

Newsletter for Birdwatchers

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ಮಾತಿಗಿಂತ, ಕೃತಿ ಮೇಲು : ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಸಾಧನೆ

ಕನ್ನಡ ರಾಜ್ಯೋತ್ಸವ ದಿನ : ಕನ್ನಡ ಮಾತನಾಡುವ ಜನರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಗೂಡಿ, ಒಂದೇ ಆದಳತಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು ಅಪೂರ್ವದಿನ. ಈ ಮಂಗಳ ದಿನದ ಮೂವತ್ತೊಂದನೆಯ ವಾರ್ಷಿಕೋತ್ಸವವನ್ನು ಆಚರಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಮೂರು ದಶಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕನ್ನಡ ನಾಡು, ಕನ್ನಡ ನುಡಿ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ, ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ, ಕಲೆಗಳ ಸಂವರ್ಧನೆಗಾಗಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಅಮಿರತವಾಗಿ ಶ್ರಮಿಸಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡ ಜನತೆಯ ಕ್ಷೇಮಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹಲವು ಹತ್ತು ಬಗೆಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ಹಮ್ಮಿಕೊಂಡು ಕಾರ್ಯಗತಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಈ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳ ಸಿಂಹಾವಲೋಕನಕ್ಕೆ ರಾಜ್ಯೋತ್ಸವ ದಿನ : ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತ ದಿನ.

ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸಾಧನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಜನತೆಯೇ ಕಾರಣ ಎಂಬುದು ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ದೃಢವಾದ ನಂಬಿಕೆ. ಜನತೆಯ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕಳಕಳಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಈ ಅನಂದದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರಿಗೂ ತನ್ನ ರುಫಾಶಿಯಗಳನ್ನು ಕೋರುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಟ್ಟು ಸಮಾಜದ ಅಗತ್ಯಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಧೋರಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕೆ ತರಲು ಬದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂಬ ಅಂಶವನ್ನು ಮನರ್ದೃಢೀಕರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಜನತೆಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರ :—ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪರಿಷತ್ತುಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸುವುದರ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಗಾಂಧೀಜಿಯವರ ಕನಸು ನನಸಾಗಿದೆ. "ಜನತೆಯ ಕೈಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರ"—ಇದು ಈಗ ಕಾರ್ಯರೂಪಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಮತ ಚಲಾಯಿಸಲು ವಯೋಮಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಇಳಿಸುವುದು ಮಹಿಳೆ ಯರಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜಾತಿ—ಜನಾಂಗದವರಿಗೆ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ ಮುಂತಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಚುನಾವಣಾ ಸುಧಾರಣೆಗಳು, ಆಡಳಿತ ವಿಕೇಂದ್ರೀಕರಣದ ಆಶಯವನ್ನು ನಿಜವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಥಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವ ತತ್ವವನ್ನು ಸಾರ್ಥಕಗೊಳಿಸಿದೆ.

ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳ ಚುನಾವಣೆ, ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವ : ಪದ್ಧತಿಯನ್ನು ಪುನರ್ ಚೈತನ್ಯಗೊಳಿಸಿದೆ. 'ಲೋಕಾಯುಕ್ತ ರಚನೆ' ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಮಾಣಿಕತೆಯನ್ನು ತರುವ ದಿಶೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ವಿನೂತನ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ. ಆಡಳಿತ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಹಂತಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಕನ್ನಡ ಬಳಕೆಯಿಂದ ಆಡಳಿತವನ್ನು ಜನರ ಸಮೀಪಕ್ಕೆ ತರಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಲೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಗಿರುವ ಪ್ರಗತಿ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಕಾಣುವಂಥದು.

ಭೀಕರ ಬರಗಾಲ :—ಕಳೆದ 5 ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಿಂದೆಂದೂ ಕಂಡಿರದ ಭೀಕರ ಬರಗಾಲ. ಬರಪೀಡಿತರಿಗೆ ಸಕಾಲಿಕ ನೆರವು ನೀಡಲು ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಲಭ್ಯವಿರುವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲಗಳನ್ನು ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಿತವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿದೆ. ಬರಪರಿಹಾರ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳು ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಪರಿ ಪರಿಸುವುದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಶಾಶ್ವತ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಸ್ತಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೂ ನೆರವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಂಥ ವಿಷಯ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲೂ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಪ್ರಗತಿಪರ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ಕಡೆಗಣಿಸಿಲ್ಲ.

ನೀರಿಗಾಗಿ ಶೋಧ :—1983 ಮತ್ತು 1987ರ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 1104 ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಿಗೆ ನಲ್ಲಿಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ನೀರನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತು 47391 ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳನ್ನು ತೋಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಹಸಿರು ಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಯೋಜನೆ :—ಬಡವರು ಆಹಾರ ಧಾನ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಬಟ್ಟೆಗಳನ್ನು ರಿಯಾಯಿತಿ ದರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳಲು, 'ಹಸಿರು ಕಾರ್ಡ್' ಒಂದು ಪರದಾನ. 30 ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳಿಗೆ ಇದರ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನ.

