

UNEARTH THE WETLAND **BIRDS** OF **BENGALURU**

A HAND GUIDE

First Edition

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Environmental Management and Policy
Research Institute (EMPRI)
&
Harish R. Bhat Science Foundation (HRBSF)**





Harish R. Bhat
Science Foundation

UNEARTH THE WETLAND BIRDS OF BENGALURU

A HAND GUIDE

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Wetland Birds of Bengaluru

Introduction

Wetlands are unique ecosystems that provide a variety of benefits for us humans, like recharging of underground water, purifying water biologically, reduces impact of floods, regulates micro climate, livelihood for fishermen, source of fodder (macrophytes), surface water for various domestic uses, recreation and a habitat for various flora and fauna.

Birds are studied as bio-indicators of an ecosystem across the globe due to their varied size and adaptations of which, some are specific to their food or the habitat they live in. Assessing a habitat by observing the species of birds present there is effective, inexpensive and one need not undergo rigorous training of any sort. Keen observation for identification, understanding of birds and documentation is the main key.

In a wetland ecosystem, observation of birds becomes easier as there are large open spaces to spot birds, unlike in a dense forest where visibility is low. Birds and wetlands are linked on various factors like the availability, depth and quality of water; availability of food source and nesting opportunities; presence or absence of predators.

Wetland Birds

There are various species of birds that visit a wetland for various purposes, of which some are resident (birds seen throughout

the year) and others are migratory (birds seen seasonally). These birds are categorized as below,

1. Aquatic Birds (Ducks, Grebes etc.)
2. Wading Birds (Hérons, Egrets etc.)
3. Rail Birds (Swamphens, Jacanas etc.)
4. Birds of Prey (Kites, Eagles etc.)
5. Other common birds (Crows, Pigeons etc.)

Most of the above mentioned birds are seen in the wetlands of Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Monitoring the birds around the wetlands may be the easiest way to understand the status of the ecosystem. The more the species are varied, the healthier the ecosystem is. This is mainly due to the interdependency of birds with other species as prey or predators. This guide helps in identifying the species that are commonly seen around the wetlands of Bengaluru city. 50 common species have been described with photographs, common name, scientific name, Kannada name, family, food habits, their presence throughout the year or seasonal and IUCN status.

A brief description of the birds such as local names, diet, family and status are provided for clear understanding. Locations of the birds will vary from season to season depending on the several factors.

How to read this guide?



