
Whispering Wings®

Newsletter of the Chandigarh Bird Club®



Volume 5 - 2nd Edition

October - December 2019

From the Editor's Desk

The Club was very active this quarter. A photo exhibition, the Birdwatching Workshop in Military Litfest, Bird Census of the Sukhna Lake, Salim Ali Birth Anniversary Dinner, Greater Himalayan Bird Count in Uttarakhand and three monthly bird walks as well as Nagar Van Birdwalks with Chandigarh Forest Department kept the members not only busy but also in the news. It has been very fruitful three months with tremendous contribution of the members. Let us hope we make greater strides by the day.

We must chart a way forward where greater effort need to be made in terms of increasing avifauna awareness amongst the citizenry. Awareness, as they say is like the sun; when it shines on things, they are transformed. These efforts need to be concerted as well as consistent. Ways must be found to increase the outreach of these efforts, even if it is by the way of contributing bird photos or pictures of specific habitats, bird photo exhibitions in public spaces, pamphlets, or by any other means.

May you always hear the bird song!

Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

Secretary's Report

In October, Chandigarh Bird Club, in collaboration with Chandigarh Forest Department, held an exhibition of Photos of Birds and Animals of Chandigarh. The monthly field trip was held at member Sandy Grewal's farm near Aerocity with a promise of sighting Grey-headed Lapwings and other early waders.

Four members made a birding trip to Kotagiri in the Nilgiris.

In November the members took a field trip down to River Ghagghar behind the Chhatbir Zoo. Along with the common birds, large flocks of Red-headed Buntings were seen feeding in the Bajra fields.

As a precursor to the Military Literature Festival annually held in Chandigarh, a bird watching workshop was organised in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary by Chandigarh Bird Club, for schoolchildren and others. November also is the month for celebrating the birth anniversary of Dr Salim Ali with the annual dinner of CBC. Four Members of CBC participated in GHBC 2019 in Uttarakhand.

Chakkimorh is a birding hotspot for Chandigarh birders! Aptly the last field trip for the year was scheduled for the mountainous region. Members turned out in large numbers to make the final trip of 2019. Twenty members and 45 species made it a very successful outing with sightings of Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Fire-tailed Sunbird and Himalayan Goldfinches

Members continue to photograph and post beautiful pictures of birds - Long Live the DSLR!

Till next time - Happy Birding!

Rima Dhillon

Photo Exhibition

Forest and Wildlife Department, Chandigarh Administration, on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary, organised an exhibition of photographs of birds, animals and butterflies of Chandigarh.





Club put up their photographs for the exhibition. It was visited by many citizens of the city beautiful. It was officially open by the Club put up their pictures for the display. Many citizens of the city beautiful attended it. It was officially open by the Chief Conservator of Forests Chandigarh Mr Debedra Dalai. Sarbjeet Kaur, Narbir Kahlon, Rima Dhillon, Manjot Singh, Mitinder Sekhon, Lalit Mohan Bansal, Saiyam Nagar and Amandeep Singh had put up the pictures.

Amandeep Singh Channa

Monthly Field Trip - October

Date - 13th October 2019

Venue - Grewal Farms

Participants - Rajesh Khokar, Simmi Waraich, Simrit Kaur, Sandy Grewal, Simran Grewal, Jaideep Grewal, Sarbjeet Kaur, Aprajita Lobana, Saroj Gulati, H S Pathania, Mahesh Garg, Amandeep Singh Channa.