ಅಗತ್ಯವುಳ್ಳವರಿಗೆ ನೆರವು :—ಆಸರೆೆಯಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಅನಾಥ ವಿಧವೆಯರಿಗೆ 'ವಿಧವಾ ಮಾಸಾಶನ', 3,64,000. ಫಲಾನುಭವಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಿಂಗಳಿಗೆ 50 ರೂ.ಗಳ ಮಾಸಿಕ ನೆರವು : ಕೃಷಿ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಗರ್ಭಿಣಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರಿಗೆ 3 ತಿಂಗಳ ಅವಧಿಗೆ, ಮಾಸಿಕ 100 ರೂ.ಗಳ ಹೆರಿಗೆ ಭತ್ಯೆ. ಬಡವರು ಕಡಿಮೆ ಖರ್ಚಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮದುವೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಅನುಕೂಲವಾಗುವ 'ತಾಳಿಭಾಗ್ಯ' ಯೋಜನೆಯಿಂದ ಸಾವಿರಾರು ಬಡ ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಾಲದ ಹೊರೆಯಿಂದ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ.

ಉಚಿತ ಪಠ್ಯ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮವಸ್ತ್ರ :—ಬಡವರ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆಯ ದಿಶೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉಚಿತ ಪಠ್ಯ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮವಸ್ತ್ರ ವಿತರಣೆ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಕಾರೀ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ. ಇದರಿಂದ ರಾಜ್ಯದ 70 ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಚಿತ ಸಮವಸ್ತ್ರ ಮತ್ತು 165 ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಉಚಿತ ಪಠ್ಯ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಲಭ್ಯ.

ಒಣ ಬೇಸಾಯಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ :—ಮಳೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಸುಮಾರು ಶೇಕಡಾ 80ರಷ್ಟು ರೈತರಿಗೆ ನೆರವಾಗುವುದು. ಈ ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶ. ನೀರಿನ ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ಬಳಕೆಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ, ಕಡಿಮೆ ವೆಚ್ಚ, ಅಧಿಕ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ, ಕೃಷಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪಶುಸಂಗೋಪನೆಗಳ ಪೂರಕ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಇವು ಈ ಯೋಜನೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಅಂಶಗಳು. ಈ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 1,11,549 ಹೆಕ್ಟೇರ್ ಕೃಷಿ ಭೂಮಿ ಮತ್ತು 11,396 ಹೆಕ್ಟೇರ್‌ಗಳಷ್ಟು ಕೃಷಿಗೆ ಯೋಗ್ಯವಲ್ಲದ ಭೂ ಪ್ರದೇಶವನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೊಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ :—1983ರಿಂದ ಕಾರ್ಯಗತವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಯೋಜನೆಯಿಂದ 23,757 ಹೆಕ್ಟೇರ್‌ನಷ್ಟು ಭೂಪ್ರದೇಶ ಹಸಿರಾಗಿದೆ. ಗಿಡ ನಟ್ಟು ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಜನರಿಗೆ ಸಸಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸಲಹೆಯನ್ನು ಉಚಿತವಾಗಿ ಒದಗಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಪರಿಗೆ 3300 ಲಕ್ಷ ಸಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೆಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಒಂದು ಮಹತ್ತರ ಸಾಧನೆಯೆಂದರೆ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕೆಗಳ ವಿಕೇಂದ್ರೀಕರಣ—ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದಾದ್ಯಂತ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕೆಗಳು ವಿಕಾಸವಾಗಲು ಮುಕ್ತ ವಾತಾವರಣ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಈಗ ಹೊಸ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಕಾರೀ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳು. ಜನತೆಯ ಬದುಕಿನ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟವನ್ನು ಸುಧಾರಿಸುವುದೇ ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳ ಗುರಿ. ಈ ಐತಿಹಾಸಿಕ ದಿನದಂದು ಜನತೆಯ ಸೇವೆಗೆ ಸರಕಾರ ಸದಾ ಕಂಕಣಬದ್ಧ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ದೃಢಪಡಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ವಾರ್ತೆ

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Editorial

Birdwatchers' Network

The number of bird watching and natural history groups which have flowered in India during recent years is most encouraging. Can someone take the trouble to make a list of such associations for our Newsletter? Knowing about the existence of such groups, and of their special interests and capabilities is the first step towards useful collaboration. What prompted me to write this was a letter from H.N. Mathur of Tripura Rehabilitation Plantation Corporation Ltd., Agarthala - 799 001, Tripura West. Mathur is now bringing out Tripura Nature News, and if foresters are getting interested in our birds they will probably ensure that their plantations reflect some concern for our avian population.

A highly active group is the Madras Naturalists Society, 36 IV Main Road, R.A. Puram, Madras - 600 028. In their circular of June 1987, a reference is made to the sighting of the Rufous bellied hawk eagle (*Iophotrichis kienerii*) in Periyar. This is a most interesting bird both because of its handsome appearance and its discontinuous distribution (Handbook Vol. I, No. 165, page 270). Some of our readers in Kerala should look out for it. Rishad Naoroji who has made his mark as an outstanding raptor photographer, is keen to photograph this bird.

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Asian Waterfowl Count

Mr. S.A. Hussain of the Bombay Natural History Society, who is in charge of the Asian Waterfowl Count, has sent out his second circular. This also includes some excerpts from correspondence received by him.

Prof. K.K. Neelakantan writes: "I was greatly amused to find that the data relating to 'Kerala' show (or suggest) that there are just 2 Little Egrets, 33 Pond Herons, 4 Reef Herons, 3 Night Herons, a single Coot and so on I would suggest that in preparing the tabulated statement for 1988 you should give precise details of the spots where counts were carried out and also name or names of the persons who did the counting."

