

south of Okhla, I could see on the map, was a marshy area next to the canal. That looked like as good a risk as any, so that evening I cruised up and down the canal road until I saw a flock of wagtails pass overhead. Matters were confused somewhat, though, because hundreds of weaver birds were also flying to their roosts. I managed to follow the flocks of wagtails as they were tossed around in the strong wind, and, sure enough, they came down by the marsh – which was almost entirely composed of a large expanse of cattails. I got out of the car and saw a field of stubble literally covered with birds, almost all of which were in full plumage... As a result of this discovery the Delhi bird-ringing effort will get a big boost.” And as expected, Julian Donahue’s effort has proved invaluable to Delhi birders.

Apart from these articles on bird ringing,

the 1962 *Newsletter* contained some exciting material. Like Donahue, K. K. Neelakantan, through the medium of a map, found a new pelican (Pelecanidae) area in Andhra Pradesh, Usha Ganguli found an unexpected visitor in the shape of a Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* in her garden in Delhi. Dr Joseph George had a rare sighting of the mating of the Black Drongos *Dicrurus macrocercus*. It is difficult to do justice to everyone who wrote in the 12 issues of 1962 in this space. But I would like to include this piece by Professor A. A. A. Fysee, the noted Islamic scholar, and our first ambassador to Egypt, as an example of persons who had little interest in birds, occasionally keeping *such* careful notes about them. Writing about the morning calls of birds he noted, “It might interest readers of the *Newsletter* to know the sequence of

time when birds commence singing in the morning, or to use the language of Islamic scholars, when birds commence their paens to God, the Exalted, the Almighty”. This is what he observed: April 2nd 1962: 05.55hrs, Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea* 05:55hrs; Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* 06:00hrs (chorus); kingfisher (Alcedinidae) 06:10hrs; Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* 06:13hrs; *Dhaya* (Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*) 06:13hrs; Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* 06:15hrs (“koh koh”); Crow Pheasant *Centropus sinensis* 06:17hrs; Unidentified 06:25hrs (“too too too”); Tailor Bird *Orthotomus sutorius* 06:27hrs; Coppersmith *Megalaima haemacephala* 06:30hrs; flowerpecker (Dicaeidae) 06:45. The timings were about the same on April 1st and 3rd.

Recent ornithological literature on South Asia and Tibet

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With respect to the paper on munias of Mt. Abu in *Indian Birds* [1 (4): 77-79], I would like to make a few observations. I studied the avifauna of Mt. Abu extensively from May 2004 to May 2005 and observed that the Green Avadavat *Amandava formosa* was a common species found in some areas like Sunrise valley, Tiger path, Salgaon, Adhardevi, Dilwara Salim Ali watch tower area, Achalgarh area, etc. The maximum number of birds I observed at that

time, in a flock, was 22. During all these years I never heard of tribals trapping Green Munias. The authors should give more substantial evidence for their contention that Green Munias are trapped by tribals for medicinal use and for the trade in aviary birds.

I met many tribals (Devraj Alika, Raju Alika, Kalu Bheel, Dinesh Bheel, etc.) and local residents after reading the story published in *Newsletter for Ornithologists*

1 (6): 84-85. To my surprise none of the tribals that I met knew this species and neither did they have a local name for it.

The presence of Red Munia *Amandava amandava* and Black-headed Munia *Lonchura malacca* in Mt. Abu needs confirmation in the form of either photographs or sightings by different people. I know several birdwatchers from the region (Kiran Chavda, Anil Mathur, Shailesh Patel, Satish Kumar Sharma of Udaipur, and Dharendra Devarshi of Bharatpur), who have not spotted these two species in Mt. Abu or Sirohi district during many years of extensive work.

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Errata: *Indian Birds* Vol. 1 No. 3.

- Page 63, column 2, line 8: Add 'Specimen of *L. i. phoenicuroides*: Sirur (35km west of Bir), one specimen (Field Museum 2004).' This taxon has been raised to species level by Rasmussen and Anderton in their *Birds of South Asia. The Ripley Guide* (2005).
- Page 67, column 1, line 37: Add: 'Harris, T. and Franklin, K. (2000): *Shrikes and Bush-shrikes*. Helm Identification Guides. Christopher Helm, London.'