
Whispering Wings®

Newsletter of the Chandigarh Bird Club®



Volume 3 - 3rd Edition

January - March 2018

From the Editor's Desk

ਚਾੜਕ ਮੀਨ ਜਲ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵਹਿ

ਸਾਰਿੰਗ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਹਾਈ ॥

ਰੈਨਿ ਬਬੀਹਾ ਬੋਲਿਓ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਈ ॥

The Pied Hawk Cuckoo and fish find peace in water;

the deer is pleased by the sound of bell.

The Hawk Cuckoo calls through the night, O my mother.

~ Guru Nanak Dev Ji

Sri Guru Granth Sahib

The brain fever bird does call through the night. Soon the pied hawk cuckoos will make an appearance, harbingers of the monsoon rains. Mother nature is at its fecund best. A new generation is on its way. Let us make every possible effort to ensure that nature procreates.

We can contribute by enhancing awareness about bird habits, habitats and habitat protection; conservation will automatically follow. Aware societies try their best to save nature and protect their environs. The increasing bird population and numbers of species in the Chandigarh Inter-state Region are a result of the society's love for nature. We are heading in the right direction, only we need to intensify our efforts.

May you always hear the bird song!

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

Secretary's Report

In the last three months there has been a lot of activity among the members of CBC.

In January 2018, club members helped in the annual waterfowl census organised by Punjab Forest and Wildlife Department at Harike Wetland and Gurdaspur & Shailapattan Community Reserves. This is an annual activity of the club and maximum members volunteer for it. Field-trip for the month of January was at Chakkimodh, the all-time favourite of Chandigarh birders, to record the altitudinal wintering migrants.

In February, World Wetland Day was celebrated with a birdcount of Sukhna Lake and a photo exhibition of birds seen around the lake. The monthly field-trip for the month was held at Forest Hill Golf and Country Club on the outskirts of Chandigarh. HSBC Chandigarh Birdrace was a great success. As usual birders gave their wholehearted support by participating in the event. There were fourteen teams covering the entire ISCR region. It was followed by dinner, presentations by some members, bird quiz and prize distribution.

In March members went for a field-trip to Morni Hills.

Work on the pocket guide to the Birds of Chandigarh, which was in the pipeline for the last one year, was completed and finally printed in collaboration with the Department of Forest & Wildlife, Chandigarh. All the photographs have been taken in the ISCR region and are contributed by the members.

Birders from the CBC have been travelling for birding within the country to Kerela, Tamil Nadu, Bhutan, Sikkim, Assam, and also overseas to the United States of America, Switzerland and New Zealand.

We are grateful to the editing team of the newsletter for doing such a great job.

Keep up the good work.

Rima Dhillon

Annual Waterfowl Census

In January 2018, members of Chandigarh Bird Club participated in annual bird surveys conducted by WWF-India and Punjab Wildlife Department, in Keshopur and Shailapattan Community Reserves, District Gurdaspur, and Harike Wetland, District Ferozepur. The WWF-India, Punjab co-ordinator, and fellow member of the Club, Gitanjali Kanwar had organised our accommodations in Gurdaspur and Harike. From Chandigarh, Alpana N.P. Singh, Rima Dhillon, Sarbjeet Kaur, and Amandeep Singh Channa, participated in Keshopur and Shailapattan Bird Survey, on 25th January 2018. The day was marked by the great numbers of bar-headed geese, and common cranes, and a pair of Sarus cranes.



Rufous-vented Prinia, endemic to Harike

The second phase of our trip was Harike Bird Survey, with Narbir Kahlon, Navjit Singh, and Parbhat Bhatti of our Club, joining us in Harike. The Survey was held on 27th and 28th January 2018. Vikram Tiwari of Sohailwa, Balraj Singh of Ludhiana and members of Amritsar Bird Club too joined in the Survey.

The result of Keshopur and Shailapattan Survey was 21040, with 75 water-dependant species. The result for Harike Survey was 94771, with 93 water-dependent species. The highest number was common coot - 54972, followed by greylag geese - 11949, gadwal - 8381, common pochard - 4468, and northern shoveler - 1936.

Amandeep Singh Channa

If I was not a Bird Watcher

Had I Not Been A Bird Watcher....What Would Have Happened???

When I Thought I Am Sad And I Don't Want My Heart To Beat...

A Little Beauty In Her Green Garb Fluttered Its Wings By

And My Heart Started To Beat...

When I Felt Not Like Hearing A Word Of This World...

A Black Beauty Chirped In My Trees....

Nothing Could Shut The Song...

When I Thought Not A Morsel Of Food Would I Take In...

The Brown Ones Came On The Feeder To Enjoy The Tit Bits...

Then There Was No Choice But To Chew.

When I Thought I Had No Directions To Go To....

I Saw The Formations Of White And Grey Fly Past

I Knew I Had To Be On My Path.

When I Thought There Was Nothing To Love For....

Saw The Skinnies Come Out Of The Shell...

And Knew There Is Everything To Love For....

Had I Not Been A Bird Watcher...

I Don't Know What Would Have Happened???

Geeta Goswami

High on Birding in the North-East

Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary consists of a dense forest with a single road running through it. (The road is undergoing metalling at present that has wreaked havoc on the bird activity around the road these days). There are two birding camps along this road, first, Lama Camp, located around 30 km from Tenga, the nearest town, and second, Bompu Camp, located around 25 km from Lama Camp.

At Lama Camp (Elevation 8000ft), there are tents, each with two beds. Toilets are both Indian and an improvised type of Western. No running water. You have to use buckets to flush. No electricity except portable LED lights. Generator allows you to charge your equipment in the dining hall. You would usually stay at Lama Camp only for one night and can make do with these very basic facilities. The camp is run by the Bugun community. Food is just okay. It's windy and very cold here.

After Lama Camp, you realize that Bompu Camp is nothing less than 5-Star! Beautiful tents with rechargeable LED light. Ceramic Western toilets and an Indian style (not attached with the tents), an attendant who ensures that your toilets are spick and span. Service by the staff is exceptionally good. Hot water can be requisitioned if you choose to have a bath despite the weather! Food is delicious. Large open flat patch that allows you free view of the sky and effortless movement from here to there. (Even that is tough at Lama Camp) Very very comfortable for three nights. Elevation of Bompu Camp is about 6500 ft.