Bird List -

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Shikra | 15. Spotted Dove |
| 2. Pied Avocet | 16. Ashy Drongo |
| 3. Jungle Babbler | 17. Black Drongo |
| 4. Brown-headed Barbet | 18. Spot-billed Duck |
| 5. Green Bee-eater | 19. Cattle Egret |
| 6. Red-vented Bulbul | 20. Ultramarine Flycatcher |
| 7. Pied Bushchat | 21. Grey Francolin |
| 8. Common Chiffchaff | 22. Common Greenshank |
| 9. Zitting Cisticola | 23. Common Heron |
| 10. Eurasian Coot | 24. Grey Heron |
| 11. Little Cormorant | 25. Purple Heron |
| 12. Greater Coucal | 26. Common Hoopoe |
| 13. House Crow | 27. Glossy Ibis |
| 14. Laughing Dove | 28. White-thorated Kingfisher |

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 29. Black Kite | 52. Temminck's Stint |
| 30. Black-shouldered Kite | 53. Siberian Stonechat |
| 31. Asian Koel | 54. Barn Swallow |
| 32. Red-wattled Lapwing | 55. Wire-tailed Swallow |
| 33. Yellow-wattled Lapwing | 56. Rufous Treepie |
| 34. Plain Martin | 57. Grey Wagtail |
| 35. Common Moorhen | 58. White Wagtail |
| 36. Scaly-breasted Munia | 59. Yellow Wagtail |
| 37. Bank Myna | 60. White-breasted Waterhen |
| 38. Spotted Owlet | 61. Lesser Whitethroat |
| 39. Rose-ringed Parakeet | 62. Eurasian Collared Dove |
| 40. Indian Peafowl | 63. Oriental Turtle Dove |
| 41. Paddyfield Pipit | 64. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher |
| 42. Tree Pipit | 65. Eurasian marsh Harrier |
| 43. Ashy Prinia | 66. Black-crowned Night heron |
| 44. Plain Prinia | 67. Indian Pond Heron |
| 45. Common Redshank | 68. Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark |
| 46. Common Sandpiper | 69. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon |
| 47. Green Sandpiper | 70. Common Rock Pigeon |
| 48. Long-tailed Shrike | 71. Little Ringed Plover |
| 49. Common Snipe | 72. Asian Pied Starling |
| 50. Black-winged Stilt | 73. Lesser Whistling Teal |
| 51. Little Stint | 74. Hume's Leaf Warbler |

Amandeep Singh Channa



Kotagiri, Nilgiris

Though we were told that it was the worst time to visit Kotagiri for birding as it was the rainy season, four of us decided to give it a try anyway. The enthusiastic organising skills of Preet Cheema saw us taking off for Coimbatore within two weeks of having made the programme.



We arrived in Kotagiri at 1 am, amid clouds rain and mist and checked into Thillaigarden Cottage.



In spite of the lousy weather the next morning, the mood was upbeat as we got ready to meet our birding guide, Mr Aggal Sivalingam. To his credit, he was unfazed by the long list of lifers handed to him by Preet! He decided to jump right in, suggesting that we start by going up to his tea garden to see **Painted Bushquails and Red Spurfowl**.

The family of Bushquails made several appearances giving us great photo ops.



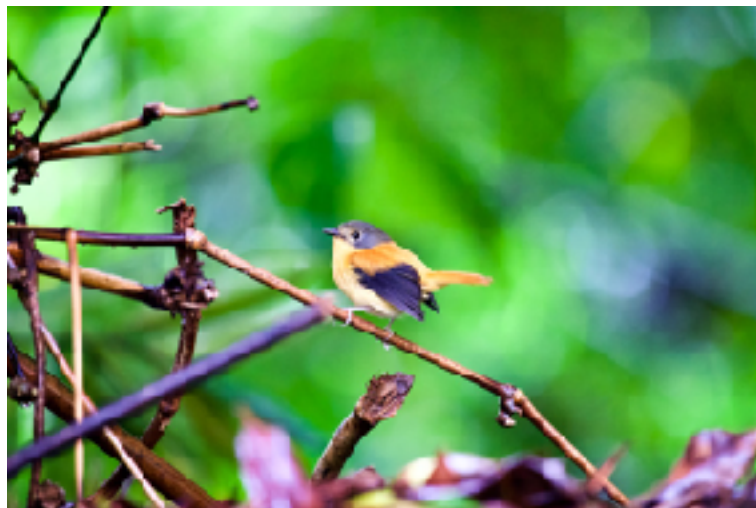
The overgrown gardens of an old family estate host the **Kashmir Flycatcher** from October to March. We were able to see a pair of them.



