

Whispering Wings®

Newsletter of the Chandigarh Bird Club

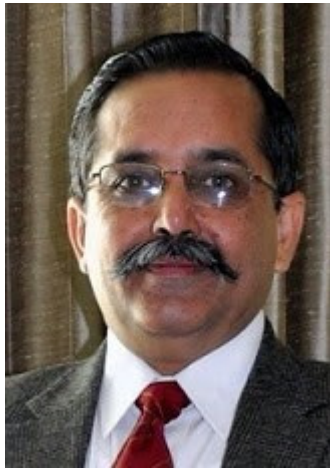
Issue 01

Inside this issue:

From the Editor's Desk

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon
— Editor-in-chief

Birds have evoked a sense of freedom since the beginning of time. Poets, painters, weavers, musicians, dancers and many others have used them as an artistic metaphor. Religions have associated them with various aspects of life, and folklore has added them to our cultures. Storks bring babies, the cranes symbolize eternal love, dove is the epitome of peace and swans that of purity. The modern day environmentalists regard birds as an indicator of the health of the environment — the bird population, as well as species diversity marking the health.



Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon
Editor-in-Chief

Baba Farid's shloka in Sri Guru Granth Sahib says — The winged visitors enhance by twice, the beauty of any garden

“ਪੰਛੀ
ਪੰਖ
ਪਰਾਗੁਏ,
ਦੂਰਾ
ਸੁਰਾਵੇ
ਬਾਗ਼”

Yet the bird population are is on the wane, need for food for growing populations and heartless urbanization being the chief reasons. Habitat destruction is the greatest threat to these avian delights, with hunting the second major threat. In his quest for development, man has wiped out so many spe-

cies, the latest being vultures. All this is a result of selfish attitude and greed, which overrides all cultural values. In times like these, mobilization of citizens by imparting information works wonders. Bird watchers or Birders all around the world have an important role to play. We can catalogue the species of a region. Estimate their populations and map habitats. Any change can be noted and publicized. The greater role is in making general public aware of our winged friends and sensitize them to their plight.

The Chandigarh Bird Club has been doing just that for a fairly long time. In recent years the bird walks, bird talks in schools and colleges, bird counts as well as bird races have helped. The

Chandigarh Bird Club	2
Summary of the club activities	3
Expert's Advice	3
Specie under Scope	5
Technology Gyaan	7
Badi Sher Field Trip	9
Chakki ka Mor Field Trip	10
Kinabalu Field Trip	12
Calendar of the Club	14

Whispering Wings®, e - newsletter of the Club, is an endeavor towards imparting knowledge about birds, their habits, their habitats, and conservation.

Let us all get together and work for our avian friends, so that —

“We can always hear the bird song”

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

The Chandigarh Bird Club

Narbir Kahlon

This article aims to revisit the first few steps left in the sands of time by the Chandigarh Bird Club and to thank those responsible for helping to create this organization.

In 2006-07 the only bird group operating in North Western part of India (other than organizations like BHNS and IBA) worth the name was Delhi Bird and this group had Bill Harvey, Sumit Sen, Nikhil Devasar, K.B Singh, Suresh C Sharma, Sh. Anand Arya, Dr PS Sangwan, Mr Bikram Grewal, Wing Commander Vijay Sethi, and Ms Nitu Sethi who were mentoring and encouraging birders from the region. In the group, there were Navjit Singh (General Secretary Avian Habitat and Wetland society), Mrs. Rima Dhillon, Mrs. Sarbjeet Kaur, Mrs. Geeta Goswami, Mr. Vikramjit Singh, and Narbir Singh (a fledgling birder) from Chandigarh. AHWS had already got a bird list from the region (250 species) and the birders from Chandigarh on the group by virtue of expanding the study area and by having more eyes on the ground was discovering additional species from the region regularly. (currently this stands at 415 species). There were other birders in the region like General Baljit Singh, and Air marshal MM Singh but they were a closed group and not Tech savvy.

In 2008 Navjit Singh took the initiative and called for a meeting at the Chandigarh Boat Club hosted by Dr. Dharendra Kumar

(President AHWS). At this meeting the idea of doing more than just birding was mooted, and this group decided to conduct a bird survey for Morni Hills and Chandigarh Wildlife Sanctuary. In this, the group was encouraged by Dr. D R Ramesh (Then PCCF Wildlife, Haryana) and Sh. Ishwar Singh (CCF Forests and Wildlife, Chandigarh). This survey may not have been a success



Chandigarh Bird Club showing birds to students

but for the Team which came in from Delhi Bird group and the efforts of all those based at Chandigarh, it certainly was. At this first initiative the group was honored to have Dr. Vibhu Prakash and Mr. Prateek Panwar (Action and Research for Conservation in the Himalayas) as guest speakers. During this survey Mr. Suresh C Sharma mooted the idea of starting an e-group for the region, which he created i.e. birdschandigarh@googlegroups.com and at his behest a large number of people joined the group (over 300 Members). This group has since grown with the addition of the Nangal chapter headed by Prabhat Bhatti, and a stronger more tech savvy

Chandigarh chapter.

