



Record of The Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* (Scopoli, 1786) from Jammu University Campus and other Common Avifauna

KEYWORDS

Ocyrceros birostris, Jammu, ISCA.

Jayashankar M

*Ramakrishna S

Division of Entomology and Nematology, IIHR, Bengaluru-560 089

Department of Zoology, Bangalore University, Bengaluru -560 056 * Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT Report on the Indian Grey hornbill, *Ocyrceros birostris* (Scopoli, 1786) (Coraciiformes – Bucerotidae) from Jammu is presented supplemented with data on scientific and other modes of reports (print media, blogs etc.) regarding the bird species from different parts of the country is provided in the article.

Introduction

Jammu is the winter capital of the state of Jammu and Kashmir covering an area of 20.36 square kms and situated at an altitude of 305 metres. The average annual rainfall and temperature is in the range of 600 to 800 mm and 15 °C to 17.5 °C respectively. The climatic conditions vary from subtropical in the Jammu region to cold and arid in Ladakh (<http://ibcn.in/wp-content>). The Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) is the official State Bird of Jammu & Kashmir. Bird diversity varies seasonally and as many as 554 species belonging to 13 orders have been recorded in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.

- 262 species have been reported from the temperate and alpine regions of the Kashmir Valley ranging in elevation from 1800m to 7500m with an average annual rainfall of 733mm.
- 225 species have been reported from the cold high-level desert of Ladakh which ranges in elevation from 2750m to 7672m with an average annual rainfall of 160 mm.
- 183 species have been reported from the sub-tropical plains of Jammu with an elevation of about 100 to 700m with an average annual rainfall of 1124mm (<http://www.jktourism.org/things-to-do/activities/bird-watching.html>).

The present article reports the Indian Grey hornbill, *Ocyrceros birostris* (Scopoli, 1786) (Coraciiformes – Bucerotidae) from Jammu during the author's visit to University of Jammu to attend the 100th Indian Science Congress. The Indian Science Congress is a scientific Kumbh Mela, Noble Laureates, Senior Scientists, Teachers, Young Scholars and Students congregate in the world's largest such gathering organized annually in the first week of January in different parts of the country. It is organized by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA), Kolkata. The 101st ISC was held during 3-7 February, 2014 at University of Jammu, Jammu. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Manmohan Singh for the 10th time in a line. Yet, another feather to its hat is the event being organized for the first time in Jammu and Kashmir, hence was postponed to the first week of February due to the severe cold conditions during January. The New Campus at Bahu Wali Rakh, with an area of about 118.70 acres is green numerous avenue trees and a wonderful Botanical garden.

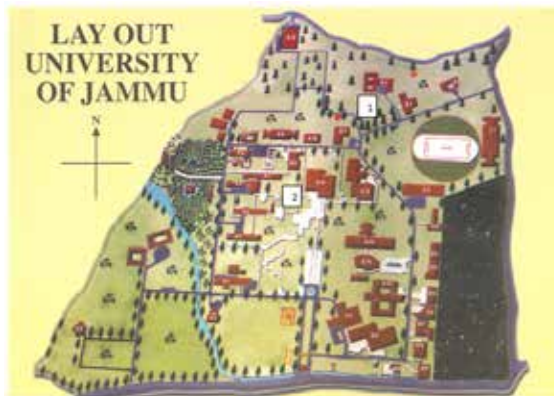
In addition to the report, data on scientific and other modes of reports (print media, blogs etc.) regarding the bird species from different parts of the country is provided in the article. Morphological description of the bird, Grey-brown plumage; large, curved beak with casque diagnostic; long, graduated tail, tipped black and white. They exhibit sexual dimorphism, casque is smaller in female compared to male (<http://agropedialabs.iitk.ac.in/iitkbirds/wiki/indian-grey-hornbill>). Vernacular Name of the bird is listed as follows, Hindi: Dhanmar,

Dhand, Dhanel, Lamdar, Chalotra, Dhanesh, Selagilli, Punjab: Dhanchiri, M.P: Selagilli, Bengal: Puttial dhanesh, Gujarat: Chilotra, Maharashtra: Dhanesh, Bhinas, Orissa: Kochilakhai, Tamil: Munu mukkula kaka, Irawakke, Telugu: Rendu mukkul (Anonymous, 2014).

Material and Methods

On foot observations on the bird sighting were done during the five day stay in the University of Jammu campus (Map 1), photographs of the birds were taken using Canon Power Shot Sx40HS. Literature pertaining to the reports of the species was obtained from different websites and blogs.

Map 1. Hornbill sighted Spots in University of Jammu (1=Boy's hostel and 2=Library science block)



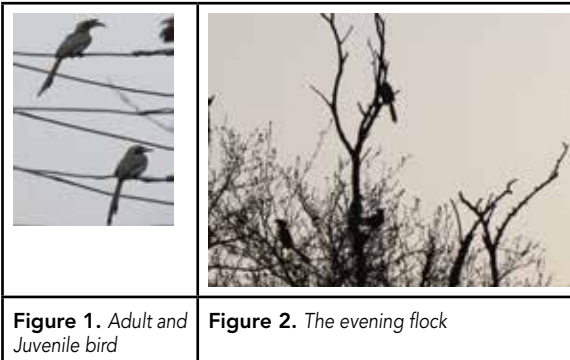
Courtesy: http://www.jammuuniversity.in/campus_map.asp

Results and Discussion

Initial and Subsequent sightings

Walking through green avenues adjacent to the Boy's Hostel, a sudden surge of squealing of the Indian grey hornbill was heard. Soon an adult bird was spotted alighting on a eucalyptus tree and immediately took to air. Following the track and patiently watching, three more birds appeared and landed on the electric wires.