Local Name / Kannada Name



Family



Diet



Aquatic Plants



Molluscs



Grains



Fish



Tadpoles



Insect



Lizard



Frog



Berries



Rodents



**Aerial
Insects**



Bird



Snakes



Crustacean



Location



Migratory



Residential



IUCN Status

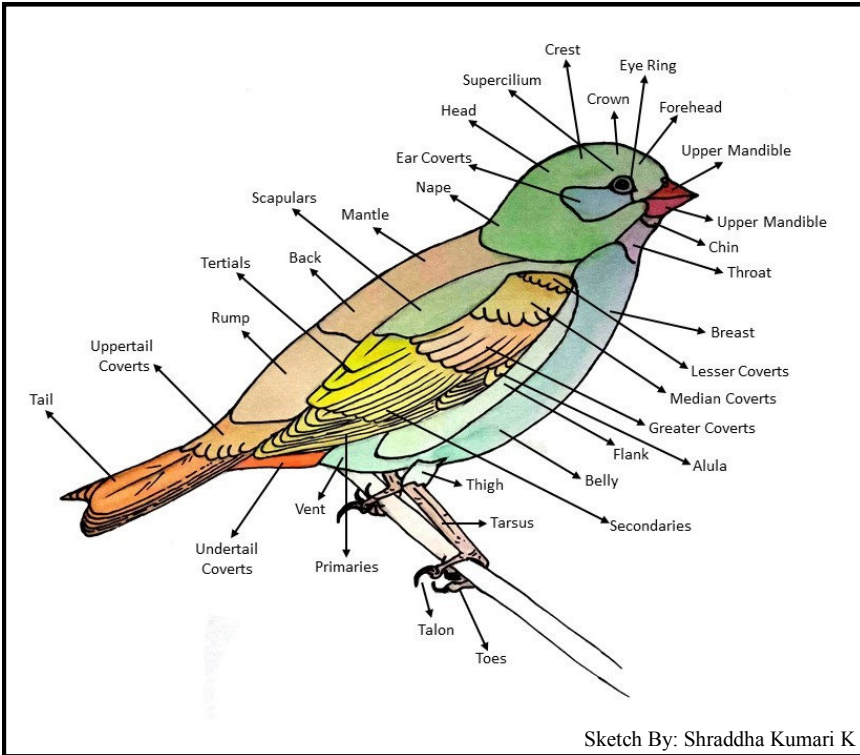


Least



Nearly Threatened

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES OF A BIRD



Crown: Top area of the head.

Forehead: Anterior portion of the head.

Ear Coverts: Feathers that cover the ear area

Eye Ring: A ring of colour around the eye

Supercilium: Feathers passing from the anterior point of the eye; over the eye to near its posterior point.

Nape: The area behind the neck

Chin: Ventral leathering below the bill ending where throat begins.

Throat: The area below the lower mandible.

Mantle: Area below the nape.

Scapulars: Feathers that cover the base of the wing

Rump: The area below the mantle down to the uppertail coverts.

Uppertail Coverts: Feathers that cover the upper base of the tail.

Lesser Coverts: Feathers near the leading edge of a wing that overlap the bases of the Median Coverts.

Median Coverts: Feathers that overlap the bases of the Greater Coverts.

Greater Coverts: Overlap the bases of the Secondaries.

Breast: The area surrounded by the bottom of the throat, the sides or bend of wing area, and the top of the belly.

Flank: The side areas below the folded wing.

Belly: The area surrounded by the breast, the flanks, and the Vent.

Vent: Refers to the area between the belly and undertail coverts.

Undertail Coverts: Feathers that overlap the bottom base of the tail.

Tarsus: It refers to the part of a bird's leg between the thigh and the foot.

Tail: (Retrices) a single transverse row of quills on the margin of the anatomical tail.

Thigh: Long leg bone close to the body, fused to the fibula between the femur and the tarsus.

Alula : The digit on the wings similar to a thumb.

Primaries: The largest of the flight feathers that help the bird propel through the air.

Secondary: These feathers are shorter than primaries. giving lift to the birds during flight.

Tertiary: These are the shortest and innermost feathers on the wings. They only support the flight along with secondaries and primaries.

Talon: These are hooked claw in the feet of any bird of prey.

Crest: A tuft of feathers on the head of the bird

Checklist of 50 Wetland Birds of Bengaluru

CATEGORY	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
AQUATIC BIRDS	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
	Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>
	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>
	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
	River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>
	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
WADING BIRDS	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>
	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola greyii</i>
	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>
	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>

CATEGORY	COMMON NAME	SCIETIFIC NAME
WADING BIRDS	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
RAIL BIRDS	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
	Eurasian Coot / Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
	Grey-headed Swamphe	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>
	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
BIRDS OF PREY	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
	Oriental Honey Buzzard / Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>
OTHER COMMON BIRDS	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>
	Blue Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
	Indian Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus culminates</i>
	Laughing Dove / Little Brown Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>
	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i> / <i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>

AQUATIC BIRDS



Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Alcedinidae



Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

A small bird with a short tail, long bill, bright blue upperparts and orange underparts, have white on the neck and patches on each sides towards the back. Legs are red. Seen on branches or rocks waiting to dive and catch their prey.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Alcedinidae