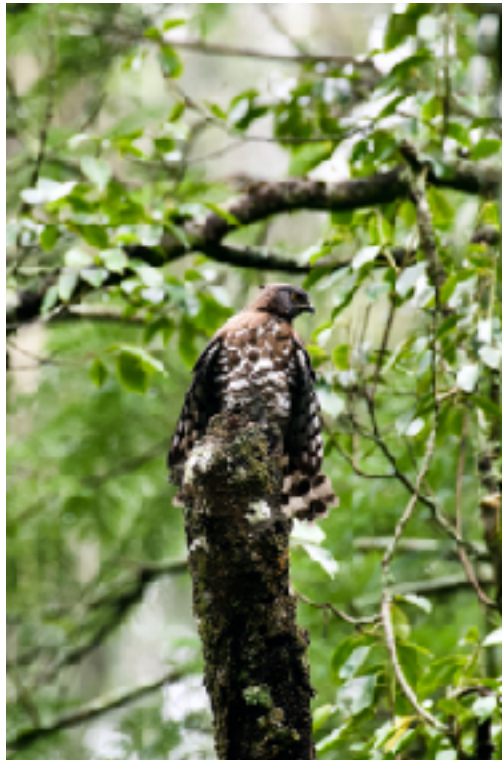
Sims Park in Conoor has its famous residents.



Black and Orange Flycatcher played hide n seek keeping to the dark undergrowth. But when it finally made an appearance, it posed like a prima donna on a red carpet facing the rapid staccato of shutters



Crested Goshawk was another treasure at Sims Park as it sat sunning itself on a dried limb of a tree.



In quest of the **Nilgiri Sholakili (Nilgiri Blue Robin)** we made a trek along a muddy, slippery track in a shola forest. Finally, we were rewarded by a sight of the little robin singing full throatily atop a small bush. The pure melodious notes resounded in the woods around us.



In contrast, the flock of **Nilgiri Laughingthrushes**, loud and boisterous seemed like an onslaught on the senses.



Nilgiri Flycatcher waited quietly and patiently for its breakfast catch.



Purple-rumped Sunbird



While **Malabar Lark** braved the wind in the watery sunshine.

Rima Dhillon



White-cheeked Barbet

Dr Salim Ali Birth Anniversary Annual Dinner



To commemorate 123rd birth anniversary of Dr Salim Ali, 'Bird Man of India', Chandigarh Bird Club held its annual contributory dinner for its members on 16th November 2019.



Chandigarh Bird Club Secretary Rima Dhillon hosted the dinner at her residence. Many members of the club, some with their spouses, attended the event. It was a delicious dinner prepared by the cooks and a delightful evening all around.



Military Literature Festival - 2019

Bird Watching Workshop

Chandigarh Bird Club volunteered in Military Literature Festival 2019, conducted by the Government of Punjab, for a second time.

The club held a bird watching workshop for participants from Chandigarh and Punjab on 17th November 2019.