This Survey was followed up by a survey of Harike Pattan a survey which was conducted with the assistance of the Indian Army, and the organizational capabilities of the Club were brought to the forefront. And the mandate given to the Club by the then PCCF Wildlife, Punjab was met. The fallout of this survey was a stricter regimen at Harike by the forest department resulting in a virtual ban on poaching there. The group has been engaged in the annual survey of this Sanctuary, and the Nangal Bird sanctuary ever since. Mrs. Rima Dhillon introduced 'HSBC Bird Race', an annual fun event. Mrs. Sarbjeet continues to coordinate with local NGO's, Mr. Mitipal Sekhon brought on board a whole lot of practical experience of the outdoors, Amandeep Singh, a local student compiles and edits the club's e-newsletter, while birding, and, Rajive Das, Mahesh Garg, Parveen Malhotra and Col Cheema brought technical experience and knowledge of what's new in the field of photography and the e-space. Outstation Birding Trips as a group followed and the group has a vibrant local membership.

Chandigarh Bird today has a vibrant local membership. Members meet on the first Saturday of every month, and go out birding together as a group on the second Sunday of the month. Membership to the group is open and all those interested in birding are free to join this group.

Summary of the Club's activities

Rima Dhillon

Chandigarh Bird Club holds a monthly bird fieldtrip within the designated birding area of Chandigarh, namely Interstate Capital Region (ISCR), which incorporates the 40 km radius of Chandigarh, fixed for the second Sunday of the month.

During the summer months most of the trips are held in the hills — Morni, Kasauli, Chakki ka Mor, Dagshai, etc. whilst the winter fieldtrips are concentrated in the plains — Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary, Ghaggar riverbed, Nepli & Kansal forests, Mirzapur and Siswan dams, and Chappar Chirri, etc.

Every year, in the month of February, the Club hosts the HSBC Chandigarh Bird Race — a national event initiated by Indiabirdraces.

Chandigarh Bird Club also supports the Big Bird Day organized by DelhiBird annually, in the month of March.

Recently, The Times of India group

Chandigarh Bird Club is committed to preserve the birdlife of the region by protecting the environment on which it depends. Hence, various exhibitions are held to promote awareness, full cooperation is ex-

tended towards the wildlife departments of Chandigarh Union Territory, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh, for bird counts of

migratory as well as resident species.

Members of the Chandigarh Bird Club travel within India as well as abroad for the purpose of birding and add to the knowledge bank of the club.

Chandigarh Bird Club family has steadily grown from five to fifty while there are hundreds on the e-group and may it continue to grow in service of the aves



Members of the Chandigarh Bird Club.

based in Chandigarh have started a bird awareness campaign wherein members of the Chandigarh Bird Club lead school children on a walk through the gardens of Chandigarh to initiate them into bird watching. At the end of the walk, the children are taught to turn empty plastic bottles into bird-feeders.

Expert's Advice

Narbhir Kahlon

Morni Hills refers to the Morni Wildlife Reserve flanking Chandigarh to the north east. It is part of the Shivalik Range falling in the Indian state of Haryana. The lower part of the range is ensconced by a scrub forest and acacia trees, this gives way to a broad leafed deciduous forest, and terraced fields, finally culminating in an evergreen pine forest. There

are perennial rivulets flowing



through the reserve supplemented

by seasonal streams which are active only during the Monsoons. The region is prone to land Slides and as a result nature has carved out deep ravines and cliffs in these mud hills, providing spectacular views for the avid landscape photographer. It is also a place where you come across stupendously beautiful sunrise and sunsets.

During the first rains in summer there is a sudden emergence of

Termite alates (Dhamakars), and if you are driving with your headlights on in the evening at this time of the year it makes for a scene from a horror movie. The wipers cannot keep pace with the swarm of insects (In their millions or so it appears) and visibility is almost down to zero. I am mentioning this just so you can appreciate the rich protein source in terms of insects available to the denizens of the forest.

Due to its location diverse biotope and rich insect population Morni offers good birding throughout the year there are residents, summer breeders, altitudinal migrants, wintering species with the occasional vagrant who use this region. There are over 250 species recorded from Morni making it a birding hotspot, amongst them are the Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Puff-throated Babbler, Blue-throated Flycatcher, Western Crowned Leaf Warbler, Common Buzzard, Spot-winged Starling, Ashy Woodswallow, Wallcreeper, Sirkeer Malkhoa, Himalayan Griffon, Cinnereous Vulture, White-rumped Vulture, Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike, Drongo Cuckoo, Black Stork, etc. The best time to visit is February and March when the silk cotton trees are flowering and birds are more visible this is also the time when birds are getting ready for the mating season.

