
Whispering Wings®

Newsletter of the Chandigarh Bird Club®



Volume 3 - 4th Edition

April - June 2018

From the Editor's Desk

बरसात की रिमझिम फुहार...
अब आई है बेला हरीतिमा की,
छा गई है चहूँ ओर हरियाली ।
पुलकित मन झूम-झूम रहा है,
जीवन में छा गई है खुशहाली ।
देखो कोयल कैसे कूक रही है,
पंछियों ने भी शोर मचाया,
संग टूटी उनकी भी बदहाली ।
पेड़-पौधे लहराकर मचल उठेंगे,
झूम उठेंगे पत्ते-पत्ते डाली-डाली ।
अब आई है बेला...

त्र्यम्बक राव साटकर “अम्बर”

How succinctly put...and with the flourish of trees and plants will prosper the birds and beetles, caterpillars and worms, bees and butterflies! It is the time to plant trees...native trees, and we must undertake a few exercises at the club level.

The year so far has seen fantastic activity by the Club with release of a Field Guide of Birds of Chandigarh and association of club members in development of Bird Park in Nagar Van, Chandigarh. New species of passage migrants and migrants were recorded by members. Press gave a lot of coverage to the club activities as well as associated club members to increase awareness about birds and their habitat.

The next step is to spread the good work to Panchkula and Mohali. A survey of birds in the parks of these satellite towns need to be conducted and awareness of park visitors needs to be enhanced.

The greatest method of increasing the awareness of avifauna, their habitats and conservation is to tell the school going children about it. This needs to be taken up at the earliest.

A road map is essential, but to put it into practice more man hours are required as are financial resources.

May you always hear the bird song!

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

Secretary's Report

The breeding season is in full swing. While some of the early breeders can be seen leading their offspring to maturity and independence, there are those who are just starting to gather the material for nest-building.

Every year around this time, the arrival of the summer migrants is always a great cause for excitement. Indian Pitta - a star breeder in this area - arrives around mid May to nest. All ears are tuned. Even a hint of its call and the Chandigarh birding community is out in full force with its artillery of lenses of all sizes and magnification -scouring the area from Saketri to Chandimandir and from Mirzapur Dam to Perch Dam-for just a flash of the blue wings.

Over the last few months there has been a lot of birding activity in Chandigarh

A pocket field-guide “Birds of Chandigarh” was released .The photographs have all been clicked locally and contributed by the members.

In May 2018 International Big Bird Day was celebrated by members visiting the Leisure Valley and Shantikunj gardens of Chandigarh. A checklist was prepared and uploaded on ebird.

The club activity also includes keeping a record of the arrival of Jacobin Cuckoo and populations of Baya Weavers in the area surrounding Chandigarh like Chhaparchiri, Siswan, Sarangpur and Saketri.

Members have also undertaken out station birding trips to Dodital and Har ki Dun.

In the coming months a project for the species count of the birds of the gardens of Chandigarh will be held to record all the species seen within Chandigarh specifically.

I wish everyone a great birding year and hope we can all join hands to make Chandigarh a bird friendly city.

May we always hear the bird chorus.

Rima Dhillon

Birding at Jibhi

The heat in Chandigarh was too much for my family to stay put in the city. So we decided to head for the hills. But it seemed that all the people in the plains were rushing to the Hill Stations with news coming as Shimla having shortage of water, Nainital Administration advising tourists to restrict their visits, Manali receiving 10,000 vehicles every day and so on. Then a birder from Gujarat suggested that I try Jibhi in the Banjar Valley in Himachal Pradesh. Quick consultations with some of my colleagues of that area and my plan was fixed and accommodation booked for 4 days - from 4th June to 7th June 2018. Since, Gushaini, a place known for trout fishing was near Jibhi, I took a crash course in angling from Prof Sekhon to try my luck at fishing too.

We started from Chandigarh on 4th June around 0800 hrs and reached Jibhi at around 1600 hrs. Jibhi is a scenic remote hamlet in Banjar Valley of Himachal Pradesh which isn't very well-known to travellers. Though luxury hotels are not available but it has several affordable camps and guest houses. Jibhi can be approached from Chandigarh via the Chandigarh-Manali Highway. It is approx. 35 Km from Aut in Kullu District. The road from Aut to Banjar, which is approx. 25 km, is a wide road. The road from Banjar to Jibhi is steep and narrow. Jalori pass is another 10 Kms from Jibhi.



Jibhi is at an altitude of approximately 6000 feet and surrounded by lush pine and cedar forests. It is just one hour away from the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP). It is a good place for hiking, birding, fishing and enjoying the nature. There are many gentle treks in Jibhi that one can take for birding. A hand made map of trekking trails near Jibhi, downloaded from the Internet, is placed above.



Rufous-bellied Niltava



Ultramarine Flycatcher



Brown-flanked Bush Robin



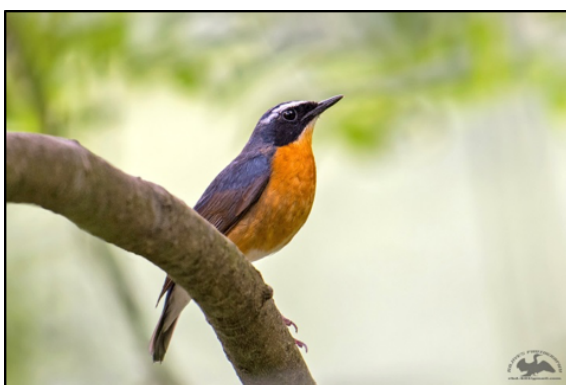
Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher

Chaini Village is popular for ancient structures which were inspired from Chinese art and archaeology. Chaini Village can be reached in an hour trek from Shringi Bagi temple. One can drive to the temple which is some 4 km from Jibhi on the way to Banjar. There is a well outlined trail from the temple that passes through cedar forest, apple plantations, and thin waterfalls towards Chaini Village. The five storey watch tower of Jibhi fort in the village is very impressive and beautiful.

The road to Jalori pass (10,000 feet) is not in good condition and it is better to take bus or hire a local taxi for the trip. One can reach Shimla via Jalori pass. There are many treks around it too. One can trek to the Serohyul Lake from here. Serohyul Lake is some 5 km from Jalori Pass. The Trek is majorly flat with some steep patches

in between. Locals say that “Jujurana” (local name for Western Tragopan) comes down to this place in mid winters.