White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

A brightly coloured bird slightly smaller than a Myna. It has a brown head, blue upper parts, wings and tail. Prominent white throat and breast. Bright red beak and legs. White patches are visible in the wings during flight. This species are found around lakes and very often very far away from water bodies as it belong to the group of woodland kingfishers.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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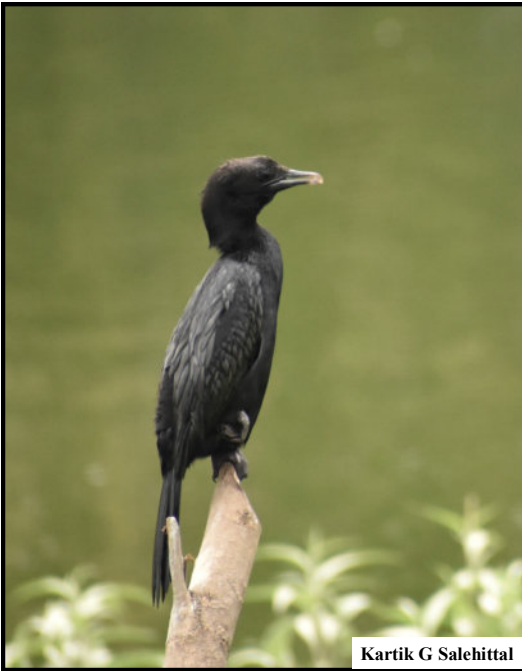
Phalacrocoracidae



Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A large duck like bird that is mainly black with white on the throat and cheeks. Often seen diving in the water or drying their wings on the shores or trees around the water body.





Kartik G Salehittal

General Characters



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Phalacrocoracidae



Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

This is a large bird similar to the greater cormorant with dark brown plumage with black markings. Lacks the white patches. Has a longer tail compared to Great Cormorant.





General Characters



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Phalacrocoracidae



Little Cormorant *Microcarbo niger*

Smallest of all cormorants in Bengaluru. Mainly blackish to brownish with a small crest. Seen diving or drying their wings perched on branches or rocks around the lakes.





General Characters



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Anatidae



Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*

This is a medium sized waterbird that is commonly found in Bengaluru's lakes. It has scale like marking throughout the body, long neck and a bill with red at the base and yellow at the tip. Usually seen swimming in pairs or flocks, rarely seen alone.





General Characters



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Podicipedidae



Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

A small water bird, often seen diving underwater frequently looking for food. Brownish grey in colour. During the breeding season males can be distinguished by their rufous neck and white cheeks.





General Characters



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Anhingidae



Oriental Darter

Anhinga melanogaster

A medium to large water bird. They have a long, slim, brownish head and neck, dagger like bill and long black tail. Has a white cheek stripe that extends to the sides of the neck. Black body with silver stripes on the wings.





General Characters



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Alcedinidae



Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

This is a medium sized Kingfisher that is completely black and white with a crest. Would be seen perching on branches or hovering before it dives into the water to catch its prey.





General Characters



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Laridae

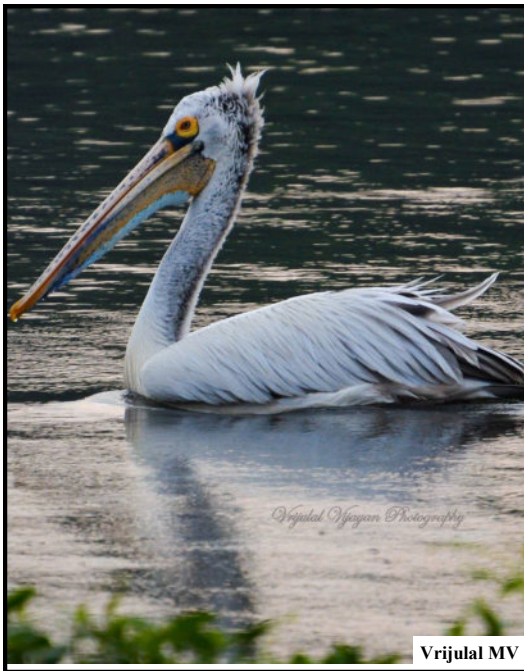


River Tern

Sterna aurantia

This is a medium sized bird seen flying over water bodies and catching fish as they fly using their beaks. Mainly greyish white with yellow beak and has a black mask over the eye through the crown and nape.