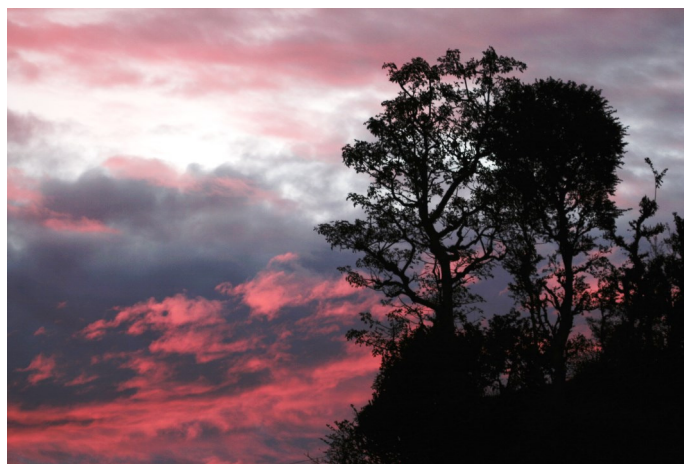
While birding in Morni you also come across other wildlife which includes Ghoral, Barking Deer, Sambar, Blue Bull, Wild Boar, Porcupine, Jackal, Molitor lizards the region also supports a

healthy population of Leopards who occasionally walk into Panchkula from there or maybe seen on an early morning drive.



Blue-bearded Bee-eater

Morni is easily accessible from Chandigarh however for those who are visiting the area from out of station or those planning to explore areas beyond Morni and



would like to stay closer. Haryana Tourism has a resort by the name of Mountain Quail at Morni. There is another Haryana Tourism facility at Thapli, Be-

tween Nada Sahib and Berwala there is a luxury hotel 'Tulip Resorts', a private resort enroute to Tikar tal by the name of Chandrawal Kunj offers rooms/cottages to birders at a special discount, apart from this a number of small hotels to suit every pocket are available.

Birding locations in Morni include Berwala, Madna, Badi Sher, Tikar tal, Samlotha, Morni - Kalesar road, Badi Sher - Mallah road. Apart from Morni itself. Here I would like to add a note of caution the drive upto Morni is best on week days as on weekends / holidays cars with loud music people drinking by the roadside and 'The Jumping Car' parked in secluded spots are a distraction to birds and birders alike. On these days I suggest you visit areas like Badi Sher, Samlotha, Mallah road or the link road going towards Kalesar and drive through the area between Berwala and Morni early in the Morning. Apart from Badi Sher the other areas are hitherto unexplored with a lot of potential. See map attached below for directions.

The road conditions beyond Morni specially towards Kalesar and Samlotha are not too good. this region is facing Lantana infestation which is slowly dominating indigenous plants as a result it is affecting certain bird populations. In spite of

this it is a must visit destination for birders around Chandigarh.

Species under the Scope

Narbir Kahlon

The Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) stands at 92-122 cm. Unmistakable, it is a large, brown-and-white bustard with black crown and wing markings. The bird is dichromatic. Males have whitish neck and underparts with narrow black breast-band. Females are smaller, with greyer neck and typically no breast-band. It makes booming moans during display and barking or bel-
lowing sounds when alarmed. It feeds on beetles

like the blister beetle (*Mylabris pustulata*), insects (Grasshoppers), grass seeds, millet, groundnut shogum and pods of legumes, berries (*Ziziphus mauritiana*), berries (*Ziziphus mauritiana*), berries and lizards specially spiny tailed lizards (*Uromastyx hardwickii*). It weighs in at 8-14.5 Kg in case of males

and 2.5-2.75 Kgs in females making it the heaviest bird on the Indian Sub continent.

The Great Indian Bustard, as it is commonly referred to, was recommended by Dr. Salim Ali and the BNHS to become the national bird of India after independence, for a bird that could well have been the iconic representative of Indian nationalisms it is a sad that it is amongst the most critically endangered species found on the Indian

Subcontinent with fewer than 250 birds left. While it missed its place in history as a national bird it does enjoy the status of being the state bird of Rajasthan.

The Great Indian Bustard inhabits arid and semi-arid grasslands with scattered short scrub, bushes and low intensity cultivation in flat or gently undulating terrain. It requires different microhabitat for different activities, such as grasslands with relatively tall (vegetation 25-100cm) and dense

monsoon. It nests in open ground, laying only one clutch (consisting of one and very rarely two eggs) per year. Outside of breeding season, it probably makes local and possibly long distance nomadic movements (largely unknown) in response to various factors, using areas rich in food resources and surrounded by natural grass-scrub habitat.