There is a beautiful waterfall at Jibhi which is less than a kilometre from the village. The place around it is also good for birding. During our stay at Jibhi, I did birding only for the morning hours while rest of the time was spent with family – driving, hiking, fishing and lazing around. I trekked many small trails in Jibhi – towards Jalori, Chaini and to the Waterfall. Black Bulbul, Rufous-bellied Niltava, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Whiskered Yuhina, Olive-backed Tit, Brown-flanked Bush Warbler, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, Large-billed Crow, Blue-whistling Thrushes were the most common birds to be seen.



Indian Blue Robin



Tickell's Thrush

While coming back to our cottage, after birding on 5th June, first I saw a Tickell's Thrush, another summer migrant, gathering nesting material close to a tea stall and then I saw a small Blue and Orange bird with a white supercilium sitting on a pillar far ahead of me near the road. But before I could get a better look, the bird flew inside a bush and never came out. I searched my field guide and soon I was sure, it was the Indian Blue Robin which comes all the way from Sri Lanka and Southern India with its friend, the Indian Pitta. While the Pitta, stays back at the foothills, the Indian Blue Robin comes all the way to the higher reaches of Himalayas to breed. I was upset to miss a shot of the bird, as there are not many images of this bird from the Himalayas.

The next morning, my only target bird was the Indian Blue Robin and I was at the spot at 0530 hrs where I saw it the previous morning. The place was near a stream with thick undergrowth and Pine Trees. Two hours went by and there were not many birds to be seen unlike the previous day. May be, because it rained the previous night and the sun was not yet up. Suddenly, I heard a piercing whistle. I had never heard such a call earlier. Based on the loudness of the call, I was expecting a

bigger bird, may be a Thrush, and kept searching for the bird in the undergrowth with my binoculars. Then it called again, right above me and voila, it was none other than Mr Indian Blue Robin. What happened next is history – click click click click click click.

Cutting the long story short, it was an excellent experience birding at Jibhi – A very beautiful place with lots of opportunity for recreational activities. Though it was a short family trip, I returned with a handful of images and loads of beautiful memories.

Bird List of Jibhi, Himachal Pradesh (4-7 June 2018):

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Indian Blue Robin | 19. Rock Pigeon |
| 2. Tickell's Thrush | 20. Spotted Dove |
| 3. Brown-flanked Bush Warbler | 21. Plum-headed Parakeet |
| 4. Rufous-bellied Niltava | 22. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher |
| 5. Whiskered Yuhina | 23. Kalij Pheasant |
| 6. Himalayan Bulbul | 24. Black-chinned Babbler |
| 7. Black Bulbul | 25. Ultramarine Flycatcher |
| 8. Common Myna | 26. Olive-backed Tit |
| 9. Blue-whistling Thrush | 27. Black-throated Tit |
| 10. Great Barbet | 28. Rufous Sibia |
| 11. Verditer Flycatcher | 29. Spotted Forktail |
| 12. Russet Sparrow | 30. Crested Kingfisher |
| 13. House Sparrow | 31. Oriental White-eye |
| 14. Grey-hooded Warbler | 32. Brown Dipper |
| 15. Large-billed Crow | 33. Grey Bushchat |
| 16. Red-billed Blue Magpie | 34. Streaked Laughingthrush |
| 17. Grey Treepie | 35. Black-lored Tit |
| 18. Yellow-billed Blue Magpie | 36. Ashy Drongo |

Rajive Das

Trip to Shuklaphanta Wildlife Sanctuary

Having seen all the Weaver birds other than the Finn's, I would always ask all senior birders where we would find the Finn's. Invariably, the answer was that it is a rare bird with a very limited distribution. I didn't think I was going to see it soon.

Till Vikram Tiwari, a Terai birding specialist, called me up one evening about three weeks ago and told me that he can give me assured sighting of this vulnerable species at the Shuklaphanta Wildlife Sanctuary. And he also mentioned other enticing names like small buttonquail, rufous-rumped grassbird, crow-billed drongo, hooded pitta (all lifers for me) and I was sold!!

I told him that I would visit the sanctuary on 5-6-7 June 18. My good luck that exactly on those dates, Brig Sarabjeet Randhawa and Mrs Satender Randhawa were also headed in the same direction, for the same purpose - Finn's Weaver. We met Vikram at Khatima and then rushed to our destination. The hotel was neat and clean, where we had our lunch, before heading for the Sanctuary. We were joined by Joshi, a local bird specialist, at the gate of the sanctuary.

From the Entry point of the sanctuary, there is initially an 18 km stretch of four-wheeler track that courses through the forest, initially Sal and then mixed. The forest then seamlessly changes to a beautiful grassland that stretches for at least another 5-6 kilometres. Other than this main arterial road, there is a network of criss-crossing tracks across the length and breadth of the sanctuary and each of those side roads throws the promise of some exciting birds.

Though we were headed for the Finn's weaver point, we could not ignore a beautiful crow-billed drongo that chose to fly next to the car track. Prominent tuft on the forehead and widely splayed tail. We stopped and quickly took some good record shots of the drongo.

Next to an Army post in the grassland, there was a big shed for their two domestic elephants. Busy feeding on the ground, close to the elephant shed, was a flock of golden yellow beauties! Finn's Weavers were here!! Sarabjeet sir and I couldn't resist approaching them for better shots but they would fly off to a nearby grass reed stock, providing the picture, typical of all weavers.

Done with Finn's weaver, we next proceeded to look for the golden-headed cisticola. Lo and behold, hardly a couple of hundred metres on the track from the Army picquet, there were these tiny creatures busy feeding on whatever there was on the track. They were at least a flock of four quails! We slammed the brakes and scrutinised the busy birds through our binoculars to diagnose their ID. They were the small buttonquails. Cameras swung into action and good record shots of these lifers were captured.



Red-rumped Grassbird

Further on, Tiwari showed us the golden-headed cisticolas. The females don't have a golden head but then, soon, we came upon a male with characteristic golden in its head. However, it didn't sit still even for a moment and eluded our cameras.

Further down, again on the track, we came across another speciality of the sanctuary - the swamp francolin - one male and one female. Beautiful! They allowed us to get close to them and take some decent pictures.