General Characters



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Pelicanidae



Spot-billed Pelican

Pelecanus philippensis

This is a large water bird with a very long beak. It is greyish white with a small crest and a brownish tail. Seen roosting on trees of islands or by the sides of the water body, or swimming and scooping for fish often.



WADDING BIRDS



Kartik G Salehittal

General Characters



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Ciconiidae



Asian Openbill

Anastomus oscitans

This is a large bird and a medium sized wader. Has a grey colour body during non-breeding season and white body during breeding season, with black wings and tail. It has a long bill that has a gap between the upper and lower mandible in adults. Seen in the marshy areas around the water body or roosting on trees on the islands in the lakes





General Characters



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Ardeidae



Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

A light grey colored bird with black crown and back. Has red eyes, yellow short legs and round grey tail. Both male and female are similar in appearance but males are slightly larger. Seen on the shores, amidst vegetation or on trees.





General Characters



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Threskiornithidae



Oriental White Ibis / Black-headed Ibis

Threskiornis melanocephalus

It is a medium sized wading bird with long legs and curved beak. Mainly white in colour with a contrasting black head. A red marking is seen underwing during flight. Seen amidst vegetation and on shores.





General Characters



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Recurvirostridae



Black Winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

This is a small to medium sized wading bird with long pink legs, black on the upperparts and white on the underparts. Males have black cap during non-breeding season. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Jacanidae



Bronze Winged Jacana

Metopidius indicus

It's a small to medium sized wading bird, found around water bodies, amidst vegetation. They have bronze wings, with the head, neck and breast in blackish blue. Has a prominent supercilium from the eye to the back of the head. Easily identifiable during flight with their hanging legs with long digits (Toes).





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Ciconiidae



Painted Stork

Mycteria leucocephala

This is a large wader bird that is mainly white with black breast band, and scale like markings on the wings. The tips of the wing feathers and rump has pink. The face is bare in orange or red. Pinkish white long legs and a long yellow beak. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation or on trees for roosting.





Avila D'Souza

General Characters



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Scolopacidae



Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

This is a small wader that has brown upperparts with fine white and brown markings, and white underparts. Has a brown bar starting from the bill across the eye towards the nape. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation.





General Characters



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Scolopacidae



Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

This is a small wader that has a dark brown upperparts with a greenish tinge. Head, neck and breast is greyish and white underparts. During the breeding season, the males will have white spots on the back. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Ardeidae



Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

This is a medium sized wading bird with ashy grey in the upperparts and lighter grey in the underparts. Head and neck are white with a dark blue broad supercilium. A streak of dark blue along the front of the neck. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation or on trees for roosting.





Vrijulal MV

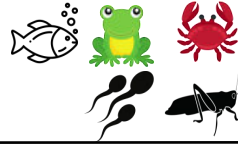
General Characters



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Ardeidae



Indian Pond Heron

Ardeola greyii

A medium sized wader that has short neck, dull brown back, streaked dark brown head and neck, white coloured wings visible during flight. In breeding season, males turn to dark maroon back, whiter, buffy head and neck. Found around water bodies and marshy areas.





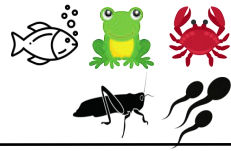
General Characters



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Ardeidae



Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Bird with white plumage, short neck (among egrets), yellow beak and eyes, black legs. Seen around grazing cattle to prey on insects that evade the cattle during their grazing or amidst vegetation in the water bodies.





General Characters



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Ardeidae



Intermediate Egret / Median Egret *Ardea intermedia*

A white coloured medium sized wader, larger than Little Egret and smaller than Great Egret. Non-breeding birds have dark legs and thick yellow bill. Breeding birds have reddish or black bill and long filament like feathers on their neck and back. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation or on trees for roosting.





