

COMMON CRANE DISCOVERED AT MAJULI, ASSAM.
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The Common Crane (*Grus grus*), which was never recorded in Assam earlier was discovered at Majuli Island (26°92'N, 94°17'E approximately) in Brahmaputra Valley by a group of Scientists on January 29, 1993 and three (3) Common Crane were spotted in the area by the author along with Prof. P.C. Bhattacharjee, Mr. Prasanta Saikia of Department of Zoology, Gauhati University and Mr. Ranjan Kr. Das, DFO (Social Forestry Division) of Lakhimpur. Even Dr. Salim Ali wrote in his books that the Common Crane was found in East India up to Bengal only and never recorded in Assam. So the recent discovery of Common Crane in Majuli is a new record for *Grus grus* distribution in Eastern India, which is a migratory bird.

On December, 1993 and January, 1994, the Crane areas were surveyed again by the author, Mr Ranjan Kr Das and Mr Bikul Goswami, and this time a total of eighteen (18) Common Crane were sighted in the Kumalia Chapori area of Majuli, which showed an increase of 15 nos. Common Crane in comparison to the previous year (1993). The inhabitants of Majuli were found very much keen to give protection to the Cranes and its habitats. A local man named Damodar Payeng has been engaged already to look after the Cranes and its habitats during the winter.

WHITE BROWED BULBUL — A NEW SIGHTING IN THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE CAMPUS, BANGALORE. **VIKRAM GADAGKAR, NAVANIT ARAKERI and MUKUND RAMAKRISHNAN, Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bangalore 560 012**

On the morning of 20th May 1994, the three of us were on our regular birdwatching trip. In the beginning we saw some of the more common birds. Our path eventually led us to the jubilee garden which is also inside the IISc Campus. When we were looking around outside the garden, at 7.30 am, the sudden appearance of two birds made us hold our breath, because these two birds did not look like any other birds which we had seen on our campus so far. The two birds flew into our sight, sat on a bush and then flew to the branch of a *Casuarina* tree. A closer examination of these birds proved that they were White Browed Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus luteolus*). They had a yellow vent, darker upper parts, white belly, black eyes and beak and of course, a white brow. Upon verification, we realised that the White Browed Bulbul had not been sighted before on our campus. We were extremely delighted to be the first ones to sight this charming bird in the Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bangalore, in which 153 bird species have previously been recorded (Shymal, 1994).

References

Shymal, L., 1994. The Birds of Indian Institute of Science Campus — Changes in the Avifauna, *Newsletter for Birdwatchers*, 34(1) : 7-9.

CORRESPONDENCE

INTERACTION BETWEEN PARADISE FLYCATCHERS AND CROWS. **RAJIV SAXENA, MIG-853 Darpan Colony, Thatipur, Gwalior 474 011 (MP)**

Paradise Flycatcher is commonly seen in wet shady areas of dry deciduous forests of North Madhya Pradesh. They are not sighted in city gardens in this region except in Sheopur tehsil of Morena district, where the forests fringe the town at an altitude of about 450 metres, this bird frequents shady gardens about human habitation.

On 21 July, 1993, I was sitting in the verandah of Sheopur dak bungalow and watching the early morning activities of the birds. My attention was suddenly caught by a pair of sub-adult Paradise Flycatchers who were chasing a Jungle Crow. Whenever they got a chance, they attacked the crow by sweeping down upon it. After chasing it for about 100 metres, they came back to settle on a tree in the dak bungalow compound. Soon three Common Crows arrived to pick up some edibles from the garbage that was scattered there. All three crows were agilely attacked and chased away by the pair of flycatchers.

Many other species of birds like Iora, Tailor Bird, Doves, Mynas and Bulbuls were also present. A few were sitting on the same tree on which the flycatchers were resting. No active interaction between flycatchers and any of these species was noted. But whenever the crows were sighted, they were quickly attacked and chased away by the pair of rufous coloured sub-adult Paradise Flycatchers.

BACK SHOTS OF A PURPLE SUNBIRD. **PRAVEEN J. Ambadi, 14/779(2) K Medu PO, Palakkad 678 013**

In the last issue of Newsletter (NLBW Vol 34(2), page 38), Mr A.K. Banerjee, Forestry Training Institute, Haldwani in his correspondence note "Flight of Purple Sunbird" mentions about backward flights of purple sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*). He had called for similar observations from other birders.

I had observed the same phenomenon in the case of its congener, Loten's sunbird (*Nectarinia lotenia*) during my early years of birding. Then, I had no field books and experience and mistook this bird to be a hummingbird (This happened the very second day I commenced this hobby) only because it shot an inch backward while hovering.

Since noting the observation by Mr Banerjee, I have been in pursuit of such behaviour among Loten's sunbird. But, by mere coincidence, I chanced upon the Purple sunbird (male in non-breeding plumage) itself hovering and backshooting in front of tamarind leaves near my house on 22.5.94 at 6.47 a.m.

INCUBATION PERIOD OF GREY PARTRIDGE. **R.G. SONI, Chief Conservator of Forests, 12, Lalgarh Palace Campus, IGNP Bikaner 334 001**

While walking through his kitchen garden in IGNP Colony Bikaner, Mr Avanish Makkar came across a nest of a grey partridge (*Francolinus pondicerianus interpositus*), on 4th April, 1994 containing 2 eggs. The nest was on the ground in a slight depression and was covered with grass leaving two openings, but too well camouflaged to notice. The bird sat in the nest most of the time and was reluctant to leave the nest even at close approach. The eggs did not hatch up to 28 April 1994 evening, however on 29th April morning only a few feathers of the mother were found in the nest. A Cat had noticed the presence of the nest and destroyed the bird and the eggs.

It indicates that the incubation period is more than 25 days, whereas in the Hand-book by Salim Ali it is mentioned to be 18-19 days. We shall be grateful if you or your readers could enlighten us about the incubation period of grey partridge.

SOME MUSINGS. **S. KARTHIKEYAN, 24, Opp Banashankari Temple, 8th Block, Jayanagar PO, Bangalore 560 082**

In spite of the fact that birds are a group of organisms which are extensively studied and documented there are still many questions