Search for the grassbirds that evening wasn't successful so we headed for the Jerdon's babbler area. The similarity of the habitat to that at Maguri Beel, more than a thousand miles away, was simply amazing. We could hear the Jerdon's calling and could even see it flitting past once or twice but it won't come out in the open for good sighting or good pictures.

It was getting dark, and far beyond the official sanctuary time. Joshi, our local guide was getting agitated as Mr Tiwari seemed to be in no hurry, in a typically UP laid back manner. Randhawa sir sensed the urgency of the situation and pressed the accelerator and we zipped to get out. There! A couple of kilometres short of the Entry gate we spotted a majestic leopard standing astride the Jeep track and looking back at us as we looked back at it, completely mesmerised. What a sight! Unexpected bonanza!

Got back to the hotel. Tea at the hotel's restaurant took ages to come. Decided never to ask for tea at this hotel again. The night at the hotel was comfortable. I got up at 3:45 AM and pressed the electric kettle that I had got along with me from Lucknow into use and quickly prepared four glasses of tea. Took two of them downstairs for Randhawas while Tiwari and I took care of the other two. We were charged for another day of birding at Shuklaphanta.

Joshi was dutifully waiting for us at the gate. Plan was to hit the grassbird area but only after a cursory search for hooded pitta, a little distance away, where it was spotted a few days ago. On reaching the spot, we called for it and guess what!! It obliged. Two of them, flying from here to there to there. Came and sat on a log quite close to us and then flew some distance. We could see this absolute beauty for nearly half an hour and click some pictures as well before we left.

Black francolins were commonly seen crossing the track and even more commonly heard calling. Another good sighting of swamp francolins happened along the way. Bristled grassbird made a bold appearance, calling relentlessly, from a grass twig next to the road. We were told that the rufous-rumped grassbird isn't as obliging and that the sighting is not going to be as easy as this one. Joshi knew where it was nesting. After a few minutes of patient wait, it made a brief appearance through the tall grass and then disappeared. Right next to it came the golden-headed cisticola, a classic male, with perfect lighting and distance. We had excellent pictures of this rarity.

As we got done with the cisticola, the much awaited grassbird started coming more and more towards surface. And then it was almost completely out in the open and we had our best shots of this very rare bird of the Indian subcontinent. What joy!

Jerdon's babbler was our next target. We had taken a length of the agro-net with us to prepare a hide. After the temporary hide was erected, we called the bird. It called back instantly and started flying from one reed-bed to another and back, but always taking cover as soon as it would land. Photo opportunity evaded us despite more than an hour of hopeful waiting. We decided we should try it another day.

When we crossed the bridge over a narrow stream, the sight of a majestic lesser eagle stopped us. Beautiful sighting, out in the open. As we clicked a few shots, it noticed our activity and flew a couple of hundred metres away to privacy. Just then, we saw a stork-billed kingfisher in action. It dove down into water and came out with a fish that it held by the fin for sufficient length of time to ensure its demise. It would violently shake the fish to drive the water out of its gills. After all, it

is the water in the gills that gives the fish it's oxygen. When the fish was dead, it tossed it up into the air, grabbed it head-first and slowly swallowed it. Just as we got over watching this action, we saw a common kingfisher getting into the act. It also darted into water and made a successful return to it's perch. The ritual of shaking the fish violently was duly followed even by the much smaller common kingfisher. And then the toss and gulp. In a span of ten minutes, we had seen all of this! Birding is all about luck, they say. They couldn't be more right!!



Golden-headed Cisticola

The sun was right on top of our heads by now and the heat was becoming oppressing. We drove back to the Army picquet, the Finn's weaver point, where Joshi and Tiwari prepared some hot and delicious wai-wai for lunch along with peanut salad. Everybody ate well. And then rested for a while.

After that, Tiwari decided to take us to another spot where Jerdon's could be sighted. We had the striated grassbird there, we also had another good sighting of the swamp francolin but the Jerdon's was nowhere to be seen or heard. We moved another few metres to another thicket of bushes. Chestnut-capped babbler made a brief appearance there and then decided to play hide-and-seek, never coming out in the open again. However, we had excellent sightings of a yellow-bellied prinia that allowed us good photography.

And then, suddenly, we saw a rabbit scamper across the grassland that got Tiwari terribly excited. 'Hispid hare!!' he exclaimed. Apparently, Hispid hares are very uncommon sighting at Shuklaphanta. We could not get a picture then, but as we were heading back, towards the end of the day, we had another one feeding on the jeep track. Here, we stopped and clicked some pictures. The day had been quite productive!

We had planned for Kali Keech part of the sanctuary for the next morning. It was diametrically opposite in location to where we had birded for the first two days. Before we entered the forest, we saw a lesser adjutant standing all by itself in the middle of an expanse of flat land. The sal forest was full of woodpeckers. Rufous, Himalayan goldenback, Greater goldenback, Lesser goldenback and the brown-capped pygmy woodpecker. Also saw a nuthatch which on closer scrutiny turned out to be the Indian nuthatch, a lifer for me. A number of other forest species, such as the greater racquet-tailed drongo, crow-billed drongo, black-hooded oriole, jungle owlet, chestnut-tailed starling, common woodshrike and some others were all there. The bay woodpecker, high on my list of priorities, however, gave us a miss.



Hooded Pitta

All in all, just one full day and two half days of birding gave us excellent sightings and me nine lifers. And what's really special about this sanctuary is the rare opportunity to capture rather rare birds of the Indian subcontinent. Strongly recommended for everyone.

Useful information....

Birding Guide - Vikram Tiwari

Contact Number - [7459808018](tel:7459808018)

Best season - 15 May to 15 June

Best way to go - Take your own car, pick up Tiwari on the way to Banbassa border and then move to Mahendranagar for staying in the hotel there.

Cost of the trip for two days for two people on twin sharing basis - Approx Rs 25000 (for two persons)

Duration of trip - Two days are enough.

Hotels are comfortable with AC rooms and clean Western toilets.

Bhupesh K Goyal

Learning to Obtain a Good Exposure

Hi Birders. This is a very elementary article for beginners in learning to obtain a good *exposure* — that is, in getting a photo in which the bird is lit well enough that you can see sufficient detail of the bird's features.