General Characters



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Ardeidae



Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Smallest of the egrets, found near fresh water bodies and coastal regions. Bright white body, black beak and legs with yellow feet. Males develop two long plumes at the back of the head, breast and back, during breeding season. Seen in the shallow areas of the water body and amidst vegetation or on trees for roosting.





General Characters



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Ardeidae

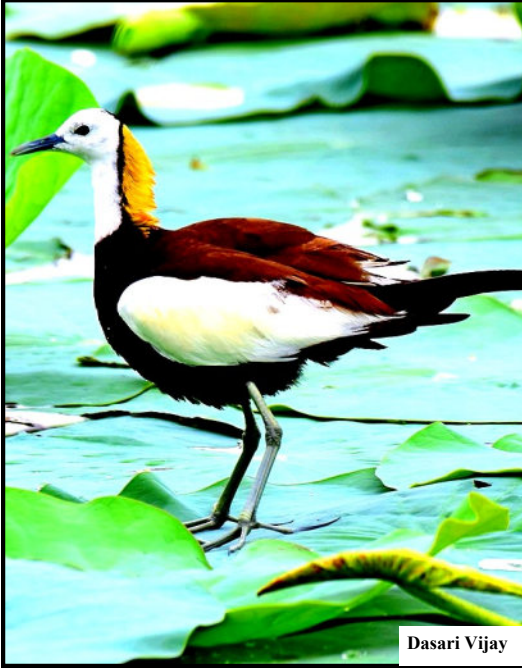


Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

It is a medium sized wading bird that is purplish grey at the back, forehead and crown. A similar coloured stripe from the beak along the sides of the neck. Chestnut in the neck. Seen in the shallow areas and shores of the water body and amidst vegetation or on trees for roosting.





Dasari Vijay

General Characters



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Jacanidae



Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

This is a medium sized wader bird, that is mainly chocolate brown on the upperparts and whitish underparts, with a white face and the back of the crown is black with white stripes running down the sides of the neck. During the breeding season, it turns the body to complete chocolate brown with white face, neck and wings. The nape is a golden yellow bordered with black and an elongated central tail feathers. Seen amidst the vegetation in and around the lakes.





Vishal Naik

General Characters



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Charadriidae



Red-wattled Lapwing

Vanellus indicus

A small to medium sized wader with light brown wings and back, black on head, throat and breast. It has a white bar from near the eye separating these two colours along the under parts and tail. Named due to fleshy red wattle near the eye. Has a short tail with black tip, beak is red with black tip, yellow legs. Seen on rocks or shores as they are ground birds.



RAIL BIRDS



Jishnu Narayanan

General Characters



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Rallidae



Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

This is a medium sized marsh bird found in amidst aquatic vegetation in the lakes. It has grey-black feathers with stripes on its wings and a red bill with a yellow tip. It has long legs and toes which help to walk on the floating vegetation.





General Characters



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Rallidae



Eurasian Coot/Common Coot

Fulica atra

This is a large sized bird found in slow moving water bodies, ponds, and freshwater. It has large back plumage with whitish bill and fore-head. The legs are stronger when compared to other rail species





General Characters



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Rallidae



Grey-headed Swamphen

Porphyrio poliocephalus

This is large sized bird usually found in lake edges and damp pastures. Their bodies are in the shades of bluish-purple with a red bill and forehead shield. It Makes short nasal grunts and croaking sounds.





Kartik G Salehittal

General Characters



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Rallidae



White-breasted Waterhen

Amaurornis phoenicurus

This is a medium sized bird commonly found in ponds, lakes and Streams. They have dark grey upperparts and flanks with a white face, breast and belly. It has long toes, short tail and a yellow bill and legs.



BIRDS OF PREY



General Characters



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Accipitridae



Black Kite

Milvus migrans

It is a medium-sized bird of prey which is the world's most abundant species of family Accipitridae. The outer flight feathers are black and the feathers have dark cross bars and the lower parts of the body are pale brown, becoming lighter towards the chin. The body feathers have dark shafts giving it a streaked appearance. The legs are yellow and the claws are black.