Birding happens when you are driving to the Lama Camp from Tenga, especially around Sessa, where, next to one forest stream, one of my co-birders sighted a full flock of Coral-billed scimitar babblers, when he had gone looking for the elusive Blyth's kingfisher! Then, lot of birding happens a few kilometers before and a few kilometers after the camp, on the road side. Only one trail that involves a not-so-difficult trek to Alubari for the Bugun leiocichla. When you drive to Bompu Camp from the Lama Camp, you cross the highest point of the terrain, called Eaglenest Pass, at approximately 9200 ft above MSL. You definitely search for the Ward's Trogon and the Blyth's and Temminck's tragopan there, besides the bar-winged wren babbler. A little below the pass, further down towards the Bompu Camp comes the famous Tragopanda Trail - a trail where you could see the Tragopans and the Red Panda.

Birding around Bompou involves a short walk/drive back towards the Lama Camp for a couple of kilometers but mostly further down along the road that terminates around 20 km away at Khellong. This entire road stretch that passes through Sessni and Chaku is good for birding.

The Bompou Camp is run by one Mr Angu who is indeed a very nice person and runs the camp very professionally. The camp is no longer under the control of Gaurav Kataria but it's with "vacvoyages" - a travel company. Angu can organize the bookings. This place has Arun Daaju as the kitchen helper, who is an extremely accomplished guide for the entire EWS. He worked with some researchers for a few months and combined with his own talent and interest. The result is that even a single note of the Eaglenest birds won't escape his ears!! He guided us during our trip and he was too good!

'Mishmi Hills' actually refers to the hilly region along the lower Dibang Valley of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh which was originally inhabited by the Mishmi tribe (Idu-Mishmi, to be precise), hence the name Mishmi Hills. Now also, the major population consists of the tribal people.

It all starts from Roing, located at around 700 ft MSL, and goes up and up along the only road that eventually goes to Anini, the forward most area on that axis. Anini is nearly 300 km from Roing but your birding happens only along the first 70 km of this road starting at Roing. After a night stay at Roing, you travel 51 km to a Govt owned guest accommodation (on lease to Ravi Mekola, a bird guide as well as the manager of this place) called Coffee House, which is 3 km short of the famous Mayodia Pass, located at about 9000 ft elevation, the highest point along the entire road to Anini. Coffee House is where we stay, and it is located at about 8000 ft. Coffee House, located on the hill face above the road, consists of two buildings. The lower building has around eight rooms and the upper one has four. The upper rooms are very well managed by the one man Army called Daaju (Dhan Bdr Rana). There is a GenSet that gives you electricity for 3-4 hours at night and one hour in the morning. Hot water is for the asking. Toilets are attached to the rooms and modern. Food is delicious.

Along the way from Roing, half way to Mayodia Pass, at Tiwari Gaon, you have a road side eatery run by a Nepali family that provides excellent Maggi, Omelette, tea and other beverages. Similarly, about 15 km from Coffee House, on the other side of the Pass, there is another similar eatery, called 65-KM HOTEL, that also provides simple thali for lunch in addition to the above.

All in all, logistics should not deter anyone from undertaking the trip to Mishmi. The forest is beautiful and birds are in plenty.

Important Bird Guides for Maguri-Dehing Patkai-Mishmi

1. Binanda Hatibaruah
2. Palash Phuken
3. Jiban Dutta

Bird guide for Mishmi alone

1. Ravi Mekola

Camping sites for Maguri

1. Maguri Camp run by Binanda
(Excellent tented accommodation, attached toilets but ordinary food)
2. Kahuwa Camp run by Jiban N Palash
(Good accommodation with attached toilets and excellent food)
3. Banjuri Camp run by Mr Debashish Gogoi of Tinsukia

Camping Sites for Roing

1. Mishmi Hill Camp run by Mr Pulu, a very well spoken Mishmi person
(Typical Arunachal tribal accommodation with all modern comforts, good food)
2. Yatri Niwas
(A newly constructed resort type accommodation with all modern facilities, good food)

Camping Sites for Mayodia

Only one .. Coffee House run by Ravi Mekola
(Decent living, good food)

Important Bird Guides for Maguri-Dehing Patkai-Mishmi

1. Binanda Hatibaruah
(7002189756, 9435271651)

2. Palash Phuken
(9707160530, 8638455004)

3. Jiban Dutta
(9732247615)

Important Sightings at Different Places:

Guwahati

1. Greater adjutants (at least fifty)
2. Striated grassbird (one)

Nameri

1. Green cochoa (one)
2. Wreathed hornbills (2)
3. Great myna (8-10)
4. Plain flowerpecker (2)
5. Large woodshrike (1)
6. Blue-eared barbet (1)
7. Black-breasted thrush (1)
8. Peregrine falcon (1)
9. Swinhoe's minivet (4)
10. Wedge-tailed pigeon (4)
11. Mountain imperial pigeon (5)

Sessa

1. Streaked spiderhunter (5-6)
2. Grey-headed parrotbill (2)
3. Blyth's shrike-babbler
4. Long-tailed sibia (12)



Long-tailed Sibia

5. Mountain bulbul (1)
6. Coral-billed scimitar babbler (8)
7. Orange-bellied leafbird (5)

Lama Camp

1. Bhutan laughingthrush (2)
2. Grey-headed bullfinch (5-6)
3. Yellow-cheeked tit (4)
4. Beautiful sibia (plenty)
5. Yellow-throated fulvetta (5-6)
6. Maroon-backed accentor (6)
7. Crimson-breasted woodpecker (2)
8. Red-headed trogon (1)



Beautiful Sibia

Bompu Camp

1. Grey-chinned minivet (4)
2. Sultan tit (5-6)
3. Beautiful nuthatch (5-6)
4. Rufous-backed sibia (1)
5. Grey-cheeked warbler (5-6)
6. Rufous-throated wren babbler (1)
7. Greater rufous headed parrotbill (4)
8. Little bunting (1)
9. White-gorgeted flycatcher (1)
10. Pygmy blue flycatcher (2)



