

Odisha, these pigeons were observed in the semi-urban areas of the city and their feeding preferences were recorded.

On 10 December 2014 a single bird was observed feeding on the small fruits of *Trema orientalis* (aka Pigeon Wood) [140] Though it perched on a variety of trees, including *Michelia champaca*, *Grewia disperma*, *Naringi crenulata*, *Melia azedarach*, *Lannea coromandelica*, *Bankara malabarica*, *Simarouba glauca*, *Gargua pinnata*, *Peltophorum pterocarpum*, *Cassia siamea*, etc., its distinct preference for *T. orientalis* was observed.

Ali & Ripley (1987) state that the species eats wild figs and other fruits and berries and also bamboo seeds, paddy and other grains. Amongst grains, it is known to frequent fields of rice, millet [=bajra], vetch, and is particularly fond of ripe Indian corn *Zea mays* (Baker 1913). Specific fruits that have been recorded in its diet include *Litsea nitida* (Mooney 1934), *L. monopetala* (Chitampalli 1977), *Syzygium cumini* [=*Eugenia jambolana*] (Jerdon 1864; Beavan 1868; Gopi & Pandav 2007), *Strychnos nux-vomica* (Beavan 1868), *Bambusa arundinacea* (BirdLife International 2001—citing Smith 1942 and, Smythies 1986), *Phyllanthus* species [given as “zi” tree] (ibid.). A number of “large plum-coloured drupes” were found in the stomach of one female in Myanmar (Armstrong 1876). However, no prior worker has reported this species feeding on *T. orientalis*.



140. Pale-capped Pigeon feeding on fruits of *Trema orientalis*.

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Editorial

Avian checklists, and those of all life forms, are not the simple datasets they seem. They hide multitudes in their columns, entire populations of living forms that populate geographical landmasses. The sum of their whole is much larger than that of their parts: while one encompasses eternities of tellurian upheavals, the other endures a contrapuntal cycle of evolutionary fine-tuning.

Checklists are different tools to different people. They are a record of names to some—who weigh in on correct spelling and the order of listing. A commingling of languages, spiraling back a few centuries, and connecting contemporary usage with formative laws of taxonomy and systematics. To some they are slightly deeper: The joy of deciphering the Greek and Latin—which might lead to further strands of information. To some they comprise statistics—to be chopped into guilds, families, genera, species, and races. To the sentient, they are doorways leading to entire landscapes. They rekindle a sense of place, or strengthen it: the ebb and flow of shorelines, over the rapidly changing topography as one travels inland, over human-modified landscapes, up and down the rise and fall of the land, past flowing waters, within the earth – shrouding forests, up into the rapidly cooling hills or mountains. Skimming checklists ignites memory and anchors the well heeled to moments in time, often rekindling a desire to travel and experience anew.

Checklists are the bulwarks of landscapes against thoughtless conversion of land usage. They become the litmus of our ecological footprint as caretakers of a legacy bequeathed to the progeny of planet Earth.

In their compilation, checklist are added to and built upon. Once they mature, they may well be pruned, or whittled down, for it is better to remove a taxon than allow it to teeter there rootlessly. An up to date checklist is a fine tool for conservation.

I sincerely hope that state lists, such as the one for Karnataka published in this issue, are compiled, monitored, and published to strengthen the foundations of Indian ornithology.

–Aasheesh Pittie