Mr. V.S. Velayudhan says: "In our vast country, with thousands of tanks, jheels, nullahs, it is really disappointing to note that only 164 sites were covered by 95 participants. In fact, in Tamil Nadu we have 40,000 and odd irrigation tanks of which, I think, at least 1% are quite big and provide abode for waterfowl. You have mentioned that almost six States went uncensused. In order to avoid such a situation and to cover more sites

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than the 1987 census, may I suggest to you to appeal individually to state their willingness to participate in the forthcoming census to the following :-

- (a) BNHS members.
- (b) Birdwatcher's Newsletter members.
- (c) To Environmental NGO's in India - A directory was published by Environmental Services Group of WWF Delhi.
- (d) Appeal through Indian Forester.
- (e) Appeal in TV.
- (f) Appeal through Sanctuary, Environment Today magazine. "

I have no doubt that a great deal of enthusiasm has been generated for this Count as evidenced by activities in Bangalore, and that in the next few years we will be able to have a truly scientific assessment of our wetlands and waterfowl in our country.

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Who is the Author?

The article on 'Some Birds in a Cardamom Estate' in this Newsletter is unsigned. Unless the author wishes to remain anonymous, I would like to know his name. It is the type of article reflecting the joys of birding which are most welcome.

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Articles

Some Birds in a Cardamom Estate

In late February this year I had occasion to visit a cardamom plantation about 20 kilometres from Kumily, in the high ranges of Kerala. I managed to make some time - about three hours in the early afternoon - for a quick look at the birds.

Three somewhat steep hills running North to South, and the valleys in between comprised the 500 acre area of the estate. The altitude ranged from 3000 to 4000 feet. The forest cover is good. A number of streams flowed down the slopes to join the main streams in the valleys.

The Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*) and the Blue Winged Parakeet (*Psittacula columboides*) were beyond doubt, the commonest birds. Both were loud and boisterous and plentiful. The parakeets were seen at nest holes in the trunks of tall, straight, smooth boled trees known locally as the "Irumbarakki" - a name which may be loosely translated as "that which saws through iron". Tallying this name with that I find in the "Handbook", this tree is probably

the Ironwood tree (*Mesua ferrea*). The nests were neat round holes, about 25 to 30 feet above the ground. The parakeets put on some spectacular displays of precision flying, with groups barrelling through the forest at breakneck speeds, weaving in and out among the trees with breathtaking virtuosity. The hill mynas too were nesting in holes similar to the ones used by the parakeets. Couples were seen sitting on branches near the nest holes preening themselves and constantly emitting gurgles and whistles and clicks as if carrying on a desultory conversation. The calls of the hill mynas resounded through the forest all day long and mingled with the equally varied repertoire of the blue winged parakeets - a fascinating variety of shrieks and mumbles, mutters and screams, whistles and clicks.

The most striking bird was certainly the Fairy Blue Bird (*Irena puella*). I saw a pair on two occasions, feeding on fruits of what I think was a species of fig. In the shady forest, the iridescent blue in the plumage of the male sparkled in the errant rays of sunlight slanting through the leafy canopy. No calls were heard.

A large flock of Black Bulbuls (*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*) whistled and wheezed on the ground and low down among the smaller trees. The soft and pleasant calls of a flock of about 20 White-eyes (*Zosterops palpebrosa*) filled an open patch overgrown with lantana. On the ground at the edge of the tangled lantana was a solitary Indian Blue Chat (*Erithacus brunneus*), standing very still and keeping an eye on me. It hopped on to a lantana stem and moved out of sight. Nearby, a stream had been crudely dammed and a small tree with yellow flower spikes slanted over the pool. On the tip of a bare branch sat a Nilgiri Verditer Flycatcher (*Muscicapa albicaudata*).

A pair of Golden Orioles (*Oriolus oriolus*) called from a nearby tree. In spite of the brilliant black and yellow coloration, these birds were very difficult to spot in the sun speckled foliage and though they kept up the sound, it took some time to locate them on the tree. While searching for them I saw a Heartspotted Woodpecker (*Hemicircus canente*) on the same tree, working diligently. A flock of Black-backed Pied Flycatcher-Shrikes (*Hemipus picatus*) were seen on the lowest branches of tall shade trees. In a similar setting I ran into a flock of Malabar Wood Shrikes (*Tephrodornis virgatus*). A gathering of Travancore Yellow-cheeked Tits (*Parus xanthogenys*) burst across the path from among the cardamom plants and hopped and skittered from plant to plant calling vigorously all the while.

Black Drongos (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) and Racket-tailed Drongos (*Dicrurus paradiseus*) were seen. As usual the latter was by far the more vocal of the two. While both were seen together in some areas, the black drongo preferred more open spaces while the racket-tailed drongos were seen inside well wooded patches. A White-throated Ground Thrush (*Zoothera citrina*) hopped about on the clean weeded ground among the newly planted cardamom. A number of Malabar Whistling Thrushes (*Myiophonus horsfieldii*) were also seen, and many more were heard. Those seen were all on the ground from where, at our approach, they flew off at high speed, keeping low, darting with agility among the stems of the cardamom. One bird came jetting out of an old abandoned dry well. A

perfunctory look gave no indication of what the bird had been up to there. A solitary male Paradise Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone paradisi*) in full adult plumage turned and somersaulted around a clump of young trees, its long white streamers following and floating gracefully, the harsh calls and beautiful plumage and flight presenting a striking contrast.

The calls of the Jerdon's Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula badia*) were heard off and on. Its coloration provides excellent camouflage. I spotted one of the birds after a hard search, high up and well concealed in the foliage of a tall leafy tree. Despite a careful look, I was able to see only this one bird on that tree. Moments later, to my chagrin, nearly six of them fell out of the tree and went clapping off!