Pygmy Blue Flycatcher

Sela Pass and Road

1. Black-eared shrike-babbler (2)



Black-eared Shrike-babbler

2. Tibetan blackbird (2)
3. White-browed rosefinch (4)

Mandala-Rupa road

1. Black-throated parrotbill (50)



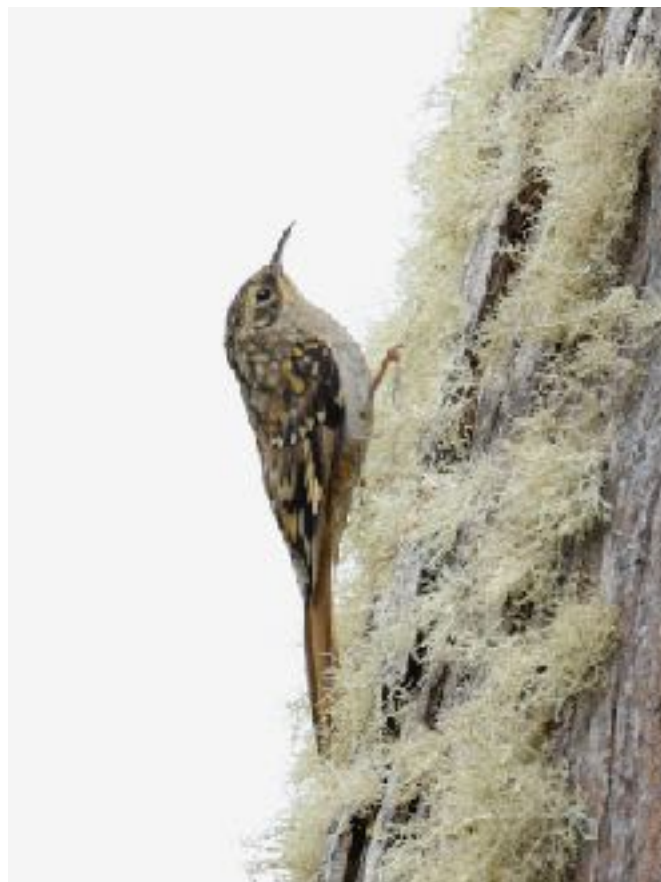
Black-throated Parrotbill

2. Ludlow's fulvetta (4)



Ludlow's Fulvetta

3. Brown-throated treecreeper (2)



Brown-throated Treecreeper

4. Fire-tailed myzornis (10)

5. Collared blackbird (1)
6. Rufous-vented yuhina (10)



Rufous-vented Yuhina

7. Striated yuhina (10)
8. Green-tailed sunbird (100)
9. Mrs Gould's sunbird (5)
10. Fire-tailed sunbird (6)
11. Golden-naped finch (4)

Gibbon Sanctuary

1. Red-headed trogon .. 4
2. Greater necklaced laughingthrush .. 1



**Greater Necklaced
Laughingthrush**

3. White-throated bulbul .. 2
4. Ruby-cheeked sunbird .. 2

Dibru-Saikhowa Sanctuary

1. Scarlet-backed flowerpecker .. 2
2. Slender-billed vulture .. 1
3. Green-billed malkoha .. 2

Maguri Beel

1. Jerdon's babbler .. 4
2. Chestnut-capped babbler .. 4
3. Chestnut munia .. 20
4. Scarlet-backed flowerpecker .. on call
5. Oriental scops owl .. 4
6. Collared scops owl .. 2
7. Brown hawk owl .. 2



Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker

Dehing-Patkai (Soraipung)

1. Red-headed trogon .. 5
2. White-winged wood duck .. 2
3. Blue-winged leafbird ..6
4. Collared treepie ..4
5. Sultan tit .. 6

Roing

1. Black-breasted parrotbill .. 3
2. Chestnut-capped babbler .. 6
3. Yellow-bellied prinia .. 10

4. Chestnut-crowned bush warbler .. 2
5. Graceful prinia .. 1
6. Bengal florican .. 1

Mishmi Hills

1. Red-billed scimitar babbler .. 6
2. White-hooded babbler .. 3
3. Lesser rufous headed parrotbill ..1
4. Striated yuhina .. 15
5. Stripe-throated yuhina .. 20
6. White-naped yuhina .. 15
7. Mishmi wren babbler .. 2
8. Bar-winged wren babbler .. 2
9. Himalayan wood owl .. 1
10. Manipur fulvetta .. 6
11. Streak-throated barwing .. 5
12. Blyth's tragopan .. 3
13. Gould's shortwing



Red-billed Scimitar Babbler

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 14. Black-headed shrike babbler | 19. Black-faced laughingthrush ..6 |
| 15. Streak-breasted scimitar babbler .. 4 | 20. Spotted laughingthrush .. 2 |
| 16. Slender- billed scimitar babbler .. 2 | 21. Rufous-winged fulvetta .. 6 |
| 17. Golden-throated barbet | 22. Yellow-throated fulvetta .. 6 |
| 18. Dusky thrush .. 4 | 23. Black-throated sunbird .. 15 |

Blyth's Pipit



Every time, when one of our members ventures into the wild, they find something new. This is true for Mr. Munish Jauhar, who has yet again found another species new to our area. Readers of the last edition of the newsletter will remember



that he had earlier found the Hume's Short-toed Lark. This time again he has found this new species in Saketri, in May 2017, but has only been able to share it this year after correct identification. He has provided some very clear photographs of the bird; its pointed bill, and streaked crown.



Plum-headed Parakeet, at Chakki Mor by M.S. Sekhon



Red-billed Leiothrix, at Chakki Mor by M.S. Sekhon

Birding Houston

Every time I travel abroad for any length of time, I keep at least one day for birding. In fact, birding takes precedence over any other activity. Whether it is a lake or a forest or a garden or the city centre - if it is approachable by public transport or on foot - I will find it! So while on a trip to Houston and New Orleans from the first week of March this year, I was excited about adding some lifers to my personal checklist.



