

CORRESPONDENCE

Berwala Bird Safari

I want to draw your attention to some points in the article "Berwala Bird Safari" by Lt. Gen. Baljit Singh [*Newsletter for Ornithologists* 1 (5): 72-73].

Cuckoos: Since the bird safari is at an altitude of 300m a.s.l., breeding of Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* (which breeds at much higher altitude) is highly unlikely, but the writer mentions, "during the hottest and driest, the magic of this little sanctuary is hard to rival. The narrow valley reverberates with the incessant calls of the Lesser Cuckoo..." On more than 10 visits I have never seen this species there, nor has any other member of the Delhi Bird Club. There are very few sightings of this bird from Haryana/Delhi – and that too in autumn when the bird migrates silently to the peninsula and Sri Lanka and possibly to Africa. The author also mentions the Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* at Berwala. This bird too, is a summer breeder at higher altitudes.

Yellow-billed Blue Magpie: The author further mentions sighting Yellow-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa flavirostris* at Berwala. There are just two sightings of this bird from Morni Hills (1,250m) that too in severe winter. Berwala at 300m is out of the altitudinal range of this magpie.

Wallcreeper: There are regular winter records of this bird from the area, and this is not the first as claimed by the author.

Green Bee-eater: This species does not breed in the vertical mud cliffs at Berwala in May. I (and others) have been regularly observing Blue-tailed Bee-eaters *M. philippinus* breeding there during April and May.

Berwala has at least 140 species (pamphlet of the Forest Dept.) and not 83 as claimed by the author.

Suresh C. Sharma, Haryana.

Tecoma sp.

"In volume 1 number 4 (July-August 2004) of the *Newsletter for Ornithologists*, p. 54, Shivanand and Shivaprakash mention thickets of *Tecoma stans*. About two decades ago I used to travel this route often and had observed quite a few trees of *Tecoma argentea*. During March / April this tree blooms into thick bunches of yellow flowers after shedding all its leaves, a most fascinating sight! *T. stans*, which is in front of our porch, flowers intermittently throughout the year, but never loses all its leaves during flowering. Is this a case of mistaken identity? If not, whatever happened to the *T. argentea* trees?"

M. Shafaat Ulla, Hyderabad

ERRATA

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1. The cover picture is that of a Laggar Falcon *Falco jugger* and not of a Peregrine Falcon *F. peregrinus*, as stated on the inside front cover (last line). The editor's apologies to artist and readers.
2. Page 71, para 3, lines 15-16: For "dead carcasses" please read 'carcasses.' Apologies for letting slip the obvious!

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