Ahmed Omar Haroon

General Characters



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Accipitridae



Black-winged Kite

Elanus caeruleus

It is a medium sized bird of prey which is very distinctive by having long wings with white, grey and black plumage; and owl-like forward-facing eyes with red irises. In flight, the short and square tail is visible and it is not forked as Black Kite. It is common in plains and can be seen hovering like other birds of prey.





General Characters



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Accipitridae



Brahminy Kite

Haliastur indus

It is a medium-sized bird of prey which is found mainly on the coast and in inland wetlands, where they feed on a dead fish and other prey species. Adults have a reddish-brown body plumage contrasting with their white head and breast which make them easy to distinguish from other birds of prey.





General Characters



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Accipitridae



Booted Eagle

Hieraetus pennatus

It is a medium-sized, migratory bird of prey. There are two relatively distinct plumage forms. In a pale form, they are mainly light grey with a darker head and flight feathers, whereas in the other form; they will have a mid-brown plumage with dark grey flight feathers.





Avila D'Souza

General Characters



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Accipitridae



Oriental Honey Buzzard / Crested Honey Buzzard

Pernis ptilorhynchus

It has a long-neck with a small head and soars on flat wings. The head lacks a strong superciliary ridge, giving it a facial appearance very unlike a raptor. It has a long tail and a short head crest.





General Characters



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Accipitridae



Shikra

Accipiter badius

It is a small raptor species which has short rounded wings and a narrow and fairly long tail. Adults are whitish on the underside with fine rufous bars while the upperparts are grey. The lower belly is less barred and the thighs are whitish. The females are slightly larger than the males.





General Characters



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Strigidae



Spotted Owlet

Athene brama

It is a small and stocky bird with the upperparts which is grey-brown, heavily spotted with white. The underparts are white, streaked with brown. The facial disc is pale and the iris is yellow. There is a white neckband and super cilium. Males and females are similar in appearance.



**OTHER
COMMON
BIRDS**



General Characters



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Cisticolidae



Ashy Prinia

Prinia socialis

It is a small bird found amidst emerging aquatic plants and other bushes. Easily identifiable by its two note loud calls. It has a long tail (Usually upright). Has ashy upperparts and yellowish underparts.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Cuculidae

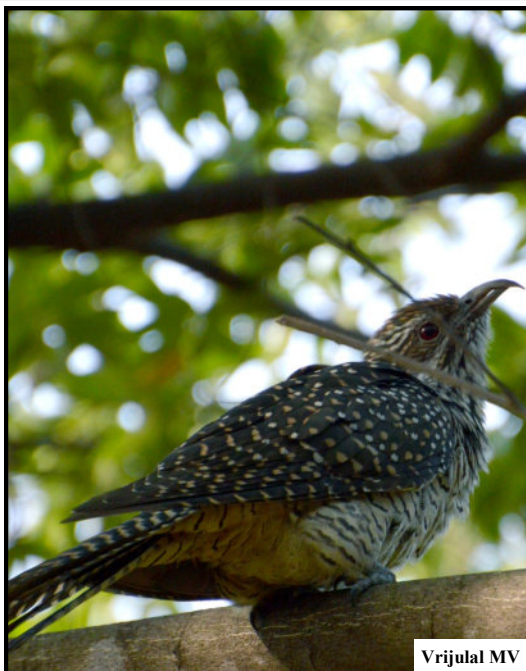


Asian Koel (Male)

Eudynamys scolopaceus

A medium sized bird slightly larger than myna, with long tail. Males are glossy black with red iris (Eye). These birds don't build nest and lay a single egg in other bird's nest (Usually Crow's)





General Characters



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Cuculidae



Asian Koel (Female)

Eudynamys scolopaceus

A medium sized bird slightly larger than myna, with long tail. Females are brown with white stripes and spots. These birds don't build nest and lay a single egg in other bird's nest (Usually Crow's)





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



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Columbidae



Blue Rock Pigeon

Columba livia

A medium sized bird that is blue grey with black bars on wings and tail. Has yellow, green and purple iridescence across the neck. Can be seen flying over, resting on buildings or on the shores to drink water.