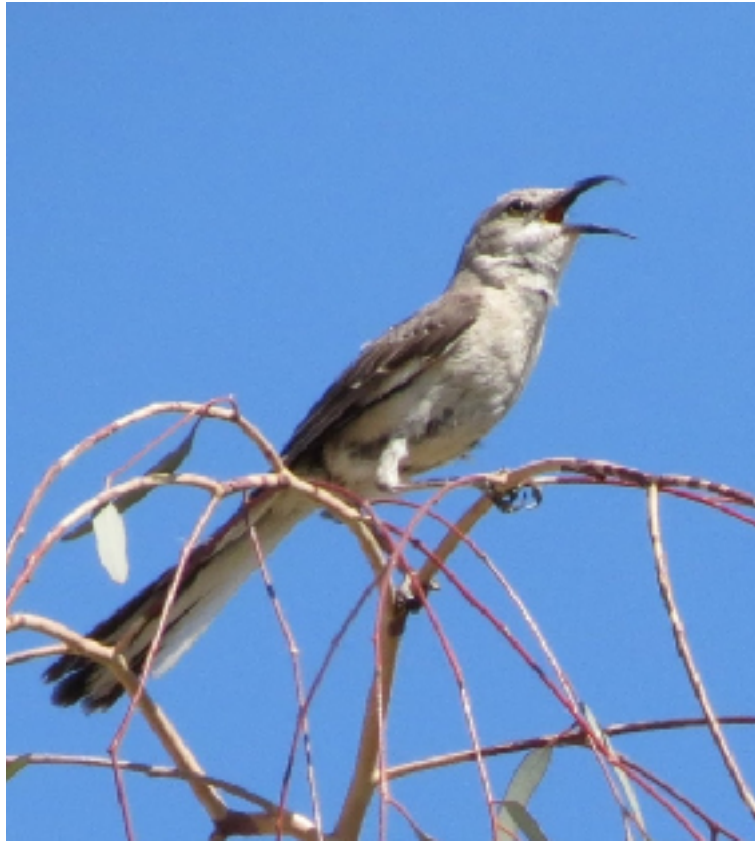
Staying with friends at their lakeside bungalow, in Houston, the first birdcalls in the morning had me jumping out of bed and pulling out my binoculars to peer out of the window. There were at least six different calls I could hear. In vain I searched, but saw not a single bird, let alone the mixed flock I was expecting. Eventually, the calls tantalised me into venturing out of the house and after much searching and craning of the neck, I finally found the culprit - a smallish grey bird with a cocked up tail, much like the female Magpie-robin of our Chandigarh gardens. Perched atop the roof of the neighbour's house, it was giving a full throated rendition as of a church choir! As I looked at it in wonder, it suddenly changed tack and continued in a

chuckle and then chittering and giggling like a group of schoolgirls. It didn't take me long to realise that the morning chorus was actually a solo performance! It is not without reason that this common bird of the American gardens is called Mockingbird - it had been mocking me all the while I was eagerly looking for its (non-existent) companions! It is known for its versatility in mimicry going as far as imitating sounds like creaking hinges, or squeaking wheels and even dogs, cats, and frogs! It is thought to be able to learn over two hundred songs in its lifetime.



for all the four days I stayed in that area it managed to befool me every time. The male Mockingbird it seems builds the basic structure of the nest, a cup-like structures of twigs in shrubbery of medium height, from three to ten feet up. however, the interior is the sole domain of the female. She alone collects the material, most suitable to line the egg chamber - fine rootlets, animal hair or soft grass fibres, and brooks no interference in this matter! The male is however allowed to do the hard-work of providing food for the fledglings and there can be anywhere between two to four little ones in the nest at one time - so both parents take an equal share in rearing the young.

The male builds more than one nest and the female chooses the most suitable one for the laying of eggs and lines the egg chamber with fine fibres. Once the fledglings are two weeks old the female moves on to one of the other nests to lay another clutch leaving the male to rear the fledglings till they are ready to fend for themselves - division of labour and getting on with the the job!



The Mockingbirds have adjusted their food habits according to the seasons of abundance so they don't have to worry about food sources during the changing season - in spring and summer, when the bugs are in abundance, these birds eat insects and in fall and winter, when the berries and fruit are ripening, they partake of the juicy harvest. No urgency to migrate - just a win-win situation.

For a while, in the 1800s right up to the early 1900s, Mockingbirds depleted in numbers as their abilities to mimic became a bane rather than a boon - they became popular as caged birds.

Thankfully, their populations are stabilised and the Americans are able to enjoy their vocal virtuosity in their backyards.

Rima Dhillon

HSBC Chandigarh Birdrace 2018

Sunday, 18th February 2018, dawned with a large number of birdwatchers from Chandigarh Bird Club setting out enthusiastically to participate in the HSBC Chandigarh Birdrace.



The Birdrace was held in Chandigarh for the 8th year running and it is heartening to see the strength of the local birding community grow from 4 to 40 in the intervening years.

Winged visitors give Sukhna a miss; lowest number in 4 yrs

By the Editor
Chandigarh: A massive bird race was held in Chandigarh on Sunday, 18th February, to mark the 8th year of the HSBC Chandigarh Bird Race. The event was organized by the Chandigarh Bird Club and attracted a large number of birdwatchers from across the city and surrounding areas. The race was held in the Sukhna Lake area, which is a popular spot for birdwatching. The club members and their families participated in the race, which was a great success. The club has been growing steadily over the years, and this year's race was a testament to its strength. The club members were very enthusiastic and participated in the race with great spirit. The race was a great success and the club members were very happy to participate in it. The club has been growing steadily over the years, and this year's race was a testament to its strength. The club members were very enthusiastic and participated in the race with great spirit. The race was a great success and the club members were very happy to participate in it.

FOR MORE DETAILS
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The award presentation ceremony was held in the evening. The club members were very enthusiastic and participated in the race with great spirit. The race was a great success and the club members were very happy to participate in it. The club has been growing steadily over the years, and this year's race was a testament to its strength. The club members were very enthusiastic and participated in the race with great spirit. The race was a great success and the club members were very happy to participate in it.



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चंडीगढ़ बर्ड रेस में टीम फैल्कन ने 155 प्रजातियों के साथ जीता पहला स्थान

बढ़ते आँकड़े नुसार खतरा रेल

The numerous watchful eyes help pick out interesting sightings and sometimes lifers in the region. Two years ago Golden Bush Robin was added to the Chandigarh bird checklist. This year too besides the local common birds there were some interesting sightings - Water Rail, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Besra, Black Bittern, Emerald Dove, Short-eared Owl, Collared Scops Owl, and raptors like Peregrine Falcon, Lesser Fish Eagle, White-rumped Vulture and Cinereous Vulture. The Bird of the Day was declared to be Water Rail.

सर्वे सदा...
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Team Falcon, the winning team, listed 155 species followed by Team Indian Eagle Owl with 141 species and 139 species by the Team Mallard coming in at third place.