Members of the club volunteered and took participants to various birding hotspots around Chandigarh and Mohali. A total of 96 species were seen.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Darter | 21. Spot-billed Duck |
| 2. Brown-headed Barbet | 22. Booted Eagle |
| 3. Coppersmith Barbet | 23. Cattle Egret |
| 4. Green Bee-eater | 24. Great Egret |
| 5. Red-vented Bulbul | 25. Intermediate Egret |
| 6. Grey Bushchat | 26. Little Egret |
| 7. Pied Bushchat | 27. Shaheen Falcon |
| 8. Common Buzzard | 28. White-throated Fantail |
| 9. Indian Chat | 29. Black-rumped Flameback |
| 10. Common Chiffchaff | 30. Red-breasted Flycatcher |
| 11. Eurasian Coot | 31. Taiga Flycatcher |
| 12. Great Cormorant | 32. Verditer Flycatcher |
| 13. Indian Cormorant | 33. Grey Francolin |
| 14. Greater Coucal | 34. Little Grebe |
| 15. House Crow | 35. Grey Heron |
| 16. Large-billed Crow | 36. Purple Heron |
| 17. Laughing Dove | 37. Oriental Honeybuzzard |
| 18. Ashy Drongo | 38. Common Hoopoe |
| 19. Black Drongo | 39. Red-naped Ibis |
| 20. Hair-crested Drongo | 40. Red Junglefowl |

41. Common Kestrel
42. White-throated Kingfisher
43. Black Kite
44. Black-eared Kite
45. Asian Koel
46. Red-wattled Lapwing
47. Long-tailed Minivet
48. Common Moorhen
49. Scaly-breasted Munia
50. Common Myna
51. Spotted Owlet
52. Alexandrine Parakeet
53. Plum-headed Parakeet
54. Rose-ringed Parakeet
55. Indian Peafowl
56. Ashy Prinia
57. Plain Prinia
58. Black Redstart
59. Indian Robin
60. Common Sandpiper
61. Green Sandpiper
62. Ruddy Shelduck
63. Bay-backed Shrike
64. Long-tailed Shrike
65. Indian Silverbill
66. Brahminy Starling
67. Black-winged Stilt
68. Siberian Stonechat

69. Crimson Sunbird
70. Purple Sunbird
71. Wire-tailed Swallow
72. Alpine Swift
73. Cinereous Tit
74. Rufous Treepie
75. Citrine Wagtail
76. White Wagtail
77. White-browed Wagtail
78. Yellow Wagtail
79. Sulphur-bellied Warbler
80. White-breasted Waterhen
81. Oriental White-eye
82. Lesser Whitethroat
83. Common Hawk Cuckoo
84. Eurasian Collared Dove
85. Crested Serpent Eagle
86. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher
87. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher
88. Indian Paradise Flycatcher
89. Black-crowned Night Heron
90. Indian Pond Heron
91. Indian Grey Hornbill
92. Common Rock Pigeon
93. Oriental Magpie Robin
94. Hume's Leaf Warbler
95. Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker
96. Western Crowned Leaf Warbler

Dr Salim Ali Birth Anniversary Annual Bird Census and Species Count

Chandigarh Bird Club conducted its 4th Dr Salim Ali Birth Anniversary Annual Bird Census and Species Count of Sukhna Lake on 24th November 2019. Fourteen birders participated in this exercise. The results are as follows:

Results

Sr No	Species Name	Count (Nagar Van)	Count (Sukhna Trail)	Count (Sukhna Regulator End)	Total
1	Cormorant, Great	3	75	50	128
2	Duck, Brahminy		108		108
3	Pintail, Northern		81		81
4	Moorhen, Common	19	8	14	41
5	Cormorant, Little	1	28		29
6	Duck, Indian Spot- billed	2	16	10	28
7	Coot, Common		16	11	27
8	Lapwing, Red-wattled	7	20		27
9	Pochard, Common		20		20
10	Heron, Indian Pond	3	6	6	15
11	Waterhen, White- breasted	5	6	2	13
12	Heron, Grey		4	9	13
13	Egret, Cattle		12		12
14	Shoveler, Northern			12	12
15	Gadwall			10	10
16	Kingfisher, White- throated	3	4	2	9
17	Egret, Intermediate	4	1	2	7
18	Duck			6	6

