south coast. These were the highest counts since 1997 from Bangladesh! After the series of surveys we can now say that Bangladesh is still an extremely important wintering ground for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. We identified Sonadia Island as the key wintering site, and with Domar Char, as passaging sites in Bangladesh. Based on more recent work, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper numbers on Sonadia Island increased to 26 (26 in November 2012 and 22 in November 2013) reduced to 20 in January (16 In January 2013 and 20 in January 2014) and again increased in March to 26. These counts indicate that the Sonadia Island is not only important for wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers, but is also significant for passaging individuals (which possibly winter in Nan Thar, Myanmar).

The 4,916 ha Sonadia Island is in the Cox's Bazar district on the SE coast of Bangladesh and comprises a wide variety of wetland habitats including mudflats, sand dunes, mangroves, sand bars, lagoons, saltpans and beaches. It was declared an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) by the Government of Bangladesh in 1999. Apart from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Sonadia also supports the endangered Nordmann's Greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*), as well as other threatened or vulnerable species such as Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*) and Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*).

Hunters turn Conservationists: While working on Sonadia Island, we encountered shorebird hunting. Eight hunters claimed to have captured a total of 22 Spoon-billed Sandpipers between October 2009 and April 2010, although they primarily targeted larger shorebirds such as Eurasian Curlew (Numenius arquata) or Eurasian Whimbrel (Numenius phaeopus). Since September 2010, a series of surveys have been conducted to identify hunters and alternative livelihood options for them on Sonadia Island. After a solid year of background work, we finally signed conservation agreements with 25 active shorebird hunters of the island between October and December 2011. Alternative livelihood options taken up include seed and fertilizers for watermelon cultivation, fishing boat, net, livestock, grocery and tailoring (sewing machine) shops. Among these alternatives, the watermelon cultivation was the most successful one.

Ex-hunters who cultivated watermelons have earned almost double the amount they used to make by trapping birds. Village Conservation Groups (VCG) of the five villages on and around Sonadia Island are now monitoring these activities, and ex-hunters repay a small percentage of the income generated by the alternative livelihood to their VCG. The respective VCGs will then use this money for further hunting mitigation and shorebird conservation awareness within these villages. The entire process is being monitored and guided by the Bangladesh Spoonbilled Sandpiper Conservation Project.

Unique example: Ex-hunters who have taken alternative livelihood support strongly agreed to protect birds from any sort of threat including hunting and habitat destruction, and assist nature conservation movements in their villages. Also a few of them took specific responsibility to guard and to monitor bird hunting activities at nearby shorebird sites, and these newly ex-hunters are visiting these sites one day every week by rotation.

Along with monthly monitoring of shorebirds on Sonadia Island, BSCP conducts surveys in previously unsurveyed areas such as the Sundarbans (2012). As part of the new area search BSCP carried out a detailed survey around Sandwip, Chittagong between 3 and 11 February 2015. A total of 35,000 shorebirds of 24 species were counted including 21 Spoon-billed Sandpipers. This new site is equally important as Sonadia Island in Cox's Bazar and may support up to 100 Spoon-billed Sandpipers. Further surveys are now being conducted in order to understand more about the site and the Spoon-billed Sandpipers. We are confident that bird hunting has stopped on Sonadia



Hunting getting stopped in Bangladesh.

Island after our conservation agreement scheme and the number of large waders appears to be increasing with the halt of the hunting. Future actions will include a massive awareness campaign in five targeted villages of Sonadia Island, monitoring activities of ex-hunters and engaging them for further motivation. In addition, regular monitoring of shorebirds including wintering, passaging and oversummering Spoon-billed Sandpipers will be carried out on Sonadia Island, Sandwip Island and new areas will be searched throughout the Bangladesh coast.

