

Aasheesh Pittie
8-2-545 "Prem Parvat", Road No. 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500034. India.
Phone: Off: Tel-fax : 040-314064 Res: 040-315683

8 September, 1996

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Unnithan
Bombay Natural History Society
Hornbill House
Dr. Salim Ali Chowk
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road
MUMBAI 400023

Dear Mrs. Unnithan,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for the prompt assistance you gave when I telephoned you for some information on the blackthroated weaver.

Further to our conversation regarding the plumage of the blackthroated weaver *Ploceus benghalensis*, please find enclosed a few photographs of the birds.

They are nesting in a protected area close to Hyderabad, and at least 3 different sites of nesting colonies have been seen and recorded.

As can be seen from the pictures, the males' facial plumage is very different in colour from that described and illustrated in Indian bird-literature. I have sent one picture to Mr. Humayun Abdulali also, for his comments.

Kindly advice us what should be done further to solve this mystery. Is this an unrecorded plumage of the male or could it be a new sub-species ?! The latter does seem like jumping to conclusions, but given its patchy distribution in the Deccan, I wonder.

Do tell us what the next step should be. A specimen could be procured quite easily it seems.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely



encl: 7 photographs of the blackthroated weaver.

09-09-1996

Page 1

Ref: Your: 4728/96 Dt. 27-09-1996

5 October, 1996

Dr. S. Unnithan
Bombay Natural History Society
Hornbill House
Dr. Salim Ali Chowk
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road
MUMBAI 400 023

Dear Mrs. Unnithan,

Thank you very much for your above letter and unstinted cooperation.


Some points come to mind about the weaver in question.

1. Your thought that the white cheeks and ear-coverts appear with the approach of breeding season may be correct, but why have the Handbook and Birds of Pakistan (Roberts) not mentioned this? And why are all illustrations available in today's bird books not like these birds, but the brown faced variety?
2. You should perhaps refer to pages 138-139 and 159 of my *Bibliographic Index* for further citations on these birds from the *JBNHS*.
3. Especially, Crook, JH (1963): The Asian Weaver birds. Problems of co-existence and evolution with particular reference to behaviour. *JBNHS* 60(1): 1-48. *There is a photo of a breeding male of this bird opposite page 21 - without any white on his face or the white ring around his neck!*
4. If you think it really necessary, I do not mind coming over to Bombay and help in whatever way I can with the research - in end November.
5. It is surprising that Blanford & Oates (vol 2 p. 178) state "After the partial spring moult the chin and throat become whitish or whity brown, and the entire side of the head and neck become uniform brown", while Oates (*Birds of British Burmah* vol. 1 p. 361) describes "throat, cheeks and ear-coverts white, sullied with brown on the latter two parts".
6. Murray and also Jerdon describe the bird almost accurately to the specimens sent to you. Baker's description is again completely different, "sides of head and lores brown; chin and throat whitish; in a few specimens, perhaps very old, the sides of the head and throat become practically pure white."
7. If the last be true, could so many old males be successfully procreating here?
8. Would you like a DNA patterning done on this bird? Anything specific one has to look for? I could try and arrange it with the Center for Cellular and Molecular Biology here.
9. Could we write a small note for the *Newsletter for Birdwatchers* describing this bird and its implications vis-a-vis the other plumage, and request readers for information? Or it is early for this act?

I would be much obliged if you could keep me informed of the status and progress of work on this subject.

Thanking you once again, with best wishes,

Yours sincerely


cc: Mr. Humayun Abdulali, 'Reshma Apts', 2nd floor, 13 Pali Hills Road, Mumbai 400 050.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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DR. SHANKAR DAYAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT OF INDIA

PRESIDENT
B.G. DESHMUKH
I.A.S. (Retd.)

Ref: 4922/96

f.
22/X
/96

16-10-1996

Mr Aasheesh Pittie
8-2-545, "Prem Parvat"
Road No. 7
Banjara Hills
Hyderabad 500 034, India

Dear Aasheesh,

First and foremost, continue observing these birds, note down the changes if any, of the white throat and face and whether they are really breeding, eggs, chicks etc.

Being a trained geneticist, I was seriously thinking of the DNA finger printing. I had earlier done the background work regarding two subspecies of White Eye and would have been the first person to use the technique in India to separate subspecies. This was about 3-4 years back. We need one male and one female live (for blood) of the subspecies concerned. Unfortunately, I couldn't procure them, hence the project was shelved. Dr Lalji Singh of the CCMB is my Rakhi brother and two years my senior. We both are the products of the same intellectual father (Guru) in that way also we are siblings, he will do anything for me. You can approach him. But you need a male and female from the other side (Gangetic plain or Punjab). We have a 90% chance of succeeding if they are really different. My learned opinion is that we should go for it. The result will be very convincing. You must be aware that this method is being used in taxonomy now. I read it but I feel it is a crude method, but the CCMB method as wrote to me by Lalji Bhaisaheb is a more refined and fool proof procedure.

