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Aasheesh Pittie (FAX:040 314 064)
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Road no.7, Banjara Hills
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12 Oct 1997

Dear Aasheesh,

You will not remember me from my Hyderabad days, back in the 1970s. But my Bangalore birding friends tell me that you do realise I am your class-mate Carolyn Lott's father, and that I take bird photographs. I've read several of your writings, and found them very interesting, especially your sighting of the Little Pied Flycatcher out in the Medak district. I managed to get some quite good slides of the LPF while we were in Nepal in March-April this year. We called in on our ACT College friends in Hyderabad on our way from Bangalore to Nepal. We should have tried to meet you then, but had very little time.

Incidentally, Carolyn is well and was delighted to hear about you. She and her husband are also interested in birdlife, though not in the slightly obsessive way that Chris and I are. She's been practising as a GP doctor for some years now, and has one child so far. They live in Nottingham, only 20 minutes from us.

I write with a request, Aasheesh. I have now photographed almost all the S.Indian endemics (including the 4(5?) endemic Bulbuls, Ceylon Frogmouth, 3 Flycatchers, 2 Laughing Thrushes, 2 Shortwings, 2 Sunbirds and a number of others). I show slides here in UK to various groups, to groups in India when I'm there, and I donate sets of slides to those who wish to educate others concerning the wildlife of S.India, esp. endangered birdlife. Eventually I'd like to get out a book about S.Indian birds.

I'm now very eager to see and get a slide of Jerdon's Courser. Is there any way you could arrange for my wife and I, and perhaps one of the Bangalore birders, to be guided to Jerdon's Courser in the S.Andhra area where it's found? We expect to be in Bangalore again from Jan 11 to March 6, though from Jan 29 to Feb 15 we'll be birding further south. And I need to be in Bangalore for the last week of Feb. That leaves us with 3 possible periods, though we would rather avoid the March week if possible. We would travel by vehicle from Bangalore to the Jerdon's Courser area. I presume it would mean staying somewhere for at least one night. We would be immensely grateful to you if you can possibly arrange for us to have the necessary permission for such a visit and for the photography.

If you are interested in a set of some of my bird slides, naturally I'd be very happy to let you have them. But let me know about that as early as possible, and be as explicit as possible regarding the species.

We look forward to hearing from you. Every good wish.
Yours sincerely
Eric Lott

Aasheesh Pittie

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Ref: Yours of 12 October 1997.

23 November, 1997

Fax: Via Dr M Forward : 01223 321 177
KIND ATTN: DR ERIC J LOTT

Dr Eric J Lott
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Dear Dr Lott, Greetings!

Thank you very much for your above letter and my apologies for this late reply. I've been awfully busy of late.

I'm so glad to have made your acquaintance, which I somehow feel is quite miraculous, even though one hears about the world being such a small place, so often! Please give our regards to Carolyn and her family. Smriti and I have two children, a daughter, Prakriti and a son, Prashast. Perhaps you could send me Carolyn's e-mail address so that I could begin corresponding with her.

Regarding photographing the Jerdon's Courser: I'm afraid it will not be possible. I had a talk with the Conservator of Forests, Mr Joseph, and he categorically refused to allow it. I sympathize with him and am sure that you will too. This bird exists by a hair on this earth and everything has to be done in our power, to prevent that hair from snapping. There is absolutely no data about this bird which will help the forest department in drawing up conservation plans for the species. Therefore their plan for the moment is total protection. I think that last year someone published a picture of the bird in OBC's Bulletin. This created a furor in the forest department here and now steps have been taken, I am told, to prevent such an incident from recurring. Please excuse me for not being able to help you. I hope you will understand.

Your offer of a set of slides is very generous and I thank you for it. Though you want me to specify the species whose slides I want, I'm afraid I will not be able to do that. Our Society does not have a slide collection at all, except a few (15-20) slides of pretty bad quality. We would welcome slides from you gratefully. I think a set of south Indian birds would serve our purpose very well.

Do forgive this late reply and my inability to make arrangements for photographing the Jerdon's Courser.

With best wishes and regards to you and Mrs. Lott,

Yours sincerely

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