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Jerdon's Courser: Yes/No? Harsh Vardhan*



Jerdon's Courser (Simon Cook)

The train dropped me and my wife, Chandrakala, at Cuddapah station. No one came to receive. An autorickshaw took us to residence of the Range Forest Officer who knew of this visit. He happened to be the top-boss there for the rare bird – equipped with no facilities. We waited in verandah some hours and picked up food from street hawkers. We hired a jeep and proceeded in evening to the area of target-visit, Sri Lankamaleswara Wildlife Sanctuary – it was nocturnal species.

No place as shelter. A tea-stall owner agreed to provide left-luggage facility. A forest guard, Aitanna, expert as he had been hailed by all, led us on foot to watch and hope to observe the bird, most elusive as it has been labeled. All stony habitat with bushes crisscrossing our walk, flat surface, for miles and few trees in between, a bullock-cart track provided better walking but we were issued notices again – move amidst stones to succeed. Which we did. Only to soon experience bruises over calf, heels, and even knees – stony boulders being overcome. The guard had a recorded-equipment and he aired the call of the bird, time and again in pitch darkness, no moon light for us. Wonder if it was same bird calling or any one else. We had never heard its call so presumed it was Jerdon's call for his-signature-bird, Courser. I hoped -- upstairs, he would be wondering -- why the Britishers had quit India leaving several species unattended.

A few hours walking. No gain. Only three of us were getting apprehensive of a fight among us since it was the most challenging session of life and no facility around, we were not used to such a walk in any forest reserve. Unhappiness reigned supreme as we discussed to go ahead or return.

The lone sighting around the walk-track was Redwattled Lapwing and it surfaced up in torch light, followed us unwittingly, only to confuse us with more sightings. As wrath of my wife scaled up, we returned empty handed. To the same shop. Its owner served us dinner, which could not be deciphered. Jeep driver did explain its intricate Andhra spices. It was past mid night when we tried to invite sleep, lying down over two stone slabs, incapable to allow us stretch legs fully.

Next morning, the driver took us inside the sanctuary to see its watershed, a temple at the end of cobbled road etc. Long drive. No animal, no reptile. The Courser had already played truant. I thought gains would have been possible had we greased palms of Jerdon? End of it, back to station via the RFO residence to extend a vote of thanks with a packet of sweets. A safari never to be forgotten!

Jerdon's Courser *(Rhinoptilus bitorquatus)* is a nocturnal and cursorial bird found only in the State of Andhra Pradesh, India. It is one of the world's rarest bird species and is classified as Critically Endangered (CR) by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The species was believed to be extinct until it was rediscovered in 1986 near Reddipalli village, Cuddapah District of Andhra Pradesh, India. I must emphatically remark that a BNHS scientist, Bharat Bhushan was responsible for having rediscovered this species in that area. Not certain why Indians are shy to convey this fact?



J. Courser at night

Extinct or not, to examine it, BNHS and the US Fish and Wildlife Service initiated a new study. Bharat, serving this study, rediscovered it near Reddipalli, in Kadapa district, with the help of a local bird trapper named Aitanna.

The site where it was rediscovered was designated as the Sri Lankamaleswara Wildlife Sanctuary. Since 2000, research on the Jerdon's Courser and its habitat is being conducted by BNHS. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Universities of Reading and Cambridge, supported by the Darwin Initiative and the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department, have joined this initiative.

The Jerdon's Courser has not been recorded since 2008. It is feared that researchers had covered a few locations and did not care to cover very large areas. Usual in India. The situation is very grave. This species was never known to be common. Vast stretches of areas need to be assessed, at night, to try and become another Bharat Bhushan. Must I acknowledge it was Bharat who took me round the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC during a study tour of USA, hosted by David A. Ferguson and Edward J. McCrea, who had then rendered pioneering work in India.

Today, it is one of the rarest birds in the world. Jerdon's Courser is listed by IUCN as Critically Endangered – the gravest category, which means that the species is facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild. According to the IUCN, there are thought to be only between 50 and 250 Jerdon's Coursers left in the wild. But it is likely that actual numbers could be much lower.