The winners were felicitated with prizes by Mr Vivek Pal, Deputy Branch Manager, HSBC Chandigarh and all participants were presented participation certificates at the dinner held at Hotel Ikon.

During the evening Amandeep gave an interesting presentation on birds and a short quiz related to bird trivia kept the birders engrossed.

This event brings together the birding community of Chandigarh and is much awaited by all.

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Black-chinned Babbler | 5. Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler |
| 2. Common Babbler | 6. Striated Babbler |
| 3. Jungle Babbler | 7. Tawny-bellied Babbler |
| 4. Large Grey Babbler | 8. White-browed Scimitar Babbler |

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9. Yellow-eyed Babbler | 34. Indian Cormorant |
| 10. Blue-throated Barbet | 35. Little Cormorant |
| 11. Brown-headed Barbet | 36. Greater Coucal |
| 12. Coppersmith Barbet | 37. Brown Crake |
| 13. Great Barbet | 38. House Crow |
| 14. Besra | 39. Large-billed Crow |
| 15. Black Bittern | 40. Darter |
| 16. Bluethroat | 41. Emerald Dove |
| 17. Black Bulbul | 42. Eurasian Collared Dove |
| 18. Himalayan Bulbul | 43. Laughing Dove |
| 19. Red-vented Bulbul | 44. Red Collared Dove |
| 20. Rock Bunting | 45. Spotted Dove |
| 21. White-capped Bunting | 46. Ashy Drongo |
| 22. Grey Bushchat | 47. Black Drongo |
| 23. Pied Bushchat | 48. Hair-crested Drongo |
| 24. Bengal Bushlark | 49. Knob-billed Duck |
| 25. Indian Bushlark | 50. Indian Spot-billed Duck |
| 26. Common Buzzard | 51. Lesser Whistling Duck |
| 27. Long-legged Buzzard | 52. Tufted Duck |
| 28. White-eyed Buzzard | 53. Booted Eagle |
| 29. Indian Chat | 54. Crested Serpent Eagle |
| 30. Common Chiffchaff | 55. Lesser Fish Eagle |
| 31. Zitting Cisticola | 56. Short-toed Snake Eagle |
| 32. Eurasian Coot | 57. Steppe Eagle |
| 33. Great Cormorant | 58. Cattle Egret |

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 59. Great Egret | 84. Black-crowned Night Heron |
| 60. Intermediate Egret | 85. Grey Heron |
| 61. Little Egret | 86. Indian Pond Heron |
| 62. Peregrine Falcon | 87. Striated Heron |
| 63. White-browed Fantail | 88. Purple Heron |
| 64. White-throated Fantail | 89. Oriental Honey-buzzard |
| 65. Yellow-bellied Fantail | 90. Common Hoopoe |
| 66. Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike | 91. Indian Grey Hornbill |
| 67. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher | 92. Red-naped Ibis |
| 68. Red-breasted Flycatcher | 93. Red Junglefowl |
| 69. Verditer Flycatcher | 94. Common Kestrel |
| 70. Little Forktail | 95. Common Kingfisher |
| 71. Spotted Forktail | 96. Pied Kingfisher |
| 72. Black Francolin | 97. White-throated Kingfisher |
| 73. Grey Francolin | 98. Black Kite |
| 74. Gadwall | 99. Black-eared Kite |
| 75. Garganey | 100. Black-winged Kite |
| 76. European Goldfinch | 101. Asian Koel |
| 77. Bar-headed Goose | 102. Red-wattled Lapwing |
| 78. Greylag Goose | 103. River Lapwing |
| 79. Little Grebe | 104. White-tailed Lapwing |
| 80. Common Greenshank | 105. Yellow-wattled Lapwing |
| 81. Black-headed Gull | 106. Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark |
| 82. Brown-headed Gull | 107. Crested Lark |
| 83. Eurasian Marsh Harrier | 108. Greater Short-toed Lark |

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 109. Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush | 134. Rose-ringed Parakeet |
| 110. Streaked Laughingthrush | 135. Indian Peafowl |
| 111. White-crested Laughingthrush | 136. Kalij Pheasant |
| 112. Red-billed Leiothrix | 137. Speckled Piculet |
| 113. Red-billed Blue Magpie | 138. Common Rock Pigeon |
| 114. Sirkeer Malkoha | 139. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon |
| 115. Mallard | 140. Northern Pintail |
| 116. Dusky Craig Martin | 141. Long-billed Pipit |
| 117. Pale Martin | 142. Olive-backed Pipit |
| 118. Plain Martin | 143. Paddyfield Pipit |
| 119. Long-tailed Minivet | 144. Tawny Pipit |
| 120. Common Moorhen | 145. Tree Pipit |
| 121. Indian Silverbill Munia | 146. Little Ringed Plover |
| 122. Scaly-breasted Munia | 147. Common Pochard |
| 123. Bank Myna | 148. Ashy Prinia |
| 124. Common Myna | 149. Graceful Prinia |
| 125. Jungle Myna | 150. Grey-breasted Prinia |
| 126. Asian Pied Starling | 151. Jungle Prinia |
| 127. Small Niltava | 152. Plain Prinia |
| 128. Collared Scops Owl | 153. Straited Prinia |
| 129. Short-eared Owl | 154. Yellow-bellied Prinia |
| 130. Asian Barred Owlet | 155. Water Rail |
| 131. Spotted Owlet | 156. Panjab Raven |
| 132. Alexandrine Parakeet | 157. Common Redshank |
| 133. Plum-headed Parakeet | 158. Black Redstart |

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|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 159.Plumbeous Water Redstart | 184.Brahminy Starling |
| 160.White-capped Water Redstart | 185.Black-winged Stilt |
| 161.Indian Robin | 186.Little Stint |
| 162.Oriental Magpie Robin | 187.Temminck's Stint |
| 163.Indian Roller | 188.Common Stonechat |
| 164.Common Rosefinch | 189.Painted Stork |
| 165.Ruff | 190.Woolly-necked Stork |
| 166.Common Sandpiper | 191.Crimson Sunbird |
| 167.Green Sandpiper | 192.Purple Sunbird |
| 168.Marsh Sandpiper | 193.Red-rumped Swallow |
| 169.Wood Sandpiper | 194.Wire-tailed Swallow |
| 170.Fire-fronted Serin | 195.Purple Swamphen |
| 171.Ruddy Shelduck | 196.Alpine Swift |
| 172.Shikra | 197.Little Swift |
| 173.Northern Shoveler | 198.Common Tailorbird |
| 174.Isabelline Shrike | 199.Common Teal |
| 175.Long-tailed Shrike | 200.Indian Thick-knee |
| 176.Rufous Sibia | 201.Blue Whistlingthrush |
| 177.Eurasian Skylark | 202.Chestnut-bellied Rockthrush |
| 178.Oriental Skylark | 203.Black-lored Tit |
| 179.Common Snipe | 204.Black-throated Tit |
| 180.House Sparrow | 205.Cinereous Tit |
| 181.Russet Sparrow | 206.Bar-tailed Treecreeper |
| 182.Sind Sparrow | 207.Grey Tree-pie |
| 183.Common Starling | 208.Rufous Tree-pie |