General Characters



ಕಂದು ಪಾರಿವಾಳ



Columbidae



Laughing Dove / Little Brown Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis*

It is a medium sized pigeon like bird that is slim, with soil brown upperparts with grey wing edges. Has a pinkish head and neck, with a small patch of black and rufous checks on either side. Whitish in the ventral region with bright pink legs. Can be seen on wires or on the walking path.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



ದರ್ಜೆ ಹಕ್ಕಿ, ಸಿಂಪಿಗ



Cisticolidae



Common Tailorbird

Orthotomus sutorius

A small bird, slightly bigger than sparrow. It has greenish upper parts and whitish lower parts. Orange coloured cap and has a long upright tail. Can be seen amidst bushes and on trees where insects are available.





General Characters



ಬೂದು ಕಾಗೆ



Corvidae



House Jungle Crow

Corvus splendens

A large sized, grey colour bird with forehead, face, neck and wings in glossy black. Commonly seen on trees and buildings.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



ಕಪ್ಪು ಕಾಗೆ



Corvidae



Indian Jungle Crow

Corvus culminates

A large glossy black bird, with heavy black bill. Commonly seen around wooded areas around the lakes.





Deepika N Karanth

General Characters



ಮಡಿವಾಳ ಹಕ್ಕಿ



Muscicapidae



Oriental Magpie Robin

Copsychs saularis

A small bird with a long upright tail. Head and upperparts are black for the males and bluish grey for the females. Has a distinctive white bar on the wing. Can be seen on trees or bushes and sometimes on the ground.





General Characters



બેલી ઝલક



Muscicapidae



Pied Bushchat (Male)

Saxicola caprata

The male is completely black but has white on the rump, lower belly and a small marking on wings. The Female is dark brown and slightly streaked with rufous rump. Can be seen on bushes and on ground.





General Characters



બેલી ચક્રક



Muscicapidae



Pied Bushchat (Female)

Saxicola caprata

The male is completely black but has white on the rump, lower belly and a small marking on wings. The Female is dark brown and slightly streaked with rufous rump. Can be seen on bushes and on ground.





Vishal Naik

General Characters



ಗುಲಾಬಿ ಕೊರಳಿನ ಗಿಳಿ



Psittaculidae



Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

A medium sized bird that is green in colour. Males have a red and black ring around their neck. Females and juveniles lack the ring or have a pale ring like markings. They have a long tail and bright red beak. Seen commonly on fruiting and flowering trees or flying in flocks or pairs.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



ಚೋರೆ ಹಕ್ಕಿ



Columbidae



Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* / *Streptopelia chinensis*

Slightly smaller than pigeon. Grey head and belly, rosy breast, semi-collars on the neck with black colour with white tips, brownish-grey back and wings with white spots, white feathers on the edges of the wings and tail which is visible during flight. Short pink legs. Seen on wires or on the ground.





Vrijulal MV

General Characters



ಸಿಪಿಫೆ



Motacillidae



White-browed Wagtail

Motacilla maderaspatensis

A slender bird with black head and upper parts, white under parts, white supercilium and a single bar on the wing, long tail which it keeps wagging while foraging. Seen near water bodies and around urban gardens.



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ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ಗಲೆಯರು

ಮೊನ್ನೆ ವಿಮಾನ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣದಿ
ಗುಬ್ಬಿಗಳ ನೋಡಿದಾಗ
ನೆನಪು ಗಾಲಿ ಮೇಲೆ ಕುಳಿತು ಓಡಿತು ಹಳ್ಳಿಗೆ !