Something about a pair of Tree Pies caught my eye and a closer look showed that they were not the common tree pies (*Dendrocitta vagabunda*) of the plains but their white bellied cousins, the Southern Tree Pies (*Dendrocitta leucogastra*). Though very similar to the common tree pie, there was, nonetheless, something attractive about these relations. Maybe its just the novelty - further proof of the old adage that familiarity breeds contempt! A number of Velvet-fronted Nuthatches (*Sitta frontalis*) were seen working their way around the trunks of trees, uttering short sharp whistles as they went. Other birds included the Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla caspica*), the Goldfronted Chloropsis (*Chloropsis aurifrons*), the Small Green Barbet (*Megalaima viridis*), the Yellow-browed Bulbul (*Hypsipetes indicus*), large numbers of the Red-vented Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus cafer*) and the Red-whiskered Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*), the Jungle Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), the Koel (*Scolopacea eudynamis*), one Paddy Bird (*Ardeola grayii*), the Purple Sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*) and the Purple-rumped Sunbird (*Nectarinia zeylonica*).

Throughout the day the challenging crow of the male Grey Jungle Fowl (*Gallus sonneratii*) had been heard from various points in the estate. While walking along a stream, there was a sudden commotion on the slope across the stream and a great deal of frenzied activity among the cardamom plants accompanied by shrill screams. Then a large unidentified predator flapped ponderously up and out of sight above the trees. We crossed the stream and came across a small female Grey Jungle Fowl standing, apparently disoriented, inside a clump of cardamom. One of the people accompanying us took the bird in hand and it did not react. When released, it walked away slowly into the undergrowth along the stream. There's a story there, but unfortunately, I could not satisfy my curiosity as we were busy then on matters relating to what E.M. Forster described as the "world of telegrams and anger".

Numerous other birds were sighted but could not be conclusively identified. This is particularly true of the hordes of tiny birds high up in the canopy. My equipment consisted of a 7 x 50 binoculars. Something with a little more magnification would have been a great help.

It is hard to convey the flavour of a cardamom plantation like this one, where the original forest was still, to a great extent, intact. The tall trees provide a pleasant shade keeping out the direct sun which even at this altitude is quite hot. There is a constant cool breeze and the coolness is

enhanced by the sound of streams gurgling down somewhat precipitous courses and the rustle and patter of leaves and foliage. One can walk all day and still feel fresh and ready for more. However, in nearby plantations adjacent to the one I visited, there were ample signs of damage and wanton destruction of the original forest cover. I was told that in some areas the forest had been extensively cut down to facilitate the cultivation of pepper. With the prices of pepper ruling at the present high levels, this tendency may become more marked in the future. Due to regular weeding operations in cardamom plantations, it is rare for a young tree to get a chance to grow. Hence, regeneration of the forest seems to be at a virtual standstill. Fallen trees of the original forest are replaced with species such as Indian Coral (*Erythrina indica*), Silver Oak (*Grevillea*), Jack Fruit tree (*Artocarpus heterophylla*) and others. I wonder how long it will be before these introduced trees are in a majority and the character of these forests is lost entirely. Another matter for concern is the extensive use of pesticides in cardamom cultivation. In the long term, the continued application of these chemicals will almost certainly have a deleterious effect on the flora and fauna of cardamom forests.

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The Birds in a Developing Housing Colony by H. Daniel Wesley, 126 Ramalinga Nagar South, Tiruchirapalli - 620 017.

Ever since I moved into my house in the colony of Ramalinganagar South Extension, Tiruchirapalli - 620 017, in 1981, I have had the opportunity of observing many birds without moving out. The housing colony is developed in a paddy field. Of the 126 house sites, there were just about 30 houses completed and occupied in 1981. The rest of the plots remained fallow with grass growing profusely in the stagnant water following the rain and attracted cattle and sheep. My house in the last plot and quite isolated then it gave me a sweeping view of the whole area. The situation has not remained the same; the colony is almost filled with houses. However, I still enjoy the privilege of having an almost total view of the paddy fields, and vast stretch of about 30 acres of fallow fields behind the house.

Quite a change in the bird species content has taken place. The resident ground nesting Indian pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*), the Redwinged Bush Lark (*Mirafra erythroptera*), the Black Bellied Finch Lark (*Eremopterix grisea*) and the Painted Snipe (*Rostratula benghalensis*) have been pushed off the area and are heard and seen rarely. A similar fate has happened to the migrants, Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) and White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*). The birds which have adapted equally to the colony of houses are the Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla maderaspatensis*) and the White Breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*). The Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*) and the small blue kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) visit the area to fish in the waters. The Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*), the Wood sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), the Fantail Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), the Indian Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*), the River tern (*Sterna aurentia*), the Black Bellied Tern (*Sterna acuticauda*), the Gull Billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*), the Black Winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), the Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), the Cattle

Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), the Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*), the Streaked Fantail Warbler (*Cisticola juncidis*) and the Chestnut Bittern (*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*) are to be seen in the paddy fields before and after the transplantation. It is no more probable to see the Kora (*Gallix cinerea*) that used to forage in the grassy fallow land and the ripening and sagging paddies, walking over them. The white breasted Water Hen (*Anaethya phoenicurus*) will soon be displaced, I am sure.