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 209.Cinereous Vulture | 225.White-breasted Waterhen |
| 210.Egyptian Vulture | 226.Baya Weaver |
| 211.Gryffon Vulture | 227.Variable Wheatear |
| 212.Himalayan Vulture | 228.Oriental White-eye |
| 213.White-rumped Vulture | 229.Lesser Whitethroat |
| 214.Citrine Wagtail | 230.Eurasian Wigeon |
| 215.Grey Wagtail | 231.Lesser Goldenback |
| 216.White Wagtail | 232.Brown-fronted Woodpecker |
| 217.White-browed Wagtail | 233.Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker |
| 218.Yellow Wagtail | 234.Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker |
| 219.Wallcreeper | 235.Grey-headed Woodpecker |
| 220.Clamorous Reed Warbler | 236.Himalayan Goldenback |
| 221.Greenish Warbler | 237.Lesser Yellownap |
| 222.Grey-hooded Warbler | 238.Yellow-crowned Woodpecker |
| 223.Hume's Leaf Warbler | 239.Eurasian Wryneck |
| 224.Lemon-rumped Warbler | 240.Whiskered Yuhina |

Rima Dhillon

Kerala - A Birders' Paradise

In the last week of March 2018, I went on a birding trip to Kerala along with Sarbjeet Kaur and Dr. Aprajita Lobana. Also accompanying us were some non-birders (including my mother). Our trip was from 26th March to 2nd April 2018.



Common Rosefinch

On 26th March, we arrived in Kochi from Delhi, at about 0900 hrs, and departed immediately to Munnar, in the Western Ghats. The town and its neighbouring areas are famous for its tea estates. Here we stayed at in a homestay for two nights in Devikulam, one small town on the outskirts of Munnar some 10 kilometres away, named Pavithram, run by Mr. Aneesh (m:9400553514). The



Kerala Laughingthrush



Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

homestay is perfectly located near tea estates and trees are aplenty both at the back and front. As a result, we saw many species of birds previously not seen by us; White-cheeked Barbet, Square-tailed Bulbul, Lesser Coucal, Rusty-tailed Flycatcher, Black-naped Monarch, Common Rosefinch, Kerala Laughingthrush, Malabar Whistlingthrush, Booted Warbler, among others. We mostly birded in the tea estates, since the reserve forests were closed due to breeding season.



Malabar Grey Hornbill

After that, we left for Thekkady on 28th March. On the way we stopped in a cardamom plantation, near Poopara. It was here that we saw, Indian Yellow Tit,



Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

Malabar Parakeet, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch Lesser Hill Myna, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, and others. After driving another couple of hours we stopped at a spice garden and then finally at Kumily city. We reached our destination of the day, Periyar Tiger Reserve. Our stay was booked in KTDC's Aranya Nivas, a very comfortable, relaxing, and luxurious resort inside the reserve, run, as the name suggests, by the Kerala Tourism Department Corporation. The



Lesser Hill Myna

resort was located next to Lake Periyar, formed by damming the river Periyar, by the British long back in 1895, by constructing the Mullaperiyar Dam. We were, however

dismayed to learn that most of the activities had been cancelled, after a group of 22 people died in an accident in the reserve. Nevertheless, we went out along the roads and tracks. Luckily for us, the exercise was not wasted. We saw, Asian Fairy



Asian Fairy Bluebird

Bluebird, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Lesser Hill Myna, Golden Oriole, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Woolly-necked Stork, White-bellied Treepie, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, and others.



Grey Junglefowl

The next day too was spent in Thekkady. We took the first boat ride into the lake, early morning at 0730 hrs. While on the boat, we saw Little Cormorants, Great Cormorants, Darter, Greater Spotted Eagle, Brahminy Kite, and Ashy Woodswallow.

We also saw the Indian Bison, Indian Sloth Bear, Otter, Sambar Deer, Dhole, Nilgiri Langoor, Wild Boar, Porcupine, Bonnet Macaca, Southern Birdwing, Blue Mormon, Malabar Tree Nymph, and Forest Skimmer. After returning from the boat



Rufous Woodpecker

trip, we had breakfast, and again went along the road. This time we saw, Malabar Woodshrike, Red Spurfowl, White-rumped Spinetail, Orange Minivet and others. Later we went onwards to some grape vineyard, and hence crossed the boundary into Tamil Nadu, in Guduloor. On the way, we saw the Crimson-fronted Barbet, Bronzed



Orange-headed Thrush

Drongo, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Chestnut-tailed Starling, among others. We returned for lunch and afterwards again went along the road, which had become our usual haunt.

On our last day in Thekkady, 30th March, we birded along the road once again, since we were leaving for Alleppey that day. This time around, we saw Rufous-bellied Eagle, Nilgiri Flowerpecker, Grey Junglefowl, Orange Minivet,



Malabar Trogon (female)

Small Minivet, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Black-hooded Oriole, Red Spurfowl, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Orange-headed Thrush, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, Rufous Woodpecker, and others. When we reached Alleppey, we saw a new shorebird; Lesser-crested Tern, with River Terns.



Malabar Trogon (male)

Our next day, i.e. 31st March, in Alleppey was dedicated to the famous backwaters of Kerala. We took a three hour ride in a shikara, and we saw Black-

bellied Tern, Lesser Whistling Teal, Southern Coucal, Lesser Coucal, among others. Then we went onwards to Cherai, in Kochi.