With the advent of canal irrigation followed by a green revolution the complete ecology of its range has been changing.

The viability of agriculture has led to a decrease in fallow land specially grasslands, cropping patterns have changed. What was once an arid region where millet and Shorgum was grown now supports paddy, sugarcane, vineyards and agro-

forestry projects. Water tables have increased and the desert has started shrinking.

The species is disappearing from Karnataka (Kumara and Mohan Raj 2007) and Maharashtra (last count 30 only), and it is thought to have completely disappeared from the states of Haryana, Punjab, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Today it is trying to make a last stand in Rajasthan and parts of Gujarat.

Its total population has declined



Picture from desert National park by Kesavamurthy N

The Great Indian Bustard in Desert National Park

cover, high insect resources and less grazing for nesting; short sparse vegetation (<25 cm vegetation) on slightly elevated ground for display; sparse vegetation (<25 cm vegetation) with minimal scrub for roosting; and moderate (25-50 cm vegetation) shade for resting (Rahmani 1989, Dutta *in litt.* 2012). Birds congregate in traditional grassland patches (mostly identified) which are less disturbed, to breed during mid-summer and

from an estimated 1,260 individuals in 1969 to 300 individuals in 2008 (Dutta *et al.* 2010), equivalent to a reduction of 82% over 47 years (three generations) current population is estimated at fewer than 250 birds with 75% population in Rajasthan.

The results of a recent genetic study, found very low genetic diversity for such a widespread species, probably owing to a bottleneck event caused by its widespread extermination possibly even before the mid 19th century (Ishtiaq *et al.* 2011). As a result population viability analysis predicts a high probability of local extinction within 50 years for populations numbering fewer than 30 individuals, with the more secure population of over 100 individuals showing sensitivity to the loss of one additional adult each year to human causes, indicating that present levels of off-take are unsustainable (Dutta *et al.* 2010). Current levels of hunting may result in the extinction of even the largest western Indian population in the next 15-20 years (Dutta *et al.* 2010).

For the reasons mentioned above it is regarded as critically endangered. We as a nation need to focus on how to save the Great Indian Bustard before it is only found in the pages of History books:

- While there is a ban on hunting in force in India a ban needs to be imposed in Pakistan as well and more than the ban on paper it needs to be enforced on the ground
- Farmers livelihood need to be supplemented and subsidized around Great Indian Bustard reserves so that they continue to sow monsoon crops like millet and shogum.



The Great Indian Bustard

- The definition and perception of forest needs to be extended to fallow land and grasslands and an effort at managing these needs to be done. With the Great Indian Bustard is the iconic species this will benefit a number of other species as well specially, if change in land use is not allowed for agriculture or even agro forestry.
- In Bustard sanctuaries micro habitats need to be diligently created and ungulate popula-

tions need to be controlled specially Black Buck as both live in similar Habitats but after some time an increased population of Black Buck reduces the chance of survival of Great Indian Bustard.

- A captive breeding program needs to be initiated to ensure repopulation of habitats once they have been properly controlled and secured.

- Annual Census needs to be conducted in its range.

- Installation of satellite collars to monitor nomadic movements so that a better understanding of the species is achieved.

The state of Rajasthan in India stands committed to the survival of this species. It can be seen at the

Desert National Park, there are reports of a population from the Pokharan Ranges, and it is an irregular visitor to Tal Chappar.

Great Indian Bustard is also found in Naliya grasslands in Kutch, but for reasons of National Security an airbase is coming up in the area where this majestic bird roams part of its living quarters is being sacrificed in the name of National Interest. As India marches towards a successful future we hope some of its denizens survive the onslaught of progress.

From Fulvous-breasted to Brown-capped

Choosing the right binoculars

Colonel S.S. Cheema

One of the most important things required for birding are a good pair of binoculars, or a camera. The reason is simple - both of these modern devices tend to keep that moment that you see close to your heart - close to your heart but in a different way altogether. The first one - the binoculars makes you appreciate the bird like holding one in your hand, the colours, the intricate patterns, the movement - name it and you will enjoy it. The camera on the other hand goes a step forward and keeps the birds as your memories - the "Modern Day Trophy Hunting."

I will take the opportunity and try to guide you as to how one can go on to choose the perfect Binocular and some time later perhaps how to choose a camera for bird watching/photography.

Before I dwell into the details that you should see for the binoculars please know that there are basically two types of binoculars, porro prism and the roof prism. Roof prism is the later technology wise and they are identified with straight cylinders. These are more compact, have less internal parts and more dust and water proof. Roof prim binoculars suffer slightly from aligned prisms so do not compromise on money as only topnotch

end of mid-range binoculars can compete with porro prism binoculars. Porro prism binoculars on the other hand are identified with eye-piece and objective lens offset from each other. The advantages are they are cheaper, have slightly better stereoscopic lens. The disadvantages are less compact, more moving parts and difficult to make them dust proof etc.