There are 03 settings in your DSLR that you can manipulate to affect the exposure (brightness) of an image - the *Aperture*, the *Shutter Speed*, and the *ISO* setting. The aperture is very easy to understand - a wider hole, or aperture, will let in more light to the camera sensor per unit time, resulting in brighter images. The aperture is a kind of *diaphragm* (or *iris*) located within the lens. This diaphragm can be opened or closed to varying sizes. A larger aperture (wider hole) corresponds to a smaller *f*-number; thus, *f/8* lets in more light than *f/11*.

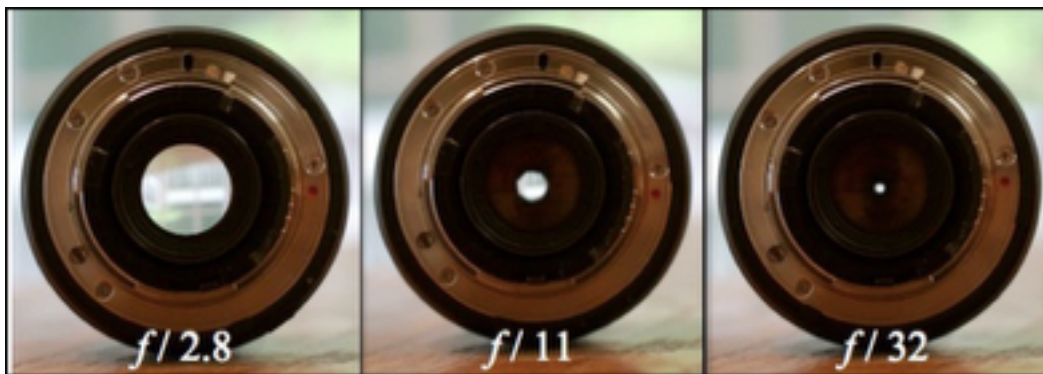


Figure-1: F-numbers and aperture are inversely related. As the f-number is varied from 2.8 (at left) to 32 (at right), the aperture decreases in size.

Light passing through the lens and diaphragm will reach the imaging sensor only when the shutter is open. The shutter can be thought of as a gate through which light must pass before falling on the sensor and creating an image. The amount of time that the shutter remains open is dependent on the shutter speed. Therefore, if the shutter opens and closes very quickly, less light will reach the sensor than if the shutter opens and closes slowly. Thus, a faster shutter speed results in a darker exposure.

Lastly, we have the ISO setting that controls the amount by which the output of the sensor (the image signal, as well as any noise therein) is amplified before being converted to a digital image. Increasing ISO values results in the pixels, and hence, the resulting image look brighter (though also noisier).

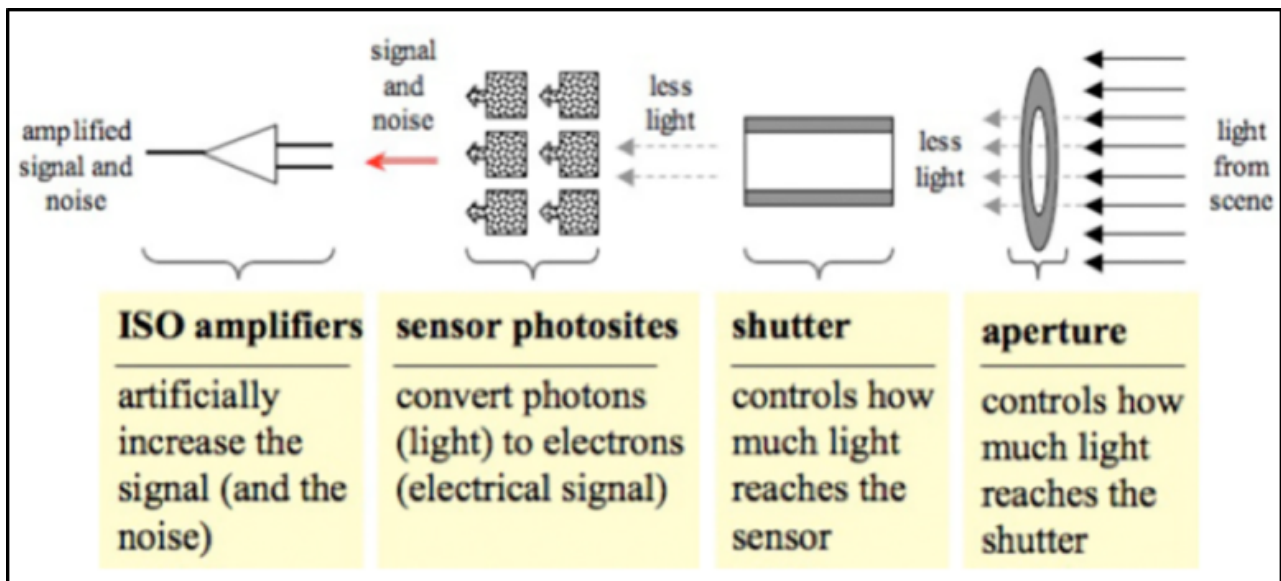


Figure-2: The 03 exposure parameters in DSLRs (right-to- left): Aperture, Shutter Speed and ISO. The aperture limits light via space constraints, the shutter speed limits light via time constraints, and the ISO setting artificially amplifies the signal (and noise) from the imaging sensor after exposure has already taken place.

We thus have the following simple rules:

Action for a Brighter Image	Action for a Darker Image
Enlarge Aperture (decrease f-number)	Reduce Aperture (Increase f-number)
Decrease Shutter Speed	Increase Shutter Speed
Increase ISO	Decrease ISO

For example, if you take a photo and find that it's too dark, you can make sure the next photo turns out brighter than this one by either increasing the ISO or enlarging the aperture or decreasing the shutter speed. If after making the adjustments, you find that the next photo is still darker, then you can simply adjust one or more of the settings further and try again, and repeat this process until you get an image that has just the right amount of exposure. This hit & trial method may seem slow, but with experience you'll get better at adjusting these settings rapidly.

Now we need to consider some of the complications involved in adjusting the 03 parameters - aperture, shutter speed & ISO. There isn't a single, unique combination of these parameters that results in the correct exposure. Once you've found a setting that gives you a properly exposed image, it is possible to change 02

or more of the parameters and still get the same overall level of brightness. For example, if you decrease the *f*-number down by one click on your camera's aperture dial (e.g., from *f*/11 to *f*/8), and then increase the shutter speed up by one click on your camera's shutter-speed dial (e.g., from 1/320 to 1/400), you will find that the resulting exposure is almost same as the previous one. This is because the increase in shutter speed has counterbalanced the larger aperture. Each click of the aperture dial or the shutter-speed dial is called a “*stop*”. A *stop* of light corresponds to doubling or halving of the shutter speed/ ISO/aperture.