Brown-cheeked Fulvetta

Our final day in Kerala was devoted to Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, near the backs of Periyar, nearest town Kothamangalam. We left Cherai at about 0430 hrs and reached Tahttekad at 0630 hrs. We were met by our guide Mr. Ajo Mon (m: 9744975627) at the entrance to the village. He then took us into the mountainous forest and showed many new and exciting species, namely Malabar Barbet, Flame-throated Bulbul, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Broiwn-cheeked Fulvetta, Ceylon Frogmouth, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Brown Hawk Owl,



White-bellied Woodpecker

Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Blyth's Starling, Loten's Sunbird, Indian Swiftlet,

Malabar Trogon, Greater Goldenback, White-bellied Woodpecker, and others. On our way back we stopped near the backwaters in Cherai (smaller than those in Alleppey, but not any less beautiful), we saw Asian Openbill, Woolly-necked Stork, Darter, and Rufous-bellied Eagle.



Ceylon Frogmouth

The following is a complete list of bird species seen in Kerala over the course of a week:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Jungle Babbler | 13. Indian Chat |
| 2. Crimson-fronted Barbet | 14. Pied Bushchat |
| 3. Malabar Barbet | 15. Great Cormorant |
| 4. White-cheeked Barbet | 16. Indian Cormorant |
| 5. Chestnut-headed Bee-eater | 17. Little Cormorant |
| 6. Asian Fairy Bluebird | 18. Lesser Coucal |
| 7. Flame-throated Bulbul | 19. Southern Coucal |
| 8. Red-vented Bulbul | 20. Indian Jungle Crow |
| 9. Red-whiskered Bulbul | 21. Black-headed Cuckooshrike |
| 10. Square-tailed Bulbul | 22. Darter |
| 11. Yellow-browed Bulbul | 23. Spotted Dove |
| 12. White-eyed Buzzard | 24. Ashy Drongo |

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 25. Black Drongo | 50. Grey Junglefowl |
| 26. Bronzed Drongo | 51. Pied Kingfisher |
| 27. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo | 52. White-throated Kingfisher |
| 28. Hair-crested Drongo | 53. Brahminy Kite |
| 29. Crested Serpent Eagle | 54. Golden-fronted Leafbird |
| 30. Greater Spotted Eagle | 55. Orange Minivet |
| 31. Rufous-bellied Eagle | 56. Small Minivet |
| 32. Cattle Egret | 57. Black-naped Monarch |
| 33. Great Egret | 58. Common Myna |
| 34. Intermediate Egret | 59. Jungle Myna |
| 35. Little Egret | 60. Lesser Hill Myna |
| 36. Western Reef Egret | 61. Velvet-fronted Nuthatch |
| 37. Nilgiri Flowerpecker | 62. Black-hooded Oriole |
| 38. Pale-billed Flowerpecker | 63. Golden Oriole |
| 39. Indian Paradise Flycatcher | 64. Brown Hawk Owl |
| 40. Rusty-tailed Flycatcher | 65. Malabar Parakeet |
| 41. Ceylon Frogmouth | 66. Vernal Hanging Parrot |
| 42. Brown-cheeked Fulvetta | 67. Grey-fronted Green Pigeon |
| 43. Common Greenshank | 68. Rock Pigeon |
| 44. Black-headed Gull | 69. Oriental Magpie Robin |
| 45. Grey Heron | 70. Common Rosefinch |
| 46. Indian Pond Heron | 71. Long-tailed Shrike |
| 47. Malabar Grey Hornbill | 72. House Sparrow |
| 48. Black-headed Ibis | 73. White-rumped Spinetail |
| 49. Common Iora | 74. Red Spurfowl |

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 75. Blyth's Starling | 95. Malabar Trogon |
| 76. Chestnut-tailed Starling | 96. White Wagtail |
| 77. Asian Openbill Stork | 97. White-browed Wagtail |
| 78. Woolly-necked Stork | 98. Yellow Wagtail |
| 79. Loten's Sunbird | 99. Booted Warbler |
| 80. Purple Sunbird | 100. Greenish Warbler |
| 81. Purple-rumped Sunbird | 101. Western Crowned Warbler |
| 82. Indian Swiftlet | 102. Oriental White-eye |
| 83. Common Tailorbird | 103. Lesser Whitethroat |
| 84. Lesser Whistling Duck | 104. Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker |
| 85. Black-bellied Tern | 105. Greater Goldenback |
| 86. Lesser Crested Tern | 106. Heart-spotted Woodpecker |
| 87. River Tern | 107. Lesser Goldenback |
| 88. Kerala Laughingthrush | 108. Lesser Yellownape |
| 89. Malabar Laughingthrush | 109. Rufous Woodpecker |
| 90. Orange-headed Thrush | 110. White-bellied Woodpecker |
| 91. Cinereous Tit | 111. Malabar Woodshrike |
| 92. Indian Yellow Tit | 112. Ashy Woodswallow |

Amandeep Singh Channa

93. Rufous Tree-pie
94. White-bellied Tree-pie

The Resilient Snow Partridge of Tungnath



While climbing the snow-covered Tungnath in Uttarakhand in early March, I was all the time wondering if we will be able to see the Snow Partridges or not as it was high on my wish-list. In spite of starting early in the morning, we reached the top around noon as I needed rest and also catch up my breath. There were four of us



i.e. Saurabh Sawant, Rakesh Ahlawat, Harish Mathiani our guide, and myself in this trip. Just as we reached the top Harish gave us the good news that he could hear the

Partridges calling. Yes, there they were twenty beautiful birds against snowy background!

Few of them, on the sledges of the steep cliff and some in the snow, feeding, totally unwary of us. And while we were admiring and clicking them they started marching in front of us one-by-one to go for feeding on the other hill top. All of them went across except for one. Wondering why, I asked our guide Harish why this one was behaving like a 'late lateef'. Harish told us this poor guy had a broken leg and he had been watching him like this since November.



Suddenly we saw the supposed leader of the group calling out to the injured one and following, others came back a little closer to it as if urging him to hurry up. Just as the resilient one reached them, they all took to their wings flying away across the valley to their other feeding grounds taking it along with them.

Though we saw many beautiful birds in our trip to Chopta but this was the highlight sighting. It's not only humans but birds also show a strong kinship amongst themselves.