19	Darter		2	2	4
20	Heron, Purple		2	2	4
21	Egret, Little		2	1	3
22	Wagtail, White	3			3
23	Duck, Tufted		3		3
24	Ibis, Red-naped			2	2
25	Sandpiper, Green	1		1	2
26	Wagtail, Citrine	1	1		2
27	Wagtail, Grey	2			2
28	Heron, Black-crowned Night		2		2
29	Swamphen, Purple		1	1	2
30	Wagtail, White-browed		2		2
31	Egret, Great			1	1
32	Wagtail, Yellow	1			1
33	Kingfisher, Pied		1		1
	Total				620

34. Ashy Drongo
 35. Black Drongo
 36. Jungle Babbler
 37. Brown-headed Barbet
 38. Coppersmith barbet
 39. Himalayan Bulbul
 40. Red-vented Bulbul
 41. Grey Bushchat
 42. Oriental Honeybuzzard
 43. White-eyed Buzzard
 44. Common Chiffchaff
 45. Greater Coucal
 46. House Crow
 47. Large-billed Corw
 48. Eurasian Collared Dove

49. Hair-crested Drongo
 50. Crested Serpent Eagle
 51. White-throated Fantail
 52. Black-rumped Flameback
 53. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher
 54. Red-breasted Flycatcher
 55. Taiga Flycatcher
 56. Grey Francolin
 57. Indian Grey Hornbill
 58. Red Junglefowl
 59. Common Kestrel
 60. Black Kite
 61. Asian Koel
 62. Long-tailed Minivet
 63. Scaly-breasted Munia

64. Common Myna
65. Spotted Owlet
66. Alexandrine Parakeet
67. Rose-ringed Parakeet
68. Indian Peafowl
69. Common Rock Pigeon
70. Ashy Prinia
71. Plain Prinia
72. Black Redstart
73. Oriental Magpie Robin
74. Shikra

75. Long-tailed Shrike
76. Common Starling
77. Purple Sunbird
78. Wire-tailed Swallow
79. Cinereous Tit
80. Rufous Treepie
81. Grey-hooded Warbler
82. Hume's Leaf Warbler
83. Oriental White-eye
84. Lesser Whitethroat
85. Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker



Spotted Owlet

Total number of water dependent species — 33

Total number of water dependent birds — 620

Total number of species — 85

Great Himalayan Bird Count

In the closing days of November, Rima Dhillon, Sarbjeet Kaur, Saroj Gulati, and I, Amandeep, went to Uttarakhand to participate in the 9th Great Himalayan Bird Count.



It is a four-day bird count and participants are assigned to teams and given trails to cover. We were a team of four, and we were to go to Yamunotri. It is a religious town, part of the Chota Char Dham in Uttarakhand. Since it was November, the Dham was closed and the supporting village Janakichatti was virtually devoid of life. I can count on one hand the number of people we saw there.



Janakichatti

We began our journey to Dehradun from Chandigarh at about 0630 hrs. On the way, we passed close to the Suketi Fossil Park, where we saw two Crested

Kingfisher. We also stopped at Asan Barrage as well. We reached Dehradun, OASIS School, at about 1200 hrs. After orientation and lunch, we left for Barkot.



Snow Pigeon

Barkot is a town on the way to many pilgrimages in Uttarakhand. We reached there at around 1830 hrs and stayed at GMNV Barkot. The rain delayed us the next day. So most of our birding was after the rain stopped near Phoolchatti. But even before we reached there, we did see a pair of Common Kestrels, near Barkot. Some of the other birds we saw were Red-billed Blue Magpie, Common Stonechat, Grey Treepie, Himalayan Vulture, White-capped Water Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Streaked Laughingthrush, etc.



Little Forktail

By the time we were near Janakichatti, the rain had stopped. We had one tea and samosa stop at Hanumanchatti. After that, we made a halt at Phoolchatti. Since the weather was clear and the sun was out and so were the birds. Here we saw one

Lemmerguir, Variegated Laughingthrush, Scaly-bellied Woodpecker, Snow Pigeons, Rock Bunting, etc. We moved forward towards Janakichatti, where we also saw Red-billed Chough.