First things first - I will divide the

INR 10,000/- or so. Do not set them off just because they are cheap, you do get good glass in this range also. Next is from INR 10,000/- up to about INR 30,000/-, they are the mid-range one. I presently have one in this and they will see you through fairly serious birding too. Next on the higher spectrum they go anywhere up to INR 150,000/-, don't ask me I have never reached that level of spending money.



Pick up the magnification

All the binoculars have figures written like 8x42 or 10x42 etc. (to seem like a pro when you talk about binoculars you

speak like... 'I have Nikon 8 42 glass'), the first figure is the magnification. So in other words, if it is 8 then the image you will see is magnified 8 times. If it is 10, then the image you see is magnified 10 times. Second part refers to the diameter of the objective lens. Okay now how do I choose binoculars? Well firstly the magnification. Specifically for birding, the more magnification may not be necessarily better. As the magnification increases, the field of view decreases, and you will find it difficult to readily point the binoculars to that particular bird and focus. Also higher magnification will require more and more steady hands and in extreme magnifications you will require a tripod etc. Second

buying of the binoculars in easy steps so that we can take systematic decisions to buying one. The steps are:-

1. Decide on the price range.
2. Pick a magnification that you prefer.
3. Test and see models for yourself.
Check eye relief
Look out for bright and crisp colours
Look out for reviews and warranties.

The price range

For our classification based on price we will try to divide the binoculars into a lower end up to say

number - the bigger the better. 42 is good but 50 is better. What it means is that more light is being passed so the image you will see is brighter and low light capability is better seeing the colours etc. in birds is better. Generally, I have seen birders preferring binoculars 8x42 or 10x42. brands, the best are Nikon, Bushnell, Olympus, and such. I will leave the preference to you and your research

Test the models yourself

Well, well, well... this is but an ideal way down the line. The best way perhaps in India is - if you have a friend who has a particular model, borrow and see it form him. Otherwise perhaps trust the advice of someone you know - the real problem is that you will not have so many binoculars on display at the same time to choose. In Delhi, Mumbai, perhaps, but not in smaller towns for sure. When you do get your hands on a pair that you decided and shortlisted:-

1. **Check out the eye relief.** For any binoculars there is an ideal distance that your eye should be from the eyepiece. This distance is called eye relief. If your eye is farther away from the eyepiece, then the outer part of the image is lost. The farther away your eye is, the smaller portion of the picture you see. So you would want a

binocular with eye relief long enough to accommodate your eyeglasses. Otherwise you will pay for a box and see the bird through a hole. A binocular with



long eye relief is okay even for a person not wearing glasses as the eye cups can be extended to the correct distance.



2. **Bright and Crisp Colours.** Many a times the quality of glass is

not good and colours are distorted due to the prism effect. This will make it difficult to see patterns on the wings. So do be vary of the uncoated lenses.

3. Next is that you look for reviews and warranties on the net. The internet has become a messiah of sorts - thousands of people reviewing products. Do not get overwhelmed by that but do check it out. But as a ball mark - the more you pay should be able to tick out more of the undermentioned qualities in a binoculars:-

- Porro prism
- Lens quality
- Single piece focus ring
- Roof prism
- Coated lens (single or double)
- Fog proof (nitrogen filled)
- Water resistant
- Water proof

I am sure that by the end of this article , you would be wiser to buy a good pair of binoculars for birding. The binoculars would be available in shops in Sector - 22 (opposite ISBT 17) or Apollo Camera shop in Sector - 19. If no joy then SnapDeal, Flipkart and Amazon are the good places to explore. Happy Birdwatching. Please do give feedback to Chandigarh Bird Club and to ask additional questions post to **cheema.ss@gmail.com** or visit **http://cheemablog.blogspot.in**

Birding in Badi Sher

Sarbjeet Kaur

On 9th August, Dr. Bhupesh Goyal, Dr. Samir, Dr. Manu Mengi, Mohit with his two cousins, Dr. Aprajita with her daughters, Nitin, Saiyam, Abhey and I, took our cavalcade to Badi Sher and Morni Hills. Not much distance from Chandigarh, only 35 km, in Panchkula district, Morni Hills are the off shoots of the Shivalik range of Himalayas which run in parallel ranges. After crossing Nada Sahib Gurudwara on HW73, a

road turns to left with a signboard of Morni and there starts the hilly terrain. It's dry in summer but the moderate rainfall gives a beautiful and soothing green look to these hills with thick foliage-creepers and undergrowth. It is a heaven for the winged beauties. Short of Morni a road diverts to left for Badi Sher, one of the good spots for birding with mixed deciduous, scrub and pines. About 6 km of zig-zag road leads till the bridge. In spring when the red flowers are in full bloom, it