With the rapid addition of the houses and the concomitant planting of garden plants and fruit trees including the ubiquitous coconut tree, there have appeared many bird species in stages. My house has an added attraction to the birds, the compound 'wall' being of Ipomea, coral trees and prosopis besides others in the compound. Since 1981 the birds that have occupied the housing colony and raised broods are: the tailor bird (*Orthotomus sutorius*), the red vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*), the ashy wren warbler (*Prinia socialis*), the purple rumped sunbird (*Nectarinia zeylonica*), the loten's sunbird (*N. lotenia*), the common sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), the jungle crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), the common crow (*Corvus splendens*), the drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*), the common babbler (*Turdoides caudatus*), the pied crested cuckoo (*Clamator jacobinus*) and the spotted dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*). The weaver bird (*Ploceus philippinus*) has usurped the coconut trees at the periphery of the colony. The Indian myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), the black headed myna (*Sturnus pagodarum*), the white throated munia (*Lonchura malabarica*), the Indian robin (*Saxicoloides fulicata*) and the hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) have not yet found the colony environment suitable for breeding in, although they forage in there. Only once - 7 April 1985 - did the small green billed malkoha (*Rhopodytes viridirostris*) pass through the colony. Likewise the tree pie (*Dendrocitta vagabunda*) visited the area only once. It is however heard and seen in the dense vegetation 200 metres away, outside the colony.

Among the non-aquatic migratory species, the golden oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) is a regular visitor to the coral trees as also are the grey headed myna (*Sturnus malabaricus*). The rufous backed shrike (*Lanius schach*) and the bay backed shrike (*Lanius vittatus*) had not been observed since last seen on 5 October 1983 and 2 September 1984 respectively. The brown shrike (*Lanius cristatus*), however, is a regular visitor to the area, roosting in the coral trees and the prosopis most of the season. The two swallow sub-species *Hirundo rustica rustica* and *H.r.gutturalis* are active birds, most of the time on the wing and resting occasionally in groups on the electric and telephone wires in the colony. Last winter a black naped blue flycatcher (*Monorcha azurea*) landed in the coral trees and was around for a day. Another new comer since last year, alternately the female and the male in non-breeding plumage, was the paradise flycatcher (*Terpsiphone paradise*). The blue tailed bee eater (*Merops philippinus*) appears overhead, on the paddy fences and wires mostly during the rains; the small green bee eater (*M. orientalis*) is observed most of the year on the wires and fences.

A small sleek warbler (*Acrocephalus* ?) that eludes identification, about the size of the sparrow with uniform upper plumage, white undersurface and supercilium is a regular winter visitor, moving about in the low fences and tall trees calling as it goes Tick, Tick; Trrr. Trrr or a cheee.

All these birds will have deserted my house when I have yielded to the pressure for having a brick wall for the compound.

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Further Notes on the Local Movements of the Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*) by
V. Santharam, C/o Salim Ali School of Ecology, P.B.154, Pondicherry - 605 001

Before giving further details on the local movements of the Pond Heron, I would first like to make a mention of the local movements of the author! I shifted to Pondicherry in August 1987, to pursue a post-graduate course leading to M.S. in Ecology, offered by the Salim Ali School of Ecology, Pondicherry University. I have, however, been keeping in touch with Madras, by coming at least once a month over the week-ends.

Coming back to the Pond Herons, I shall continue from where I left last time. After the sighting on 1.8.87. at the Simpson Estate, Madras, I saw my next Pond Heron on 29.8.87. at a ditch close to the Chinglepet Lake and again on 27.9.87. noticed 2-3 in flight near Chingleput.

On 8th October, there was a single bird at the marshes, close to the lighthouse at Pondicherry, and another was noticed flying over the town on 11th October. On 19th October, in Madras, at the Theosophical Society, I noticed 4 Pond Herons in worn-out summer plumage. On a field trip to the Kaliveli Tank, 20 kms. north of Pondicherry on 24th October, I noticed at least 15-20 birds in the inundated paddy fields, besides several others in flight. The next day at the Pondicherry town, I noticed small flocks of 8-10 birds and at times even solitary ones, flying at low heights, heading southwards. The flocking pattern was loose and the flight was erratic. In the brief period of observation that morning, I counted over 38 birds and the same evening, I saw a flock of 32 besides several smaller groups. Some of the birds even landed briefly on the coconut trees in the neighbourhood. On 26th, I saw 5 individuals. On 28th October, on a field outing to the Ousteri Lake, 8 kms. S.W. of Pondicherry, there were 15-20 birds in the fields and 30-40 in flight. On 4th November, I saw another flock of 30+ Pond Herons, this time heading westwards. By this time, the Pond Herons were well established in the fields, marshes and wetlands and were once again a part of the rural landscape.

In my last note, I had hesitated to write on the local movements of yet another heron since I had only made scanty observations on this species. But this season, I was able to see the migration in greater detail that I felt I should mention it for comments and views from other readers. The species here is the cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) which is not regularly seen at the Adyar Estuary and so I am not sure if the bird is around in summer months. However, I have never come across the nests of this species anywhere so far in this part of the country, and most of the birds that I have seen in breeding plumage were during the early part of summer. However, Ali & Ripley (1983) say that this species nest "even within populous cities like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta - not necessarily close to water." The breeding season is "mainly June to August in N. India, November to February in the South, February to July in Ceylon."

This season, I noticed a lone cattle egret on 4th October 1987, at the Adyar Estuary. On 7th October, I noticed over 100 cattle egrets heading southwards over Pondicherry Town. I kept seeing flock after flock heading in the same direction both in the early morning hours and in the evenings, and this continued till about the first week of November (and possibly even later). I have seen flocks of cattle egrets over Madras city during October/November in the last few years but I am too lazy to dig out the dates from my notes!

I hope it would be possible for every reader to keep notes on these two extremely common bird species in their respective areas for at least the next 2 or 3 years and compare them in order to get a good picture of the local movements in the sub-continent.