A number of different combinations of ISO / aperture / shutter speed may give you a good exposure. However, there are side effects of adjusting these parameters. For example, enlarging the aperture not only increases the amount of light collected, it also results in a shallower *depth of field* (DoF). Similarly, increasing the ISO can increase the noise level, while decreasing the shutter speed can decrease the sharpness of the image, due to motion blur. Thus, the challenge is in finding the best combination of these three parameters which gives you a well exposed image, without introducing too much of noise (via ISO) or motion blur (via shutter speed) as well as your desired DoF (via aperture).



Figure-3: Yellow-bellied Fantail in a shallow depth-of-field (DoF). In order to isolate my subject, I set the aperture very wide, and then adjusted the shutter speed and ISO (but not the aperture) to get a good exposure. When it is undesirable to change one of the exposure parameters, then the exposure adjustment has to be done by using the other two parameters.

Rajive Das

A Blessing in Disguise

I often while swimming talk to my self Do you think I am writing about swimming ... Or the swimming styles??? Well no not at all.... As I swim a few times a week in my favourite place CHANDIMANDIR, I see people doing different Styles, I do have a slight pang as I cannot do so...OF COURSE due to a reason, I am on my back.... Face upwards... AND I AM BLESSED for what I see and others miss out. Very simple, there are trees around and I have a bird list to submit while swimming... The Brown Headed Barbets.. Their trk! Trk! Their to and fro movements,. And if I don't mention the hopping of Grey Horn Bills on the eucalyptus trees, to see them teach their young one to hop and fly, I shall be skipping a teaching session. The flight of Golden Orioles, their golden yellow against the blue sky, a beautiful contrast. The skimming of Wire Tailed Swallow, Black Drongo, Swifts, just a touching distance away, as if they have dipped down to whisper in my ears. Their deep blues and blacks against water, is a sight to see. Not to miss the Brahaminy, the Jungle Babbler, the Tailor Bird in their flocks gazing at the swimmers. Thinking surely what are these people doing in water when best is to be in the sky. The sweet song of the Oriental Magpie Robin, The Indian Chat helps me to go within. I close my eyes and get lost as if I am in heaven flowing or soaring, I don't know. The cackle of Parakeets brings me back to my strokes in water. The plump Yellow Footed Green Pigeon, coming to the banyan tree top to feed on the figs before settling down for the night. The homeward bound numerous common birds, Egrets, Crows, Kites, Myna, Shikra do remind me it's time to go home before the night falls. Or vice a versa, I also have to go home to feed myself and my family. BUT THE BEST IS STILL TO COME, The INDIAN PITTA would not like to be neglected, after all they are our usual summer guests.

Geeta Goswami

Summer and Monsoon Visitors to Chandigarh

Many birds visit Chandigarh ISCR during the year. And the monsoon and summer months are not any different. As far as my study and expertise goes, there are about twenty-two visitors to Chandigarh ISCR in these months.

The most sought after this year has been the Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, and Indian Pitta. The Orange-headed Thrush has made Jangeshu its headquarters this year. This month's field trip was taken to Jangeshu and the thrush did not disappoint. Also, the participants in this field trip saw the Indian Paradise Flycatcher as well. I, too, went with other birders; Narbir Kahlon, Onkar Singh, Neeta Gode, and Bindoo Nangia, to see the Indian Pitta and also saw the Black-headed Cuckooshrike, another summer visitor.

But there are other visitors which are largely either ignored or not identified when birders are out in the field. For instance, it is the perfect time for Alpine Swift and Fork-tailed Swift, visitors, as they are, to our region in this time. They are difficult to identify among the other swifts found here. One has to keenly sift through the resident species of swifts to locate them.

Two years ago, during monsoon, five birders; Rima Dhillon, Brig Randhawa, Rajive Das, Col Bhupesh Goyal, and I; went to Sirsa River near Baddi. There we saw Brown Crake, Bristled Grassbird and Tricoloured Munia. So it would be the time for these birds to visit our area. Bristled Grassbird is a shy bird which breeds in tall grass, during monsoon and hovers overhead sometimes. The Tricoloured Munia visits the region during the summers. It has been sighted regularly in Jawaharpur and Sirsa River for the last four-to-five years.

Among questions, the summer visitors include, Small Buttonquail and the Yellow-Legged Buttonquail. These quails are small and shy birds, found mostly in the undergrowth of tall grasses. There is also a possibility to see the Small Pratincole as well as the Oriental Pratincole. The latter had visited Jawaharpur in summers last year.

Also, there are the more common visitors. Jacobin Cuckoo, Indian Cuckoo, Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Indian Golden Oriole, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Lesser Whistling Duck, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, and Green Bee-eater.

Amandeep Singh Channa

Big Bird Day

On 5th May 2018, members of Chandigarh Bird Club celebrated Big Bird Day, an international event where birders survey an area for its birds for a couple of hours in the morning.

Rima Dhillon, Sarbjeet Kaur, Aprajita Lobana, Saroj Gulati, and I, Amandeep Singh Channa, participated in the event. We began, first, going to Sector-10, Leisure Valley. There, among many others, we saw the Spotted Owlet, Coppersmith Barbet, and Black Kites.

Afterwards, we went to Shanti Kunj in Sector-16, opposite Rose Garden. Here, we saw many Black Kites and a Shikra. But a very interesting sighting of a family of Red-wattled Lapwings — the parents and four chicks — really made our day.

Our final excursion was at Bamboo Garden and Children's Traffic Park in Sector-23, opposite Rima ma'am's house. Saroj ma'am had returned home after Shanti Kunj (she too lives in Sector-16). Here, our only interesting sighting was of a peacock. We ended our day there at about 0900 hours.