is a sight to see how it lures bird species

Badi Sher Bird List

1. Indian Peafowl — *Pavo cristatus*
2. Black Francolin — *Francolinus francolinus*
3. Kalij Pheasant — *Lophura leucomelanos*
4. Indian Cormorant — *Phalacrocorax carbo*
5. Rock Pigeon — *Columba livia*
6. Spotted Dove — *Spilopelia chinensis surtensis*
7. Asian Koel — *Eudynamis scolopacea*
8. Greater Coucal — *Centropus sinensis*
9. Eurasian Hoopoe — *Upupa epops*
10. Indian Grey Hornbill — *Ocyroceros birostris*
11. Crested Kingfisher — *Megaceryle lugubris*
12. Green Bee-eater — *Merops orientalis*
13. Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker — *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
14. Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker — *Dendrocopos macei*
15. Ashy Woodswallow — *Artamus fuscus*
16. Long-tailed Shrike — *Lanius schach*
17. Black Drongo — *Dicrurus macrocercus*
18. Red-billed Blue Magpie — *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
19. Rufus Treepie — *Dendrocitta vagabunda*
20. House Crow — *Corvus splendens*
21. Large-billed Crow — *Corvus macrorhynchos*
22. Dusky Crag Martin — *Ptyonoprogne concolor*
23. Red-vented Bulbul — *Pycnontus jocosus*
24. Himalayan Bulbul — *Pycnontus leucogenys*
25. Ashy Prinia — *Prinis socialis*
26. Oriental White-eye — *Zosterops palpebrosus*
27. Jungle Babbler — *Turdiodes striata*
28. Indian Robin — *Saxicoloides fulicatus cambaiensis*
29. Oriental Magpie Robin — *Copsuchus saularis*
30. Verditer Flycatcher — *Eumyias thalassinus*
31. Pied Bushchat — *Saxicola caprata*
32. Grey Bushchat — *Saxicola ferreus*
33. White-browed Wagtail — *Motacilla maderaspatensis*
34. Crested Bunting — *Melophus lathemi*
35. House Sparrow — *Passer domesticus*
36. Baya Weaver — *Ploceus megarhynchus*
37. Scaly-breasted Munia — *Lonchura punctulata*
38. Crested Serpent Eagle — *Spilornis cheela*
39. Laughing Dove — *Spilopelia senegalensis*
40. Purple Sunbird — *Cinnyris asiaticus*

Chakki ka Mor, finally

Amandeep Singh

Picture ©: Jasbir Randhawa

After a two-month-long hiatus from birding, and not been to Chakki ka Mor since January 2015, on the 13th of September, I, along with Sarbjeet Kaur, Rima Dhillon, Jasbir Randhawa, Dr. Aprajita, Dr. Karan Tambe, Siddharth Nagar, Saiyam Nagar, Nitin Singh, and a friend from the Delhi Bird Club, Dr. Dinesh Singhal, went to Chakki ka Mor. We had all started from Panchkula near-about half past five, and reached the entry near the shops at about six. This spot is known for Red-billed Leiothrix but not today.

Further down the road is a cluster of few houses, which is a good area for Dron-go, sparrows, doves, treepies, babbler, and swallows. We also saw here the Red-billed Leiothrix, Grey-capped Pygmy woodpecker and a barbet. Going



Kalij Pheasant

along, we reached the bridge, where we spotted the Kalij Pheas-

ant, and flocks of Rose-ringed parakeets. A drive uphill and we reached the temple on the curve and that is where we had our tea and biccie. Though we missed the Asian Barred Owlet flying across, it graced us later. A while afterwards, with the good doctor Singhal taking his leave, we continued up to Bhojnagar, the final point of our visit and had our brunch. All-in-all, the visit was about five hours and bagged us about 54 species.

Chakki ka Mor Bird List

1. Grey Treepie — *Dendrocitta formosae*
2. Rufus Treepie — *Dendrocitta vagabunda*
3. Oriental White-eye — *Zosterops palpebrosus*
4. Great Tit — *Parus major stupae*
5. Indian Tailorbird — *Orthotomus sutorius*
6. House Crow — *Corvus splendens*
7. Large-billed Crow — *Corvus macrorhynchos*
8. House Sparrow — *Passer domesticus*
9. Blue Whistlingthrush — *Myophonus caeruleus*
10. Black Bulbul — *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*
11. Himalayan Bulbul — *Pycnonotus leucogenys*
12. Red-vented Bulbul — *Pycnonotus cafer*
13. Crimson Sunbird — *Aethopyga siparaja*
14. Black-chinned Babbler — *Stachyridopsis pyrrhops*
15. Striated Babbler — *Turdoides earlei*
16. Red-rumped Swallow — *Cecropsis daurica*
17. Wire-tailed Swallow — *Hirundo smithii*
18. Brown-fronted Woodpecker — *Dendrocopos auriceps*
19. Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker — *Dendrocopos macei*
20. Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker — *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
21. Grey-headed Woodpecker — *Picus canus*
22. Eurasian Collared Dove — *Streptopelia decaocto*
23. Rock Pigeon — *Columba rupestris*
24. Spotted Dove — *Spilopelia chinensis surtensis*
25. Siberian Stonechat — *Saxicola maurus indicus*
26. Grey Bushchat — *Saxicola ferreus*