With reference to the note by Mr. Eric J. Lott on "Birds of the Kaveri Valley - Additions" (NLBW Sept-Oct 1987), I wish to point out that the white winged black tit (*Parus muchalis*) has earlier been recorded from southern India, "once from each of the following localities: Eastern Ghats west of Nellore, Bangalore, and Satysamangala (Biligirirangan Hills). The occurrence of this species and *P. major* is mutually exclusive." - "Handbook". There was also a typographical error in the note - "Green bearded bee eater" which should be read as "Blue bearded bee eater."

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Bird Migration and Ringing by Mrs. Jamal Ara, M-7 Single Storey, Harpur Housing Colony, Ranchi - 834 012 (Bihar).

One of the greatest mysteries and adventure of bird life is migration or travelling. Migration covers the annual movements of birds, from their breeding haunts in the northern regions of Asia, Europe and America to the warm lands lying south during autumn and early winter, and the return journey during spring and early summer. During this period the bird population keeps on changing every few days with the constant coming and going of flocks of feathered travellers. Our winter friends come to spend their Christmas holidays with us after covering long distances through the air to reach their own particular place. When the nights grow warm, back they all flock to their breeding grounds. So forward and backward, these travellers pass over the country twice in the year - autumn and spring. They are wonderfully punctual too - unless they are delayed by bad weather. We may calculate almost to a day when we may expect our bird friends to return from their summer holidays. How eagerly we watch for them and welcome the first visitor, carrying the winter on its back. Not only are the birds punctual but they are faithful souls as well. Many return year after year to their old haunts.

Another type is local migration. Some species move out of an area into another, not very far away. All birds have a certain amount of local movement, caused by the stresses of living and the variations in food supply. So local migration means a complete disappearance of a species from a particular area,

and its simultaneous presence in another area, from where it had been absent formerly. This kind of movement is particularly noticeable in Northern India where the seasons are well marked and well defined. Allied to it is vertical movement, in which birds that spend the summer in the higher reaches of mountains come down during the winter to the lower foothills or even the plains. This type is very common within India, where the mighty Himalayas lie next door to the Indo-Gangetic plain. A number of birds which breed during summer at altitudes exceeding 10,000 feet, become common all over the plains. In such cases the local race mixes with those that have arrived from such distant lands as Siberia.

The brave little voyagers take great risk while travelling long, long distances through the air over hill and dale, forest and plain, large stretches of water to reach the land of their heart's desire. They face many dangers and hardships on the way. Sudden storms arise and drive them far out of their course. Often they are blown right out to sea and sink down into the wild waves. Then at night bright lights often attract and confuse the birds - thousands of them dash against tall lighted buildings and monuments as they pass over towns and cities. And in a fog the birds may become hopelessly lost.

Migrating birds do not fly at their fastest. The migration speed is usually from 30-40 miles an hour and rarely exceeds 50. Small birds seldom exceed 30 miles per hour, most shore birds between 40 and 50 miles per hour, while many ducks travel at 50 to 60. Migrants generally fly at under 3000 ft. But some travellers have been found at greater heights: golden plover at 6000 ft., lapwings at 6500 ft., rooks 11000 ft., godwit and curlew at 20,000 ft. and geese have been found flying at an altitude of 29,000 ft. above the sea.

Some birds make the long journey in easy stages, stopping to rest and picnic on the way. Others are in a great hurry and fly enormous distances without pausing to rest and feed. Some fly by day, some both by day and night, but most of them speed on their way through darkness after the sun has set. On many a soft autumn and spring night we hear the faint mysterious calls of winged travellers as they pass far above us.

Birds of gregarious habits travel usually in flocks. The 'V' shaped formation of cranes and geese attract much attention as they speed across the sky. Some birds start off alone, or with just one or two companions. When the time for journey approaches nearer, the birds grow restless. Swallows, flycatchers, warblers, shore birds, water birds, begin to gather in flocks - each with their own kind - and after a great deal of excited fluttering, twittering and calling, they rise up into the air and away all go. Usually the male birds go first to their breeding grounds in bachelor parties and the hen birds follow them in a few days. When leaving our country they put on their brightest costumes, for spring time in bird land, is a courting time, and all wish to look their very best!

The movement of birds with the changing seasons is known from the earliest times. In the Bible, the books of Jeremiah and Job both contain references to the southward movement of hawks and cranes, and in the Iliad a similarity has been drawn between the movement of the Trojan Army and that of cranes during the winter.

Very much later scientific studies of migration started. The first step was of the establishment of lighthouses - where lighthouse keepers spent their lonely hours by watching the flocks of birds that came and rested there - attracted by the light beams. Specially in the foggy and stormy weather it was they who first noticed the seasonal movement of particular species. From here onwards, scientific investigation moved along three distinct lines :- direct observation, ringing and creating artificial conditions to study their effect on migration.

Most of the information about bird movements, has come from ringing of young and old birds. Ringing is done by capturing the bird and putting on the bird's leg a light band, maybe of aluminium, celluloid or plastic, bearing registration number, date, identifying mark, and the address to which the finder is requested to return the ring. The place where such a bird is shot or captured or found dead, gives the locality to which it has migrated. To collect the facts about the birds' flight and destinations, the bird-ringers have ringed millions of birds. The return from these ringings are under 10 percent, but from many thousands of results which have been collected it has now been possible to plot regular routes of flight and indicate dates of arrival and departure with accuracy.