I am using my contacts and requesting people to observe this bird carefully. On 10th October one boy from here has gone to Bharatpur. I showed him both the sets of birds and explained the problem. He is a keen and committed birdwatcher. I am sure will go out of his way to look for the bird. Do you want me to write to Mr Satish Kumar Sharma? He has done good work on Weavers and done a compilation of the work by other ~~workers~~.

ph/ Murray and Jerdon almost described your bird. But I do not know why Boker and Salim Ali left it out, which made me think that white throat and cheek may be a passing ~~face~~ in the plumage, considering the fact that all these people

p.t.o.

described the birds probably from the same region. I am very sure that neither Murray nor Jerdon described the bird from South India. Regarding the illustrations, these are usually done from museum specimens. Pictorial Guide and Indian Handbook (Volume 10, Plate 107 facing page 128) have given the breeding male's throat white and cheek black. In Museum specimens the white is not as prominent as when they are alive. I have seen the difference in your specimens even though they are only a few weeks old as museum specimens.

It is not premature to write a note with the description of the bird and request reader's for information. I have gone through all the literature available here, and sent you copies of what I thought may not be handy there. It was not my idea that we wait, I don't contribute to that. With so much confusing descriptions by different authors it will make a big note, as such at present. Do tell if you want me to send the description which I wrote of the bird.

Wish you a happy Navrathri and Dassera,

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,

S. Unnithan
Dr (Mrs) S. Unnithan

Pocharam: 18°8'N 78°10'E

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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[Handwritten signature]
17/2/97

PATRON
DR. SHANKAR DAYAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT OF INDIA

PRESIDENT
B.G. DESHMUKH
I.A.S. (Retd.)

Ref.No.573/97

12th February 1997

Mr Aasheesh Pittie
8-2-545
'Prem Parvat'
Road No.7, Banjara Hills
Hyderabad 500 034

Dear Aasheesh,

Your letter of 12th January 1997 and a copy of his reply of 3rd February 1996 was handed over to me by Mr Humayun Abdulali today. He had written to you that he had "omitted this group myself and you will notice that the catalogue part is by Dr Unnithan alone" !

At the outset I can tell you Wagtails are not that difficult as Anthus. Only problem with Wagtails is the winter and summer plumages. If you are mentally alert (it need lots of concentration) they can be done. I do not have any doubts about what I have done with Wagtails. But the same cannot be said about Anthus, where only 50% of the specimens are according to the keys, the rest you have to use your discretion. About the courage- I have lots of them because I could concentrate and remember. May be that is why I could remain with Mr Humayun Abdulali for so long and he has confidence in me, or we are made for each other if I use the term. We have similar attitude in work and other things.

About your queries: The Wagtail you observed is undoubtedly *leucopsis*. I have again checked all the subspecies. We have only 7 specimens of *leucopsis* and only one from India (Bihar). There can be only two ways. One is, an extension of range and the second, they were present earlier also, but simply not recorded.

The other Wagtail you observed may be *dukhunensis*, since *baicalensis* is not reported from the south. But all of them are migrants, nothing prevent *baicalensis* from coming to the south. In winter it is impossible to distinguish them in the field. In the Handbook "larger size (*baicalensis*) and larger amount of white in wing especially median coverts may be helpful characters to distinguish". There is hardly any size difference. There is more white in the wings in *baicalensis*, but I have one or two specimens with wornout plumage, where I relied on the collector's identification.

..2...

:2:

Cumbum valley (c 15 N, 79 E) was in Kurnool Dt. in 1931. Since most of the specimens were collected before independence we use the atlas with the Imperial Gazateer of India 1931. Xerox copies of the labels and the particular page of the gazateer is attached with this letter. Personally, I would like to believe the Imperial Gazateer than the India directory of Postal Index 1992, because they were more thorough and honest. May be the place is later included in Prakasm Dt ? What happened to the Baya?

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

S. Unnithan
Dr (Mrs) Unnithan

V1075.

BOMBAY NAT. HIS. SOCY.

Sex ♂

Actocitta alba dufrenoyi

Locality. CUMBUM VALLEY Date:

Alt. KURNOOL Dist: 9.12.29

No.