Brown Dipper

Due to the rain, all the way from Barkot to Phoolchatti, we crossed the distance to Janakichatti very quickly. Hence, we were there in plenty of light. We walked up to the temple where they bring the diety down from Yamunotri Dham in the winters. We had our dinner in Janakichatti, near the bus stand. The entire town, which is bustling during the pilgrimage season, could boast on,y a handful of people.



Stripe-throated Yuhina

The next day, we went to Yamunotri Dham, well not up there since it was covered in snow. We did cover about three and a half kilometres of the five it takes to the end. Here we saw the one lifer on the trip for me; Stripe-throated Yuhinas. We also saw Red-billed Chough, Brown Dipper, Little Forktail, Rufous-breasted

Accentor, Pink-browed Rocsefinch, Green-backed Tit, Black-throated Tit, Blue-capped Redstart, Blue-fronted Redstart, Greenish Warbler, Spotted Forktail, Alpine Chough, etc. We trekked through snow, walked on ice, and drank from a waterfall. All along us was the river Yamuna. We returned to Janakichatti and packed up to leave and return to Barkot. We once again stayed at GMNV Barkot.



Scaly-bellied Woodpecker

The next day we returned to Dehradun. On the way, we looked along the roads we couldn't on the way up. We saw Grey-headed Woodpecker, Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker, Indian Cormorants, Great Cormorant, Lemon-rumped Warbler, Black-headed Gull, Slaty-headed Parakeets, Gryphon Vulture, House martins, Wallcreeper, Blue-throated Barbet, Rufous-bellied Niltava, Green-backed Tit, Black Eagle, among others.

After debriefing and submitting our lists and lunching with our hosts, we transferred our stuff from their jeep to our car and left for home.

Amandeep Singh Channa

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lemmerguir | 6. Himalayan Bulbul |
| 2. Wallcreeper | 7. Red-vented Bulbul |
| 3. Rufous-breasted Accentor | 8. Rock Bunting |
| 4. Jungle Babbler | 9. Grey Bushchat |
| 5. Blue-throated Barbet | 10. Pied Bushchat |



Blue-capped Redstart

11. Alpine Chough
 12. Red-billed Chough
 13. Great Cormorant
 14. Indian Cormorant
 15. Large-billed Crow
 16. Brown Dipper
 17. Black Eagle
 18. Little Forktail

19. Spotted Forktail
 20. Black-headed Gull
 21. Common Kestrel
 22. Chestnut-headed Laughingthrush
 23. Streaked Laughingthrush
 24. Variegated Laughingthrush
 25. Common Myna
 26. Rufous-bellied Niltava



Phoolchatti

27. Slaty-headed Parakeet
28. Rock Pigeon
29. Snow Pigeon
30. Blue-capped Redstart
31. Blue-fronted Redstart
32. Pink-browed Rosefinch
33. Spot-winged Rosefinch
34. Long-tailed Shrike
35. House Sparrow
36. Russet Sparrow
37. Siberian Stonechat
38. Black-throated Tit
39. Cinereous Tit
40. Green-backed Tit
41. Grey Treepie
42. Rufous Treepie

43. Gryphon Vulture
44. Himalayan Vulture
45. Greenish Warbler
46. Grey-hooded Warbler
47. Lemon-rumped Warbler
48. Blue Whistlingthrush
49. Oriental White-eye
50. Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker
51. Grey-headed Woodpecker
52. Scaly-bellied Woodpecker
53. Stripe-throated Yuhina
54. Red-billed Blue Magpie
55. Common Rock Pigeon
56. Plumbeous Water Redstart
57. White-capped Water Redstart



Barkot

Press Coverage



Indian Express
11th December, 2019



CBC honoured by the Chief Minister of
Punjab at MLF 2019



Yellow-footed Green Pigeon
By Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

Oriental Honeybuzzard
By Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon



Common Chiffchaff
By Mitinderpal Singh Sekhon

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**