ಮನೆಯ ಅಂಗಳದಿ ಪಡಸಾಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಡಿದ್ದ ಭತ್ತದೆಡೆಗೆ
ಕುಪ್ಪಳಿಸಿ ಕುಪ್ಪಳಿಸುತ್ತಾ
ಆಚೀಚೆ ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ
ಕೊಕ್ಕಿನಿಂದ ಹೆಕ್ಕುತ್ತಾ
ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ ಸಪ್ಪಳ ಕೇಳಿದೊಡನೆ
ಬಿದ್ದ ನೆರಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದೊಡನೆ
ತನ್ನ ಗೆಲೆಯ ಗೆಲತಿಯರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪುರನೆ ಹಾರಿ
ಸೂರಿನ ಮೇಲೆ ಕುಳಿತು ತಿನ್ನುತ್ತಾ
ಚಿಲಿಪಿಲಿ ಸದ್ದು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ
ಮತ್ತೆ ಜರೆಯದು ಕೆಲಗೆ ಹಾರಿ ಬಂದು
ಪಾತ್ರೆ ತಟ್ಟೆ ತೊಟ್ಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ
ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ನಾನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ ರೆಕ್ಕೆಗಳ ಕೊಡಹುತ್ತಾ ಪಟಪಟನೆ ಬಡಿಯುತ್ತಾ
ಭತ್ತದ ಹುಲ್ಲು ಗರಿಯ ಮತ್ತೆ ಹಾರಿ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ದು
ಗೂಡೊಳಗೆ ಇಡುತ್ತಾ ಮೊಟ್ಟೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾವು ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾ
ಮರಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ
ಮನಕ್ಕೆ ಮುದ ನೀಡಿದ ಈ ಪುಟ್ಟ ಜೀವಗಳು ಎಲ್ಲಿ ಹೋದವು ?

ಹೇಳಿತು ಪುಟ್ಟ ಗುಬ್ಬಿ "ಕೇಳು ಗೆಲೆಯ "
"ಈ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಊರಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಂಚಿನ ಮನೆಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ
ಗೂಡು ಕಟ್ಟಲು ಹೆಂಚುಗಳ ಕಟ್ಟಿದ್ದ ಬಿದಿರಿನ ಗಲಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ
ಬಣಗಲು ಹಾಕುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಭತ್ತ ಕಾಳುಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ !
ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಗಳವೂ ಇಲ್ಲ !

ಚಿಟ್ಟಿಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲ ಚಿಟ್ಟಿಗಳ ಕಂಬಳಿ ಹುಳುಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ !
ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಇಲ್ಲಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಹೇಗಿದ್ದಾವು ನಮ್ಮ ಪುಟ್ಟ ಕಂದಗಳು ?
ಕೀಟಗಳ ಓಡಿಸಲು ನೀವು ಹಾಕಿದ ಕೀಟನಾಶಕ
ತಿಂದ ಕಂಬಳಿ ಹುಳುಗಳ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆ
ಆ ಕಾಳುಗಳ ಕಂಬಳಿ ಹುಳುಗಳ
ತಿಂದ ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಹಕ್ಕೂ
ಸೇರಿತು!
ಅದೇ ಈಗ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಂತತಿಯ
ಕೊನೆಗಾಣಿಸಿದೆ!
ಮಣ್ಣೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮುಚ್ಚಿದ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಕಾಂಕ್ರೀಟು
ಮಾಯವಾದ ಕೆರೆಗಳು
ಸುತ್ತುವರಿದ ಮೊಬೈಲ್
ಟವರ್‌ಗಳು
ನಮ್ಮ ನೆಲೆಯ ಛಿದ್ರಗೊಳಿಸಿವೆ

ಹೇಳು ಗೆಲೆಯ ಬದುಕುವುದಾದರೂ ಹೇಗೆ ?
ಏನಾದರೂ ಮಾಡು
ನಾವೂ ನಿಮ್ಮೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬದುಕಲು!

– ಡಾ. ಕೆಎಚ್ ವಿನಯಕುಮಾರ್



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