Amandeep Singh Channa

Liesure Valley Bird List

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Indian Pond Heron | 9. Asian Koel |
| 2. Oriental Honey-buzzard | 10. Spotted Owlet |
| 3. Shikra | 11. Indian Grey Hornbill |
| 4. Black Kite | 12. Brown-headed Barbet |
| 5. White-breasted Waterhen | 13. Black-rumped Flameback |
| 6. Common Rock Pigeon | 14. Rose-ringed Parakeet |
| 7. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon | 15. Black Drongo |
| 8. Greater Coucal | 16. Ashy Drongo |

17. Rufous Treepie

18. House Crow

19. Red-vented Bulbul

20. Hume's Warbler

21. Common Tailorbird

22. Jungle Babbler

23. Common Myna

24. Purple Sunbird

Shanti Kunj Bird List

1. Shikra

2. Black Kite

3. White-breasted Waterhen

4. Eurasian Collared Dove

5. Common Hawkcuckoo

6. Indian Grey Hornbill

7. Brown-headed Barbet

8. Black-rumped Flameback

9. Rose-ringed Parakeet

10. Black Drongo

11. Rufous Treepie

12. House Crow

13. Jungle Babbler

14. Oriental Magpie Robin

15. Red-breasted Flycatcher

A Hunt for Pitta

On 3rd June 2018, I went to Karoran Village in Haryana just after crossing the Punjab and Haryana Border to see the Indian Pitta. I went with Narbir Kahlon, Onkar Singh, Bindoo Nangia, and Neeta Gode. We met at Narbir sir's house in Sector-10, Chandigarh and left for our destination at around 0545 hours.



Karoran village is beyond Naya Gaon, after crossing Forest Hill Golf Club and going along into the stream (now dried). The locality is a low mountainous area, an extension of the Kansal Forest hills. The road is bordered on one side by hills and on the other by terraced fields.

Upon reaching the area, we heard around three-to-four different calls along with the distinctive call of the Indian Pitta. We heard four calls from the birds, one of which was very close to the road. The pitta was a lifer for Neeta Gode, Bindoo Nangia, and I. Narbir sir and Onkar Singh went back down the road to scout the area. While waiting for the bird to show itself, we heard the other pitta close-by and up the slope of the mountain on the opposite side of the road. I followed the call and climbed up the hill. I searched for the pitta, but instead saw the Black-headed Cuckooshrike.



Later, I walked down to the others, joining them as we all entered the field. Here, too, the Indian Pitta was calling out. We zeroed it on the top of a eucalyptus tree. We, i.e. everyone except Narbir sir, circled around the eucalyptus to get a good look at the pitta. And there it was, perched gregariously on a branch of the tree, calling its distinctive call. We raised our cameras and took shots of the pitta in all its glory. The weather being overcast, the photos were not spellbinding but anyway, they were good enough for me.

Afterwards we continued to look around for another pitta. We also saw the Indian Golden Oriole, Common Iora, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Chestnut-shouldered Petronia, and Verditer Flycatcher, among others.

We returned to Chandigarh at around 0930 hours and I was home at 1000 hours. On the way back we heard Common Hawkcuckoo, the Brainfever Bird.

Amandeep Singh Channa

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Grey Francolin | 5. Red-wattled lapwing |
| 2. Barred Buttonquail (H) | 6. Common Pigeon |
| 3. Cattle Egret | 7. Eurasian Collared Dove |
| 4. Shikra | 8. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon |

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 9. Plum-headed Parakeet | 19. Rufous Treepie |
| 10. Common Hawkcuckoo | 20. Common Crow |
| 11. White-throated Kingfisher | 21. Grey-breasted Prinia |
| 12. Green Bee-eater | 22. Common Tailorbird |
| 13. Blue-tailed Bee-eater | 23. Jungle Babbler |
| 14. Indian Pitta (L) | 24. Common Myna |
| 15. Black-headed Cuckooshrike | 25. Verditer Flycatcher |
| 16. Common Iora | 26. Chestnut-shouldered Petronia |
| 17. Black Drongo | 27. Crested Bunting |
| 18. Indian Golden Oriole | 28. Common Hawkcuckoo (H) |

Monthly Field Trip to Jangeshu

On 9th June 2018, members of Chandigarh Bird Club participated in the monthly field trip, this time to Jangeshu.

The following species were seen:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Babbler, Jungle | 20. Griffon, Himalayan |
| 2. Babbler, Black-chinned | 21. Honey-Buzzard, Oriental |
| 3. Babbler, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar | 22. Hoopoe, Common/Eurasian |
| 4. Barbet, Blue-throated | 23. Hornbill, Indian Grey |
| 5. Barbet, Coppersmith | 24. Munia, Scaly-Breasted |
| 6. Barbet, Great | 25. Junglefowl, Red |
| 7. Bulbul, Himalayan | 26. Laughingthrush, Rufous-chinned |
| 8. Bulbul, Red-vented | 27. Laughingthrush, Streaked |
| 9. Bushchat, Pied | 28. Laughingthrush, White-crested |
| 10. Chat, Indian | 29. Leiothrix, Red-billed |
| 11. Cormorant, Little | 30. Magpie, Red-billed Blue |
| 12. Cuckoo, Indian | 31. Myna, Common |
| 13. Dove, Emerald | 32. Munia, Scaly-Breasted |
| 14. Drongo, Ashy | 33. Oriole, Indian Golden |
| 15. Drongo, Black | 34. Parakeet, Plum-headed - |
| 16. Drongo, Spangled | 35. Parakeet, Rose-ringed |
| 17. Flycatcher, Indian Paradise | 36. Petronia, Chestnut-shouldered |
| 18. Forktail, Spotted | 37. Piculet, Speckled |
| 19. Francolin, Black | 38. Pigeon, Common/ Rock |

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 39. Pigeon, Yellow-footed Green | 53. Thrush, Blue Whistling |
| 40. Prinia, Ashy | 54. Thrush, Orange-headed |
| 41. Prinia, Grey breasted | 55. Tit, Cinereous |
| 42. Prinia, Striated. | 56. Treepie, Grey |
| 43. Robin, Oriental Magpie | 57. Treepie, Rufous |
| 44. Robin, Indian | 58. Warbler, Grey-hooded |
| 45. Sparrow, House | 59. Woodpecker, Brown-fronted |
| 46. Starling/Myna, Common | 60. Woodpecker, Fulvous-breasted - |
| 47. Starling, Brahminy | 61. Woodpecker, Grey-capped Pygmy. |
| 48. Sunbird, Crimson | 62. Cuckoo, Common hawk |
| 49. Sunbird, Purple | 63. Cuckoo, Jacobin |
| 50. Swallow, Barn | 64. Crow, House |
| 51. Swallow, Red-rumped | 65. Crow, Large-billed |
| 52. Tailorbird, Common | |

Birder's Take

This issue's photographs have been contributed by birder Vikas Sharma.



