

Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*, House Crow *Corvus splendens*,
Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Migrants:** Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, Northern Shoveller
Anas clypeata, Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*, Garganey *Anas
querquedula*, Common Teal *Anas crecca*, Western Marsh-Harrier
Circus aeruginosus, Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, Little
Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*,
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa
limosa*, Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*, Common Greenshank
Tringa nebularia, Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*, Wood
Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*, Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*,

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus
himantopus*, Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*, Indian Pitta
Pitta brachyuran, Common Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Grey Wagtail
Motacilla cinerea, Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*, Blyth's Reed-
Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, Booted Warbler *Hippolais
caligata*, Greenish Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Brown
Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*, Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus
oriolus*, Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*.

*The names and order of listing follow Manakadan and Pittie (2001);

**Species considered to be residents or migrants in Bangalore
area as per George (1994).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* breeding in Kerala, India

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Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* is found in small numbers in almost all the large wetlands of Kerala. Up to 25 birds have been seen at a time at Kattampally, a major wetland in north Kerala. But here, they are seldom seen during the monsoon, June to August, which is the season when the heronries of the area become active. Ali (1969) states that there is no breeding record of Grey Heron in Kerala, neither are there any recent reports of it breeding here. Grimmett, et al (1998) and Kazmierczak (2000) have given the breeding range of the species only in Andhra Pradesh in south India and Gujarat on the west coast; in the rest of south India, it is a winter visitor. C. P. Sethumadhavan recovered a bird, ringed at Pune (Dr S. Balachandran *pers. comm.*), Maharashtra, at Punnayoorkulam (Thrissur District, Kerala) in 2002.

On 5.vii.2004, while surveying the heronries around Kannur as part of the Common Bird Monitoring Programme of the Malabar Natural History Society, Kozhikode, we chanced upon a breeding colony of the Grey Heron at Koduvally near Thalassery. There were five nests, placed on mangrove trees at the edge of a small islet east of the railway line. The nests were about 3m above the

ground, about 0.6m in diameter and 0.3m thick, made of thick twigs. Two chicks each, probably more than two weeks old, were seen in four nests; the contents of the fifth nest were not clearly visible. One adult bird was sitting on guard at each of the nests. Change over of the adult birds was observed a few times; the birds were found foraging in the shallow lagoon around the islet. There was a heronry consisting of 231 nests of Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger* and Indian Pond-Heron *Ardeola grayii* on eight Rain Trees *Samanea saman* and one Gulmohar *Delonix regia* beside NH 17, about 500m from the islet. But none of these birds nested on the mangrove islet.

References

- Ali, Salim. 1969. *Birds of Kerala*. Madras: Oxford University Press.
Grimmett, R., Carol Inskipp & Tim Inskipp. 1998. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. London: Christopher Helm.
Kazmierczak, Krys. 2000. *A field guide to the birds of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives*. New Delhi: Om Book Service.

Sighting Of Thick-billed Warbler *Phragmaticola aedon*¹ near Panchgani, Maharashtra, India.

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On 30.i.1998, at 10:00hrs, we were bird watching at the Pasarani Ghat near Panchgani. We had stopped to watch raptors, and paid scant attention to the various hard "tek" sounds made by scrubland passerines in the low bushes and grasses on the hillside. One sound, however, did seem a little different. It was a loud, solid and low-pitched "tchak" coming from low bushes immediately by the roadside. We quickly located the bird, which was hopping confidently through the bushes close to us. Its general shape reminded us of a wren-warbler, mainly because of its short wings and long tail, though it was clearly much larger, about the size of a bulbul. Also the tail was not waved from side to side in the characteristic manner of a *Prinia* species, but was held out straight as the bird made its way steadily along the hillside. We watched it for over 5 minutes at close range. At no time did it fly or show itself

for a clear view. Instead, it skulked through the bushes giving partial views in a manner typical of *Acrocephalus* warblers.

In general the bird appeared uniform brown above with a hint of rufous, and with a striking pale brown patch between eye and bill, reaching above the level of the eye but terminating in front of the eye, so that no supercilium as such was formed. There was no wing-bar. Apart from the patch on the lores, the entire upper parts appeared uniform in colour. The breast appeared brownish, though paler than the upper parts. The throat, belly and vent were whitish.

The bill was of medium length and thickness for a warbler, contributing to the overall impression of an outsize wren-warbler rather than the typical long and pointed bill of *Acrocephalus* species. The lower mandible was pale and, the upper appeared mainly dark.