

ADDITIONS TO THE BIRDS OF MELGHAT TIGER RESERVE, MAHARASHTRA

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Melghat Tiger Reserve (21°15'-21°45'N and 76°57'-77°30'E) is located in Amravati District of Maharashtra. and covers an area of 1676.93km². The Tiger Reserve is known to support maximum number of tigers in Maharashtra. A preliminary list of 33 birds was prepared by R.T. Jenkin (DFO, Melghat) in 1925 and was published in Guide to Chikalda (Nelson, 1925). Sawarkar (1987) published a comprehensive checklist of the birds of Melghat which included 252 species of birds. Besides the old records of Fairy Blue-Bird (*Irena puella*) and recent records of Great Black Woodpecker (*Dryocopus javensis*), Stork-billed Kingfisher (*Halcyon capensis*) and Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*), lately Forest Owlet (*Heteroglaux blewitti*) has been rediscovered in Melghat Tiger Reserve.

I have noted the following three additional species in Melghat Tiger Reserve, which makes the total number of species 260.

Little Green Heron (*Butorides striatus*)

Resident and uncommon. I saw this bird on 8 April 2001 in Sipna River basin near Semadoh. On 1 July 2001 it was again seen along the river in Bhimkund Valley near Chikhaldara. It prefers undisturbed nullahs.

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Resident and uncommon. This bird was seen by me for the first time during the pugmark census of April 1999. Then it was again seen in Sipna Basin on 3 September 2001.

Crested Bunting (*Melophus lathami*)

Resident, uncommon, seen along riverine and in dense forest. Seen at various places like Malur, Dhakna, Semadoh and Buralghat. Nesting behaviour seen near Dharkhora waterfall outside Melghat Tiger Reserve during August 1999.

I also sighted a Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter nisus*) once during waterhole census in May 2000. Since this bird is known to be a winter migrant, its occurrence in Melghat needs confirmation.

Reference

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Received 20 August 2002

Finally accepted 30 December 2002

NESTING RECORD OF BLACK IBIS *PSEUDIBIS PAPILLIOSA* IN KOTA DISTRICT, RAJASTHAN

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During one of our visits to Udupuria - a village pond on 19 May 1998 to check the breeding of Painted Storks (*Mycteria leucocephala*), we saw a pair of Black Ibis (*Pseudibis papilliosa*) nesting on a Banyan tree (*Ficus bengalensis*). We searched for more possible nests but there were none.

This pond is situated 30km from Kota Town (25°10'N & 75°56'E) and about 10km from the river Chambal. The pond was first discovered accidentally as the second breeding site for the Painted Storks in Rajasthan after Bharatpur in 1996 (Vyas & Nair, in press). This site was recorded the following years to check the breeding of Black Ibis and saw a increase of only one more nest up to the year 2000. According to Ali and Ripley (1978) Black Ibis breed during March and October in northern India, later in Gujarat, Deccan and the south. This is the first record of Black Ibis breeding in Kota District, Rajasthan.

References

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Received 19 March 2002

Finally accepted 6 December 2002