Lesser Whistling Duck



Blue-tailed Bee-eater



Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler



Paddyfield Pipit



Grey-bellied Cuckoo



Egyptian Vulture



Ashy Drongo



Crested Kingfisher



Spotted Owlet

Awareness through Press



CBC Members with UT Administrator, Member of Parliament Chandigarh, and PCCF Chandigarh, at the launch of “Birds of Chandigarh”.



HI Correspondent
chris@hickhickhick.com

CHANDIGARH: UT administration opened gates of the newly-created Nagar Vard, also called City Tower, on Tuesday.

Set up a road of the new, the forest features walkways, jogging trails, nature trails, shallow water bodies, rain shelters, meditation hut, an open air gym and a children's park, besides public conveniences.

"The department of forests and wildlife has established the Nagar Vaa on around 100 hectares in Sukhna Lake," said Sanjiv Kumar, chief conservator of forests and chief wildlife warden, U.P. Chandigarh.

Inaugurating Mager Van, UP administrator VP Singh Bodnore desired that efforts be made to develop the area as a destination for bird lovers.

The forest, which will be open to public from 9am to 5pm, has been set up as part of the Nagar Van Udyog Yojana, an Urban Forestry Scheme of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

Location around 100 hectares
behind Sakima Lake, Chy Forest
features walkways, jogging
trails, nature trails, shallow
water bodies, rain shelters,
meditation hut, an open air
gym and a children's park.
Besides public conveniences,



The scheme aims to create at least one forest in each city having a municipal corporation for providing who become an environment and contribution to growth of a smart, clean, green and healthy city. The IT department of forests and wildlife has created the Forest in the Lake Reserve forest area with 90% financial assistance from the central government.

The inauguration function was attended by Chandigarh member of Parliament Kiran Khur, adviser to Union minister for PwM and Public works secretary-cum-secretary (environment).

and forests) Amarag Agarwal, finance secretary, A.R. Sanku, chief conservator of forests, Sanjiv Kumar, besides other officers of the Chaudhgarh administration.

BIO-TREATMENT OF WASTE WATER

Santosh Kumar said to tackle sewage from Kansalwara off-Panjab entering like the forest of Chandigarh, the forest department has carried out bio-treatment of the sewage by traditional organic method.

Besides, a 1-km water channel has been constructed to divert

this sewage into a shallow water body created under the Nagar Van Udyam Yojana in the forest area.

As part of organic bio-treatment of the sewage, the department has installed *Saccharum munja* grass, rice straw, gravel, iron ore, etc., along and in the channel.

"Due to this promotive approach, the biochemical oxygen demand level of this waste water has reduced from 79.8 mg per litre to 7.1 mg/L, and chemical oxygen demand level has reduced from 260-274 mg/L to 37.3 mg/L as per water analysis reports of the Chandigarh Pollution Control Committee," Kamrasaid.

On the occasion, UT administrator VP Singh Raina released the Coercing Chandigarh Action Plan 2019. This crucial plan is a guiding tool for all governing agencies of Chandigarh administration, to strategise effectively for fulfilling the commitment of making City Beautiful cleaner and greener.

It was shared that 1,89,128 saplings were planted in 2017 against the target of 2.35 lakh saplings. This year, the target has been increased to 2.43 lakh.

Badgers also released a book "Birds of Chandragiri", which has information and pictures of 875 birds found in Chandragiri and its periphery. "The U7 forests and wildlife department in association with the Chandragiri Birds Club has compiled this guide book for the benefit of amateur bird watchers, environmentalists and scientists who study birds (ornithologists) and residents," Sarath Kumar said.

प्रशासक बदनौर ने ग्रीनिंग चंडीगढ़ एक्शन प्लान 2018-19 किया रिलीज

[illegible][illegible]

प्रस्तावक जी.सी. सिंह भारती ने संसदीय लोक निर्माण विभाग के अध्यक्ष एम.ए.ए. जे.ए.ए. के निर्देशों के अनुसार प्रस्ताव पेश किया।

बड़े खर्चों के लिए गाइडलूक का अनावरण

एक कृप में बड़े लवों के पास उनके बाल-बाल कभी-काल ही कम-कमिनी मिलेंगे। और यदि वे एक कृप को देखें, तो वे अपने बाल-बाल के बालों में ही कम-कमिनी मिलेंगे। और यदि वे एक कृप को देखें, तो वे अपने बाल-बाल के बालों में ही कम-कमिनी मिलेंगे।

2017 में आर.एस.पी.
एन. लैंगल

पैसा : 10	100
पैसा : 10	100
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3.43. **आवृत्ति**



विवरण	रकम
प्रीमियम	500.00
डिस्ट्रिक्ट, नगर निगम	400.00
डिस्ट्रिक्ट, ग्रामपंचायत	200.00
एन एन डी जे	1.20.00

यह एरिया होंगे कवर

[illegible]

नगर वन का किया उद्घाटन

[illegible]

नगरकज
में यह स्थल

- [illegible]

Governor opens Nagar Van

Has been set up by Forest Department on 100 hectares behind Sukhna Lake

THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 25

Punjab Governor and UT Administrator VP Singh Badnore inaugurated Nagar Van (city forest) in the presence of MP Kiran Khosla on Tuesday.

The Department of Forests and Wildlife has established Nagar Van of around 100 hectares behind Sukhna Lake under the Nagar Van Udayan Yojana sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change.

It aims at creating at least one city forest in each city for providing a healthy living environment and contributing to the growth of smart, clean, green and healthy cities.

The total cost of the project is approximately Rs 2 crore. It spreads over an area of 100 hectares. Facilities such as walkways, jogging trails, nature trails, shallow water bodies, visitors' shed, rain shelter, meditation hut, open air gym, and a children's park have been provided.

Suresh Kumar, Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden, said the Forest Department has also successfully carried out bio-treatment of sewage coming from the Kanals area of Punjab and entering into lake forests of the UT. The Forest Department has constructed a water channel of about 3 km to divert the sewage water to a shallow water body created under Nagar Van Udayan Yojana.