Asian Barred Owlet

27. Pied Bushchat — *Saxicola caprata*
28. Red-billed Leiothrix — *Leiothrix lutea*
29. Ashy Drongo — *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
30. Black Drongo — *Dicrurus macrocercus*
31. Streaked Laughingthrush — *Garrulax striatus*
32. White-crested Laughingthrush — *Garrulax leucolophus*
33. Great Barbet — *Megalaima virens*
34. Alexandrine Parakeet — *Psittacula eupatria*
35. Rose-ringed Parakeet — *Psittacula krameri*
36. Common Myna — *Acridotheres tristis*
37. Dark-sided Flycatcher — *Muscicapa sibirica*
38. Verditer Flycatcher — *Eumyias thalassinus*
39. White-browed Fantail Flycatcher — *Rhipidura aureola*
40. Red-billed Blue Magpie — *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
41. Indian Robin — *Saxicoloides fulicatus cambaiensis*
42. Oriental Magpie Robin — *Copsychus saularis*
43. Grey Breasted Prinia — *Prinia hodgsonii*
44. Striated Prinia — *Prinia crinigera*
45. Kalij Pheasant — *Lophura leucomelanos hamiltoni*
46. Asian Barred Owlet — *Glaucidium cuculoides*
47. Grey-hooded Warbler — *Phylloscopus xanthoschistos*
48. Hume's Leaf Warbler — *Phylloscopus hunei*
49. White Wagtail — *Motacilla alba*
50. Yellow Wagtail — *Motacilla flava*
51. Black Kite — *Milvus migrans*
52. Shikra — *Accipiter badius*
53. Indian Silverbill — *Euodice malabarica*
54. Scaly-breasted Munia — *Lonchura punctulata*



Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker



Great Barbet



Scaly-breasted Munia

Hang-out in Sabah

Dr. Mandeep Kang

I had visited the Kinabalu National Park in Sabah, Malaysia in December 2013, with a local birder. On a cloudy day, we started on some paddy field on the outskirts and witnessed a variety of water birds like the Black winged Stilts, Egrets, Herons, and Wood Sandpipers. Huge population of the Black - Headed and Dusky Munias had me in raptures. Along the shore line, we saw not only the coastal birds, but a park

also along the shore boasted a



Glossy Swiftlet

wealth of birds; Blue - Naped Parrots, Dollar Birds and Green

Imperial Pigeons.

Kinabalu National Park is simply beautiful and full of species endemic to the area. The highlights were the Laughingthrush, Woodpeckers, and the Crimson - Headed Partridge, which could be found around the Park Headquarters.

Kinabalu National Park Bird List

1. Eurasian Tree Sparrow — *Passer montanus*
2. Spotted Dove — *Sterptopelia chinesis*
3. Glossy Swiftlet — *Collocalia esculenta*
4. Oriental Magpie Robin* — *Copsychus saularis pluto*
5. Cattle Egret — *Bubulcus ibis*
6. Little Egret — *Egretta garzetta*
7. Great Egret — *Ardea alba*
8. Purple Heron — *Ardea pupurea*
9. Grey Heron — *Ardea cinerea*
10. Javan Pond Heron — *Ardeola speciosa*
11. Wood Sandpiper — *Tringa glareola*
12. Black - winged Stilt — *Himantopus himantopus*
13. Common Greenshank — *Tringa nebularia*
14. Little Grebe — *Tachybaptus ruficollis poggeii*
15. Common Kingfisher — *Alcedo atthis*
16. Chestnut Munia — *Lonchura atricapilla*
17. Dusky Munia** — *Lonchura fuscans*
18. Collared Kingfisher — *Todirumphus chloris*
19. Red Avadavat — *Amandava amandava*
20. Striated Grassbird — *Megalurus palustris*
21. Ashy Glossy Starling — *Aplonia panayensis*
22. Zebra Dove — *Geopelia Striata*
23. Yellow Bellied Prinia — *Prinia flaviventris*
24. Yellow - vented Bulbul — *Pycnotus goiavier*
25. Whiskered Tern — *Chlidonias hydridus*
26. White - breasted Waterhen — *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
27. Grey - headed Lapwing — *Vanellus cinereus*
28. Purple Swamphen — *Porphyria porphyria*
29. Pacific Swallow — *Hirundo tahitica*
30. Crested Myna — *Acridotheres cristatellus*



