

—*Photo essay*—  
A brief glimpse into the private world of the  
Oriental Honey-Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

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I studied and photographed (between July and August 2007) this nest of an Oriental Honey-Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* in Siyakheri forest block (24°16'30"N 74°43'43"E), adjacent to the Chittorgarh–Pratapgarh national highway in Rajasthan. I shot the pictures while seated inside my vehicle, which was parked behind lantana bushes on the roadside. The birds remained undisturbed despite the movement of hundreds of vehicles on the busy national highway.



The male Oriental Honey-Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* was chased and hounded by House Crows *Corvus splendens* for over 30 min., for it seems it had plundered one of their nests for the nestling that it grasps in its talons while perching on a *Boswellia serrata*, before flying to the nest and delivering the food.



The female Oriental Honey-Buzzard and her chicks waiting impatiently for the male to deliver food.



When the food was delivered into the nest, the two nestlings tussle to grab it. Already the difference in size between them is visible.



The larger, dominant chick managed to snatch the prey and swallow it whole. The entire family is present here.





True to its name, the Oriental Honey-Buzzard feeds on bee honey, honeycomb and larvae. Here the male is feeding honey larvae to a chick...



...here the female, a honeycomb...



...and here the male, a drop of honey.



Sibling rivalry is intense and gradually the second (and younger) chick is deprived of food and constantly pecked and harried by its larger and older sibling till it succumbs.



The female with two chicks and fresh green leaves of *A. latifolia*, placed on the rim of the nest.



Finally just one chick remained in the nest.





The female carrying a sprig of fresh green leaves of *Anogeissus latifolia* for its nest. Green leaves, it is thought, cool the nest.



More wing exercises.



Here it is seen exercising its wings.



Gradually attaining adulthood.