Chetna Sharma

The Lake - Chandlai

The Ramsagar Chandlai Lake is approximately 15kms from Jaipur city, Rajasthan, on Tonk Road. The road to the Chandlai Lake is a four lane national highway. One has to take right turn under the over bridge at Shivdaspura. The lake is easily approachable from Jaipur and is a good place to spend at least half a day for birding if one is in Jaipur. The Chandlai Lake is an inland drainage water body. It is the second lake to be covered under the Alake Development Act after the Jal Mahal Lake. The total catchment area of the lake is 4,096 Hectares and there are no recorded encroachments..



It was Narbir Kahlon sir who persisted that in case I want to add some new birds to my bird list then it was the time to visit some wetlands as we can see many birds in passage. So I thought in case I get time from my safari in Jhalana I would surely visit this lake. After the morning safari which is from 6.15 to 10.15am we headed towards the lake so that we could manage taking another safari in evening from 3.45 to 06.15pm. As we reached the lake the sight was very disturbing as it was filled with sewage. Ironically the main feeder to the Ramsagar Lake is the Amanishah Nallah or the polluted Dravyawati River. The Chandlai lake is the main source of irrigation to the nearby villages and the birds too feed in its water. The fisheries department also has a major role to play in utilising whatever resource is available from the lake (breeding aquatic species, for which yearly contracts are given). We drove around the lake for at least 3kms and sighted many species of birds. Our list included:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Greater Flamingo | 4. Northern Shoveler |
| 2. Little Grebe | 5. Eurasian Spoonbills |
| 3. Rudy Shelduck | 6. Bar Headed Geese |

7. Black winged Stilts
8. River Lapwing
9. Little Ringed Plover
10. Black Tailed Godwit
11. Cattle Egret
12. Pied Avocets
13. Grey Heron
14. Red Wattle Lapwing
15. Garganey
16. Lesser Whistling Duck

17. Eurasian Coots
18. Spot Billed Duck
19. Large Grey Babbler
20. Lesser Whitethroat
21. Purple Sunbird
22. Little Stint
23. Spotted Redshank
24. Northern Pintail
25. Ruff
26. Dunlins



Vikas Sharma

Forest Hill Field Trip

On 11th February 2018, members of Chandigarh Bird Club went for a bird walk to Forest Hill Resort and Golf Club. Rima Dhillon, Saroj Gulati, Harbhajan Singh Pathania, and Amandeep Singh Channa participated in this bird walk. Rima Ma'am and I started from her house at about half-past six and picked up Saroj ma'am and Pathania sir.

We reached the golf club at about quarter past seven. The area is an extension of Kansal forest and privately owned by a friend of Rima ma'am's. The forest cover is mostly denser towards the east, west, and north of the estate, while the course is in the south. There are two lakes, one in the forest and one in the course. The entire area is hilly, and has been cut to accommodate the greens. The tracks lead in to the forest along a stream. There is also a large clearing with very few trees.

Along the stream we saw Hume's Leaf Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Eurasian Wrenneck and Indian Robin, amongst others. Next, we walked along the lake. Here we saw Ruddy Shelducks, Common Teals, Little Cormorants, Common Coots, and White-throated Kingfishers. We also saw a pack of feral dogs attack and kill a foal of Sambar Deer. After witnessing this heart-wrenching scene and hearing the blood-curdling screech of the deer, we left the pond and went towards the main club and along the pond amongst the greens.

This pond is surrounded by tall reeds and the water is shallow. There we saw White-throated Fantail, Ashy Prinia, Little Cormorants, Pond Herons, Black-winged Stilt, and Red Wattled Lapwing. But the highlight was a pair of Common Snipes. We also walked along the green towards the south, after a raptor (probably a Harrier), and saw Black Redstart, Pied Bushchat and others.

The following is the bird list for the day:-

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|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Red Jungle-fowl | 6. Ferruginous Duck |
| 2. Indian Peafowl | 7. Little Grebe |
| 3. Ruddy Shelduck | 8. Woolly-necked Stork |
| 4. Gadwall | 9. Indian Pond Heron |
| 5. Common Teal | 10. Little Egret |

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 11. Little Cormorant | 33. Red-vented Bulbul (<i>bengalensis</i>) |
| 12. Common Kestrel | 34. Grey-breasted Prinia |
| 13. Black Kite | 35. Ashy Prinia |
| 14. Hen Harrier (?) | 36. Common Chiffchaff |
| 15. Common Moorhen | 37. Greenish Warbler |
| 16. Black-winged Stilt | 38. Sulphur-bellied Warbler |
| 17. Red-wattled Lapwing | 39. Hume's Leaf Warbler |
| 18. Common Snipe | 40. Lesser White-throat |
| 19. Green Sandpiper | 41. Jungle Babbler |
| 20. Common Pigeon | 42. Yellow-eyed Babbler |
| 21. Laughing Dove | 43. Oriental White-eye |
| 22. Rose-ringed Parakeet | 44. Common Myna |
| 23. White-throated Kingfisher | 45. Blue Whistling-thrush |
| 24. Long-tailed Minivet | 46. Oriental Magpie Robin |
| 25. Long-tailed Shrike | 47. Indian Robin |
| 26. Black Drongo | 48. Black Redstart |
| 27. White-throated Fantail | 49. Pied Bushchat |
| 28. White-browed Fantail | 50. Grey Bushchat |
| 29. Rufous Tree-pie | 51. Purple Sunbird |
| 30. Cinereous Tit | 52. Crimson Sunbird |
| 31. Plain Martin | 53. White Wagtail |
| 32. Himalayan Bulbul | 54. White-capped Bunting |

Amandeep Singh Channa

level can vary without any
illside taking effect on the
winged visitors.

Whispering Wings®

Newsletter of the Chandigarh
Bird Club



Incepted in 2008, the Chandigarh Bird Club dedicated itself 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, Vikramjit Singh, Mrs Rima Dhillon, Mrs Sarbjeet Kaur, and Mrs Geeta Goswami.

The fundamental objectives of Chandigarh Bird Club continue to be to:

1. Bring people, especially the younger generation closer to nature, through birding and help them to enjoy the outdoors while making out a fun activity.
2. To make individuals and government more sensitive towards the environment to create a dynamic database for analysis to focus on conservation efforts.
3. To create a forum for birders to share information and discuss issues related to this activity.

Editors: -

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

Amandeep Singh Channa

• **President - Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon**

• **Vice President - Narbir Singh Kahlon**

• **Secretary - Rima Dhillon**

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• **Treasurer - Mahesh Garg**