Zebra Dove

Kinabalu National Park Bird List

31. Unidentified Drongo
32. Rock Pigeon — *Columba livia*
33. White - breasted Woodswallow — *Artamus leucorhynchus*
34. Blue - naped Parrot — *Tanygnathus lucionensis*
35. Green Imperial Pigeon — *Ducula aenea*
36. Dollarbird — *Eurystomus orientalis*
37. Pied Triller — *Lalage nigra*
38. Red - throated Sunbird — *Anthrepetes rhodolaema*
39. Brown - throated Sunbird — *Anthrepetes malacensis*
40. Olive - backed Sunbird — *Nectarinia jugularis*
41. Temminck's Sunbird — *Aethpyga temminckii*
42. Lesser Coucal — *Centropus bengalensis*
43. Common Moorhen — *Gallinula chloropus*
44. Wandering Whistlingduck — *Dendrocygna arcuata*
45. Yellow Bittern — *Ixobrychus sinensis*
46. Brahminy Kite — *Haliastur indus*
47. White - bellied Sea Eagle — *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
48. Short - tailed Green Magpie — *Cissa thalassina*
49. Chequer - throated Woodpecker — *Picus mentalis*
50. Orange - backed Woodpecker — *Reinwardtipicus validus*
51. Brown - capped Woodpecker (Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker) — *Dendrocopus moluccensis*
52. Bornean Bald Laughingthrush** — *Melanocichla calva*
53. Sunda Laughingthrush — *Garrulax palliatus*
54. Chestnut - hooded Laughingthrush** — *Rhinocichla*
- treachery*
55. Bornean Forktail** — *Enicurus borneensis*
56. Hairy - crested Drongo — *Dicrurus hottentottus*
57. Chestnut - crested Yuhina** — *Yuhina everetti*
58. Black - capped White-eye — *Zosterops atricapilla*
59. Grey - chinned Minivet — *Pericrocotus solaris*
60. Scarlet Minivet — *Pericrocotus flammeus*
61. Crimson - headed Partridge** — *Haematrtyx sanguineus*
62. Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatcher** — *Rhinomyias gularis*
63. Bornean Whistler** — *Pachycephala hypoxantha*
64. Asian Brown Flycatcher — *Muscicapa dauurica dauurica*
65. Mountain Leaf Warbler — *Phylloscopus trivirgatus kinabaluensis*
66. Mountain Tailorbird — *Orthotomus cuculatus*
67. Golden-naped Barbet** — *Megalaima pulcherrima*
68. Pale-faced Bulbul** — *Pycnonotus leucops*
69. Grey Wagtail — *Motacilla cinerea*
70. Mugimaki Flycatcher — *Ficedula mugimaki*
71. Dark-sided Flycatcher — *Muscicapa sibirica*
72. Indigo Flycatcher — *Eumyias indigo*
73. Bornean Whistlingthrush** — *Myophonus borneensis*
74. Barn Swallow — *Hirundo rustica*
75. Long-tailed Shrike — *Lanius schach bentet*
76. Velvet-fronted Nuthatch — *Sitta frontalis*
77. Black-winged Flycatcher Shrike — *Hemipus picatus*

* Sub-species has black belly with white sides to tail

** - Species endemic to Borneo

Species in coloured font are lifers

Schedule of Events for October

- ◆ October 10 — Club's Field Trip - Old Kasauli Road, from Parvanoo, and returning through Baddi.

Schedule of Events for November

- ◆ November 1 to 6 — Out-station Field Trip - Sangla and Chitkul.
- ◆ November 7 — Chandigarh Bird Club meeting
- ◆ November 15 — Club's Field Trip - Derabassi, including Jawaharpur etc.

Schedule of Events for December

- ◆ December 5 — Chandigarh Bird Club meeting
- ◆ December 13 — Club's Field Trip - Mirzapur Dam, in the afternoon

Whispering Wings®

Google Groups:
birds-
chandigarh@googlegroups.com

Facebook:
Chandigarh Bird Club

Newsletter for the Chandigarh Bird Club

Incepted in 2008, the Chandigarh Bird Club has been dedicated to its goal of protecting the environment. The Club owes its existence to those few dedicated and expert members, who started this club in the Chandigarh Boat Club, namely, Navjit Singh, Narbir Kahlon, Vikramjeet Singh, Mrs. Rima Dhillon, Mrs. Sarbjeet and Mrs. Geeta Goswami.

The Basic objective of the Chandigarh Bird Club continues to be to:

- Bring people specially the younger generation closer to nature through birding and help them to enjoy the outdoors while making it a fun activity
- To make people and government more sensitive towards the environment to create a dynamic database for analysis in order to focus conservation efforts.
- To create a forum for birders to share information and discuss issues related to this activity