Huge flock comprising 12-15 birds of different age group were found resting on a tree in the vicinity of the library complex at dusk. The flock-mates flipped from the main tree to adjacent trees frequently with their characteristic squealing dominating the landscape. The subsequent observations were made during noon and evening time of the day. The bird behaviours include, foraging on different fruits, flocking, flight and tending to young ones.



Literature records

Besides scientific literature good lot of records from print media and blogs is available, a concise list of the same is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Rescue, first records and Media based records of IGH from different parts of India

Sl.no	Location	References
1	Chandigarh (2004)	http://www.tribuneindia.com
2	Vadodara (2012)	http://timesofindia.india-times.com
3	Ranganthitu, Karnataka (2011)	http://www.naturemagnified.com/
4	Nagpur (2009)	Raju Kasambe et al. (2010)
5	Bengaluru (2012)	Jayashankar et al. (2012)
6	Kherli-Hafijpur, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh,	http://orientalbirdimages.org/birdimages.php?action=birdspecies&Bird_ID=339
7	Goncoi, Aldona, Bardez, Goa; Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary Fields, India; Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarkhand; The Estate, Sultanpur, Delhi;(2012-14)	http://www.xeno-canto.org/species/Ocyrceros-birostris

Other avifauna

Besides the IGH different avifauna belonging to eight families and ten genera were recorded in the campus during the period and are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. List of avifauna observed along with IGH in University of Jammu campus

Sl.no	Common name	Scientific name	Family	IUCN status and Figure number
1	Rufous treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i> (Latham, 1790)	Corvidae	Least concern (LC) Fig. 3
2	House crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i> Vieillot, 1817	Corvidae	LC Fig. 4
3	Rose-ringed parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i> (Scopoli, 1769)	Psittaculidae	LC Fig. 5
4	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	Sturnidae	LC Fig. 6
5	Indian robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulvicatus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	Muscicapidae	LC Fig. 7
6	Black kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	Accipitridae	LC Fig. 8
7	Rock pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> Gmelin, 1789	Columbidae	LC Fig. 9
8	Brown-headed barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i> Gmelin, 1788	Megalaimidae	LC Fig. 10
9	Red vented bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	Pycnonotidae	LC Fig. 11
10	Tawny eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i> (Temminck, 1828)	Accipitridae	LC Fig. 12

Figures 3-12. Other avifauna reported during the period of observation

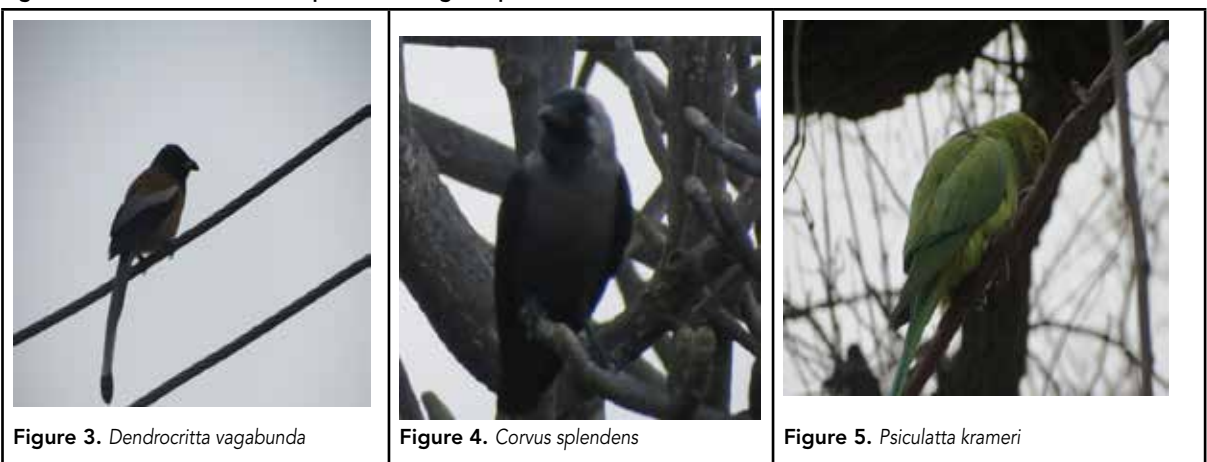


Figure 6. *Acridotheres tristis*Figure 7. *Saxicoloides fulicatus*Figure 8. *Milvus migrans*Figure 9. *Columba livia*Figure 10. *Megalaima zeylanica*Figure 11. *Pycnonotus cafer*Figure 12. *Aquila rapax*

Visit to Patnitop

Patan-Ka-Talab rechristened by the British and is widely known even today as Patnitop. The hill station is located at an altitude of 2024m between Udhampur and Srinagar. An amazing thing to watch are the Himalayan jungle crows (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) flying and landing on snow, it seemed as if they had ignored the hostile conditions. The scavenger birds feed on left-over's by the vendors in the area.

The campus has many tall trees with large girths a requisite for nesting by *O.birostris* (Santhoshkumar and Balasubramanian, 2010). The key threats to birds and the biodiversity of the State are overgrazing by livestock, tourism, firewood collection and forest fire (http://ibcn.in/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/23-479_522-Jammu-and-Kashmir.pdf). Though all the birds reported in the present article are listed under least concern status of IUCN (<http://www.iucnredlist.org>), they constitute the local biodiversity and need to be monitored and protected along with their habitat.

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