Bird ringing did not begin until 1740, when Johann Leonhard Frisch of Berlin first tied real strings around the legs of swallows before the autumn migration. But real scientific bird ringing scheme was started in 1899 by Mortensen in Denmark, who used rings with a complete address and identification marks, followed a few years later by schemes in Germany and Hungary. The United Kingdom entered the field in 1909, followed much later by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Today the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are leaders in the field, doing ringing on a very large scale. Our own country has started this work comparatively recently in 1958, on a small scale, but is conducting an organised work on ringing. From the records we gather that United States and Canada between them, mark about 600,000 birds every year. The U.S.S.R. and British Isles have ringed more than three million birds, Germany about four million, Holland and Sweden more than a million each. India has ringed more than 50,000 birds so far.

From ringing it has been proved that the main migratory movement is generally north to south in the autumn and vice versa in the spring. Thus the main travellers come to India through the north-west, and start from between Lake Baikal and the Sea of Aral in Siberia. But some storks do come over from as far west as Braunschweig in Germany. The other route used by birds from Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan is over the passes in north-eastern Himalayas. The main routes of entry to India are through the passes on the north-western and north-eastern flanks of the Himalayas - but certain birds on the direct route fly straight across the main Himalayan range and do not detour. Those birds are capable of flying at very great heights.

Ringing has proved the large distances covered by birds. The Arctic Tern flies from the Arctic Circle to the Antarctic Circle, covering more than 11,000 miles each way. A snipe breeds in Japan and flies 3,000 miles non-stop over the ocean to spend the winter in Tasmania and eastern Australia. The

wood cock on its winter movement flies from the Himalayas to the Nilgiris without pause, a distance of 1,500 miles. The wild duck come to our jheels and tanks from Central Asia and Siberia - flying 2 to 3 thousand miles over the Himalayas. The white storks come from Germany and the Rosy Pastors from E. Europe or Central Asia. Wagtails, about the size of a sparrow, come from the Himalaya regions and Central Asia into the plains. Smallest of all, the willow warblers - half the size of a sparrow, cover as many as 2,000 miles to reach us every winter.

Why do birds migrate inspite of heavy loss of life on the way? Primarily to escape low temperatures and restricted food supply, which in the case of water birds disappear altogether due to freezing. And the shorter time available for feeding due to the long winter nights. The main reason for the spring movement is the availability of nesting sites, and to escape the summer heat.

The migration of birds is a fascinating study, indeed, and there are many unsolved problems that lie ahead. For example, how do the birds know when to start? How do they know their way over the sea without any landmark? How do they manage to return year after year to the same locality? How do the young cuckoos rejoin the adult birds without previous experience, and without any guidance by any adult cuckoo, who fly to India and Africa several weeks before the young cuckoos are ready to leave their foster-parents! And there are still many more, equally interesting problems lie for you to solve!

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Correspondence:

Tanks in Gondal, Gujarat by Dr. G.R. Joshi, Nani Bazar, Gondal - 360 311

In the year 1903 our late Maharaja Bhagwatsingh built a Talav Veri Talav for Gondal's water supply. It was then 33 ft. deep but now it can store only 8 ft. of water, the rest being filled with silt and mud. Another small talav was also built downstream. A third Talav (Ashapura) was by Shri Bhojrajji in the year 1947. All the three are now filled with silt and mud and hence the total storage of water has decreased considerably.

The Veri Talav was surrounded by neem trees till 1950, when an enthusiastic Deputy Engineer ordered all of them to be raised to the ground.

Our late Maharajas were very fond of trees and in olden times, one would immediately know when one would enter the boundaries of old Gondal State. But in came independence and along with it the campaign to increase acreage of land for cultivation, resulting in decrease in the area of jungle and thus affecting flora and fauna.

Recently young boys and girls have formed a forest youth club and are planting trees and also attend camps organised by the Forest Department and by W.W.F.

(Dr. Joshi has sent a list of 83 birds seen at Veri Talav. These include a wide variety of aquatic and land birds ranging from the bar headed goose, curlew, the Kashmiri roller, Brown fish owl and the common iora) Editor

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Peculiar Feeding Behaviour of Milkant (Coracias benghalensis) by R.S. Kanoge,
Forest Ranger, Forest Colony, Jaipur Road, PO Jagdalpur Dist., Bastar (MS) 494001

I have been observing a blue jay feeding along the fire lines. These birds keep going ahead of the approaching fire and eat the locusts which fly up at the approach of the fire. Hence, they perform a valuable service by keeping down these pests.

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The Indian Pitta by K.K. Surendran, Cloth Merchant, Market Road, Mulanthuruthy
P.O., Kerala - 682 314

I have been watching birds around our village Mulanthuruthy 20 kms. east of Cochin city during the past 15 years, but never came across an Indian Pitta here. But on 20th December, early morning, a rubber tapper from a nearby rubber plantation told me that he heard some strange whistling noises in a rubber estate and saw some new birds. When I reached the area at about 7.30 a.m., I saw more than 30 Indian Pittas there. Whistling noises were heard from other plantations and a total area of 100 acres of land including rubber, tapioca and banana plantations were covered, and a total of 183 birds were counted within two hours of walk. The local people and rubber tappers of the plantations told me that they have not seen such birds before in that area. The birds remained here for two days and left.

In the Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan, while referring to Indian Pitta, Dr. Salim Ali says "Details of the movements have not yet been studied".

I wish to draw your kind attention to this new movement of Indian Pittas and would like to get your comments.