Shrikanth Singh, Joint



Punjab Governor VP Singh Badnore and MP Kiran Khosla take a round after inaugurating Nagar Van in Chandigarh on Tuesday. PHOTO: ANS/PTI



Greening action plan for 2018-19 released

On this occasion, "Greening Chandigarh Action Plan 2018-19" was also released by Punjab Governor and UT Administrator VP Singh Badnore. This plan is a guiding tool for all greening agencies of the Chandigarh Administration to fulfil their commitment of making the City Beautiful more clean and green. Against the target of 2,315,000 saplings in 2017-18, altogether 2,34,126 saplings were planted. In the year 2018-19, a target of 2,00,000 saplings has been fixed. A book, "Birds of Chandigarh", was also released by the Governor. The Forests Department, UT, in association with the Chandigarh Bird Club, has prepared a guide book for the benefit of residents.

About the project

The total cost of the project is approximately Rs 2 crore. It spreads over an area of 100 hectares. Facilities such as walkways, jogging trails, nature trails, shallow water bodies, visitors' shed, rain shelter, meditation hut, open air gym, and a children's park have been provided.

design, ground, iron area, etc., were put between the channel in order to maintain the water by traditional method of bio-treatment.

Parimal Rai, UT Advisor, Animal, Agriculture, Housing De-

partment, said the project is

Secretary (Environment and Forests), and A.R. Singh, Finance Secretary, were also present on the occasion.

Badnore, while appreciating the efforts, desired that efforts be made to develop this area as a bird-friendly destination for local tourism.

Chandigarh Tribune, 25th April 2018

सिटी में पाए जाने वाले 376 पक्षियों की फोटो के साथ किताब लांच

चंडीगढ़ और आसपास के इलाके में पक्षियों की करीब 376 प्रजातियाँ पाई जाती हैं। इन सभी प्रजातियों की फोटो के साथ उनकी जानकारियों को एक किताब में समेटा गया है। चंडीगढ़ बर्ड्स क्लब के सहयोग से तैयार की गई किताब का विमोचन गवर्नर व चंडीगढ़ प्रशासक वीपी सिंह बदनौर ने किया। किताब में प्रकाशित सभी पक्षियों की फोटो बर्ड्स क्लब के सदस्यों ने उपलब्ध करवाए हैं। बर्ड्स क्लब के प्रेसिडेंट एमएस सेखों ने बताया कि यह पहली बार है, जब एक साथ इतनी पक्षियों को समेटे एक किताब को लांच किया गया हो।

Dainik Bhaskar, 25th April 2018

Art. 15.000.000
attilene.saragosa.com

This became a matter of worry for Slagh, who developed a keen interest in documenting birds visiting the city. Photographing them and keeping them stored with him until he found the time and the direction to complete them in something meaningful. "My father was in the Army or we would have been in the country," he says.

However, as much as paternal grandfather was against the idea of killing birds and in Italy, my maternal family was full of intensely hunters. I had some

► **Harinder Singh**, who serves on the wildlife board for both Chandigarh and Punjab, has been an active participant in rebalancing the natural appearance for the newly-opened "Nagar Ván (City Forest)"

> In 2004, he joined Delhi Bird Group, an online forum which opened his eyes to numerous birders from Delhi and other parts of the country.

→ Singh believes the removal of top soil during the desilting of the lake, is behind the decline in the population of migratory birds.

a great deal of will-
ing in my life, which
was sort of missing
by the time of my
daughter in 2000.
2001 - 2014
Sue.

Singh post INDI TIME would often take his daughter to Merri Hill, Mirzapur and other diverse areas around the city to explore wildlife and document the birds, until in 2004, he joined a Delhi based group, Delhi Bird Group. The online forum opened Singh's eyes to numerous birders from Delhi and other parts of the country who started responding to his reports and questions and gave him a place to share his

Stark, who serves on the wildlife board for 30th Congressional District, has been an active participant in revitalizing the natural appearance for the newly opened "Nagar Van" (after forests) to keep birds in their natural habitat. "I am in talks with the U.S. Forest department to create as many 'hides' as possible for the birds we can in the dense forest to protect them from adverse climate," he said.



लव विद. नेचर...

[illegible]

यह मोटे खाँसीगल
बढ़ा करण के
प्रेमिबेट द्वायम
सेखो ने खीपी है।

NATURE WATCH

Indian pitta sootied in city



slowly along the bed towards the bottom of the column, be released and move into the column bottle, even as water

Item 14 (Trans. 1.05)

INDIAH is a word derived from the Indian word *andiah*, which is a village of the Indian nation of the same name. In the Indian word, *andiah* means "village of the Indians." In the Indian word, *andiah* is called

These birds feed in the Humberglades and the lower Illinois River valley and are common to southern California. Several thousand pairs may breed in the Sacramento.

Indian
with
gold
braided
hair

When the first seeds fell
Lanka in September and
October, there was completely
silence by the night and the
Palk Strait can be seen in the
dark. The waves began to break
against the north shore, and
then, the other side was covered
in clouds and the sea was
dark.

The trouble is the secretary.
That changes it all.

Indian gifts,
which get its name
from the Indians, is
so-called. It is
usually made of
stone.

लव विद. नेचर.



नीलकण्ठ यशंता को जो भी देखता है, सीढ़ाना हो जाता है

[illegible]

● **सिमांत प्रदेशों में**
सिमांत क्षेत्रों में स्थित
राज्यों में **सिमांत**
क्षेत्रों में **सिमांत**

दोषों का निवारण है। यहाँ तक कि इन दोषों का निवारण करने में सफल होना ही एक प्रकार का धर्म है। दूसरे पक्षों की ओर से जो दोषों का निवारण करने में सफल होना ही एक प्रकार का धर्म है। दूसरे पक्षों की ओर से जो दोषों का निवारण करने में सफल होना ही एक प्रकार का धर्म है।

[illegible]

Amar Ujala, 3rd June 2018

भारतीय पिट्टा सर्दी में चली जाती है श्रीलंका...



पिटल की फोटो
महिला बर्ड
वॉचर सीमा
जिल्लों ने
अपने कैमरे में
कैच की है।

[illegible][illegible]

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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**
- **Joint Secretary - Sarbjeet Kaur**
- **Treasurer - Mahesh Garg**