**An amateur conservationist, email: birdfair1@hotmail.com*



The glory that Man Sagar in Jaipur now is (Harsh Vardhan)

Mongolia 'ringed' Demoiselle Cranes

Rajasthan Patrika published on 16 December 2018, a news with a photograph of a Demoiselle Crane having yellow rings, observed at Khichan (Phalodi, Rajasthan). It caused sensation and we circulated this news among conservation colleagues all over. Came in response from Mongolia:

Annegret Stubb <annegret.stubb@zoologie.unihalle.de>

Friday 12/28/2018, 10.29 pm

Dear Harsh,

The crane with yellow ring 1001 (Alu-ring CA004817) was marked by our team in Mongolia at 4.7.2017 5 km W of the city Arvaycheer 46°23'30-6"N/102°50'05, 3E. Hope for more observations. Phalacrocorax carbo and Ardea cinerea must leave Mongolia in winter. Where are they wintering? I think also in Indian subcontinent.

We are very interested in recoveries. All the best for 2019.

Note: Anthropoides virgo is Latin name of Demoiselle Crane.

We wish to thank Dr. George Archibald, Co-Founder of International Crane Foundation (Baraboo, Wisconsin, USA) for having led us on crane conservation since late 70s. His Greetings illustration appears on page 47 in this publication. And thanks to Michael Stubbe for providing facts about this species, prompt response same day is most appreciated.

- Editor



Demoiselle Crane with yellow rings by Bal Yuvraj and Prathmeshwar Singh (courtesy: Sumit Dukia)



Demoiselle Crane migration in 2018, courtesy Elena Ilyashenko, Crane Head for Europe.

Michael Stubbe

CONSERVING ENDANGERED SPECIES AND THREATENED HABITATS

The TWSI (Tourism & Wildlife Society of India), a registered charity in India, attempts to generate appreciation and delight in the natural world, its wild species and habitats, making people better aware of what they ought to do to conserve natural resources. It is administered by elected members of its executive committee.

Its on-field organ is known as Indian Birding Fair Group. It is responsible for field level conservation initiatives. The annual Indian Birding Fair is one of its events organized at Man Sagar lake in Jaipur city since 1997. This heritage lake got restored as a result.

Welcome to interact.





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GIB Now On Ventilator

Wildlife Institute of India (WII) always outlined there were 150 Great Indian Bustards in India up to 2018. The forest department of Rajasthan, where most birds were found, Gujarat, where second biggest population occurred, and other states, took it for granted what WII stated. Numerous meetings were held to discuss and debate the fate of this large grassland bird to try and seek ways to conserve it.

More the meetings, greater has been the decline of the species – extinct in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. Maharashtra says it may have couple of birds. Gujarat numbers may be in double digit (?). WII has tried best to work best in Gujarat.

Rajasthan has been proud to remark – doing the best and shall do even the 'best'. Net result is that GIB in this desert state could not be more than 50 (2018-19), which would be 96% of global population. A meeting, held on 28 April 2017 at Jaipur, folded up with a declaration by Ms. Vasundhara Raje, then Chief Minister, Rajasthan, we will set up a Conservation Breeding Centre for this species.

Nothing has happened since. Hon. Rajasthan High Court (Jodhpur) took a suo motto cognizance (15 Jan., 19) on this species issuing notices to Union and Rajasthan Governments to report reasons of this species being driven to extinction. Mr. Justice Sangeet Lodha and Mr. Justice Dinesh Mehta constitute a double bench to decide it.

What is happening with Rs 35 crores handed over to WII on GIB-work? Any help needed -- Rajasthan Forest Department and WII?

Experts with experience and expertise are here to support you. If not, attention will be drawn of Mr. Ashok Gahlot, Chief Minister, Rajasthan, he launched project Bustards in June 2013 and observed birds in Sudasuri, Jaisalmer. Mr. Sukh Ram Bishnoi, Forest Minister, has already been briefed. The bird is on ventilator, and do you wish to offer it a head-ache pill?



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