

—Correspondence—

*Goats and the Narcondam Hornbill *Aceros narcondami**

"A group of eight including ornithologists visited Narcondam Island between 13 and 16 April 2010. We spent about 22 hours on the island and can confirm that we neither saw a goat, goat trail, or droppings during this time. We followed different paths—along a stream that provides water to the police camp, a trail that skirted along the north to a beach opposite Pigeon Island, and a path from the police camp up a 430 m hill. We also climbed this hill from the north-western side. Access to much of the rest of the island is reportedly treacherous with loose rocks that make climbing up in single file a dangerous proposition, so it would be hard to ascertain how many goats remain. We also circumnavigated the island almost twice by boat and did not see any goats.

"Apparently some of the policemen stationed there saw two goats during the previous week. There is water in the upper reaches of the stream (we climbed up as far as a waterfall), which may sustain the goats. While the hardest part of the job is getting the last few that remain, there is no doubt that these should be removed before they re-colonize the island. Literature from other parts of the world recommends using a radio-collared Judas goat. The principle is that this goat would eventually join up with the rest, making it easier to locate them. Nevertheless, acting on

the recommendation of ornithologists, the administration, and police need to be commended for doing a reasonably good job of removing the goats."

– Tasneem Khan
– Janaki Lenin
– Umeed Mistry
– Divya Mudappa
– T. R. Shankar Raman
– Kalyan Varma
– Rom Whitaker

Cover of Indian Birds vol. 5. no. 6

The Shaheen's *Falco peregrinus* prey in the cover photograph of *Indian Birds* vol. 5 no. 6, is a Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* and not a Common Teal *A. crecca*, as captioned. The wings and mirror clearly point to the former; moreover, the latter does not have pinkish legs.

– Harkirat S. Sangha

—Editorial—

Indian Birds has completed five years: five volumes, 30 issues, 956 pages, 529 colour photographs, and 430-odd papers, notes, letters, columns, etc. The support of its well-wishers—ornithologists who've sent write-ups, and waited patiently for our response, photographers who've donated pictures without any reservations or demands, referees who've responded with alacrity to repeated email queries, and sponsors who bolstered our sagging finances—all have made this a reality. Yet all this effort would have been naught but for our enthusiastic readership that supports a printed journal even in these times of instant gratification by publication on the Internet. I thank all of you for making *Indian Birds* what it is.

The number of subscribers remains a concern. If you have not renewed your subscription, please do so (you could send me an email to enquire your subscription status). If you have, please recruit another reader for *Indian Birds*. If you can support through advertisements, do contact us.

Woodpeckers always spark ripples of excitement among birdwatchers. They are one of my favourite group of birds, and I've had my woodpecker moments—birding with friends in the forests around Dehradun, five species darting from one tree trunk to another, the still, humid air resounding with their whirring wings, their energetic Morse code tapping, their manic laughter; and we, mesmerised, simply rotated with their gyrations, as though locked in an incomprehensible cosmic spiral. In this issue, Arun Singh studies the role of woodpeckers in the control of the forest destroying sal heartwood borer.

We have a mixed sheaf of articles for you in this issue of *Indian Birds*—White-naped Tit, wetlands in Bihar, a surprise occurrence of Thick-billed Green-Pigeon in Orissa, Lesser Florican in Rajasthan, kleptoparasitism, etc.

Enclosed with this issue is the index to volume 5. Happy reading!

– Aasheesh Pittie

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