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The House Crow - A Verminous Bird, and Aggressive Behaviour of Roseringed
Parskeet, by Indra Kumar Sharma, Bhagwari Bhawan, Ratanada Rd., Jodhpur 342 020

Dr. V.G. Prasad's comments in support of crows are far from correct. Not only the crow, but a good many other birds, can also become friendly when fed regularly by the same person. But the cunning of the house crow is something proverbial. It is known to be a thief and a nuisance as well. Yes, crows do pick up grubs and insects when ploughing operations are on, but many other birds like mynas, drongos, blue jays and egrets do the job better and prove a more reliable friend of the farmer than crows. Even in the matter of disposal of dead creatures lying in the open, vultures and stray dogs do a more thorough job. It is equally well known that crows invade the nests of smaller but positively useful birds and carry away the tender

nestlings thus endangering the very existence of such smaller birds. I have no hesitation in saying Dr. Prasad's sympathy for crows appears misplaced. Villagers who know better will never support his views. In fact, crows cause them so much annoyance that they hang a dead crow in their fields to scare away the crows in the vicinity. Crows are pests undoubtedly and should be treated as such.

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Aggressive behaviour of roseringed parakeet

House crows scaring off birds of prey is a matter of common observation in urban and rural areas. But on 20th October 1987, while observing bird activity in the vicinity of my house, I saw to my surprise a rose-ringed parakeet chasing and attacking a tawny eagle. The parakeet kept up the attack unrelentingly to a distance of nearly two kms. when both went out of sight. The attack, I presume, must have been from a parent bird - male or female - for protecting its offspring unmindful of the size and strength of the intruder.

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Trishna Calling (Birds - Our Feathered Friends) by D. Chakraborty, D.F.O., Research Division, Tripura.

In the first week of March, after a hard day's work, Sri A.K. Singh, Dy. Conservator of Forests, and myself, reached Rajnagar. We were dog tired and devoid of any feelings about our enchanting surroundings. We woke up to the music of birds, bee-eaters, sunbirds, bulbuls and others. I am listing only 27 birds to give an indication of the rich bird life of this area:

Chestnut bittern, red jungle fowl, spotted dove, roseringed parakeet, eastern slatyheaded parakeet, cuckoo, redwinged crested cuckoo, pond heron, little egret, emerald cuckoo, crow pheasant, common green bee-eater, hoopoe, small kingfisher, goldmantled chloropsis, red vented bulbul, red whiskered bulbul, lesser racket tailed drongo, hair crested drongo, black drongo, green magpie, black browed treepie, white bellied yuhina, yellow bellied fantail flycatcher, black necked tailor bird, rufous bellied niltava, common myna.

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Correspondence

Post script

Letter from M.K. Himnatsinhji, Jubilee Ground, Bhuj, Kutch

I would like to correct one serious error on my part which I made in my last article/note on 'rare birds in Kutch' published in the Newsletter Vol. XXVII No. 11 & 12. Among the birds recorded recently here I had mentioned the Spottedbilled or Grey Pelican. They were actually the Dalmatian Pelican - *Pelicanus philippensis crispus* - which I saw again at an irrigation dam a few kilometres west of Mandvi on 14th January this year, and I was able to have a good look at them through my binoculars. This is a typical example of how one should not jump to conclusions when identifying birds. I cannot understand how I did this. For it is my normal practice over the years that whenever in doubt about the identity of a bird, I never add it to my list, but make a note in my field book (which I did in this case too) saying identity to be confirmed. After coming back home on seeing the pelicans, I consulted the Handbook (Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan, Ali & Ripley), wherein the Grey Pelican is properly described. However below the descriptive paragraph Alexander is quoted as saying that the grey colouring of the wings and tail are distinguishing characteristics of this pelican. The over all colour above of the Dalmatian Pelican is dirty greyish white, and I took it for granted that the birds I saw at the Rudramata dam were the Spottedbilled Pelican. I mention this fact at length for the benefit of the readers of the Newsletter, excluding the category of those experts such as Lavkumar. For this is an example of how one should avoid haste in bird identification, and also to curb one's overenthusiasm for adding birds in this unmethodical way to one's list.

Mentioning the Handbook, I am reminded of the very sound advice given by Mr. Lavkumar Khacher in the above-mentioned volume of the Newsletter, of following the practice of using names of birds as given in that great work. However, in the first edition of the Handbook (the second edition is yet to be completed) certain old English names, subsequently changed, are still there. This, however, is not such an important issue; but in my humble opinion the handbook with its ten volumes may be out of reach of many of the persons who read or contribute information to the Newsletter. In keeping with the good advice given by Mr. Lavkumar, I may also suggest that (although it may not have all the English names in common use of birds listed therein, particularly some of the subspecies), the 2nd edition of 'A synopsis of the birds of India and Pakistan' by S. Dillon Ripley, should be used as a standard work which contains, if I mistake not, most, if not all, latin names of birds in common use today.

The above paragraph now brings me to the subject of the change of the older English names of birds in recent years, such as European Roller for Kashmir Roller, Leaf Warblers for Willow Warblers, etc. Without meaning to challenge the knowledge or authorities of Drs. Salim Ali (now deceased) and Dillon Ripley, merely for the interest and for the sake of knowledge and guidance of not-so-knowledgeable contributors of the Newsletter like myself, it would be nice if Mr. Lavkumar or any other expert could give his comments, including on

the change in English names owing to reclassification of birds, for example, the Greybacked Warbler, now called Rufous Chat (Vol.8 of Handbook (1st Edition) has called it Greybacked Warbler or Rufous Chat!) - Erythropygia galactotes.

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THE NEWSLETTER 1988

Those who have not sent in their contribution of
Rs. 20/- or over may kindly do so.

ZAFAR FUTEHALLY
Editor

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