The Indian White Wagtail

LOCALITY CUMBUM VALLEY

ALT. KURNOOL DIST. DATE - 9.12.29

Cheyyar R.,	N. Arcot Dist., Madras	43 C 3	Chittur,	Cochin State, Madras	43 B 4
Chhabra,	Tonk, Rajputana	36 E 3	Chizar,	Kashmir	35 C 1
Chhachrauli,	Kalsia, Punjab States	34 E 2	Chobepur,	State and Town, C.I.	40 D 2
Chhapara,	Seoni Dist., C.P.	41 B 2	Chogotong,	Sibsagar Dist., Assam	32 C 2
Chhata,	Muttra Dist., U.P.	33 A 3	Chok,	Kathlawar, W.I.	39 B 2
Chhatarpur,	State and Town, Bundelkhand, C.I.	40 C 2	Chokahatu,	Ranchi Dist., B. & O.	31 B 3
Chhatr,	Kailat, Baluchistan	37 E 2	Cholam,	Lushai Hills Dist., Assam	32 C 4
Chhattisgarh Div. (4),	Madras	41 D 3	Chola P.,	Sikkim	30 B 2
Chhbraman,	Farrukhabad Dist., U.P.	33 B 3	Cholpanglik Mt.,	Kashmir	35 G 2
Chhindwara,	Dist. and Town, C.P.	41 B 2	Chomiomo Mt.,	Sikkim	30 B 1
Chhindwara,	Narsinghpur Dist., C.P.	41 B 2	Chomu,	Jaipur, Rajputana	36 D 2
Chhoti Sadri,	Udaipur, Rajputana	36 D 3	Chopan,	Mirzapur Dist., U.P.	33 D 4
Chhuikhadan,	State and Town, C.P.	41 C 3	Chopda,	E. Khandesh Dist., Bombay	39 D 2
Chicacole,	Ganjam Dist., Madras	44 E 2	Chor,	Thar Parkar Dist., Bombay	38 B 3
Chicbak R.,	Kalat, Baluchistan	37 C 3	Chorwad,	Kathiawar, W.I.	39 B 2
Chicbgarh,	Bhandara Dist., C.P.	41 C 3	Chotan,	Jodhpur, Rajputana	36 B 3
Chichli,	Afghanistan	49 C 2	Chota Nagpur (4),	Div., B. & O.	31 B 3
Chichli,	Narsinghpur Dist., C.P.	41 B 2	Chota Sinchula Mt.,	Bhutan-Assam	32 A 2
Chichoki,	Shekhupura Dist., Punjab	34 D 2	Chota Udaipur,	Rewa Kantha, Bombay	38 B 4
Chicholi,	Betul Dist., C.P.	41 A 3	Choti,	Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab	34 E 3
Chidambaran,	S. Arcot Dist., Madras	43 C 4	Chotila,	Kathiawar, W.I.	39 B 1
Chikalda,	Amraoti Dist., Berar	41 A 3	Chowghat,	Malabar Dist., Madras	43 A 1
Chik-Ballapur,	Kolar Dist., Mysore	43 B 3	Chowra (I),	Nicobar Is.	48 A 5
Chikhli,	Buldana Dist., Berar	41 A 3	Chuadanga,	Nadia Dist., Bengal	30 B 4
Chikmagalur,	Kadur Dist., Mysore	43 A 3	Chung P.,	Kashmir	35 E 2
Chiknayakanhalli,	Tumkur Dist., Mysore	43 B 3	Chumar,	Kashmir	35 F 3
Chikodi,	Belgaum Dist., Bombay	39 D 4	Chumurchi,	Bhutan	32 A 2
Chikodi Road,	Belgaum Dist., Bombay	39 D 4	Chunar,	Mirzapur Dist., U.P.	33 D 4
Chikung,	Burma	46 C 1	Chungam,	N.E. Frontier, Assam	32 E 2
Chilas,	Kashmir	35 D 2	Chunian,	Lahore Dist., Punjab	34 C 2
Chilianwala,	Gujrat Dist., Punjab	34 C 1	Churi,	Bilaspur Dist., C.P.	41 D 2
Chilka L.,	Puri Dist., B. & O.	31 B 5	Churia Ghati Hills,	Nepal	45 C 4
Chillinji,	Chitral, N.W.F.P.	35 C 1	Churia,	Darrang Dist., Assam	32 C 2
Chilmari,	Rangpur Dist., Bengal	30 B 3	Chutia,	Ranchi Dist., B. & O.	31 B 3
Chilpi,	Kashmir	35 C 1	Chyagalmar,	Kurnool Dist., Madras	43 C 2
Chilang P.,	Kashmir	35 E 3	Cinque Is.,	Andaman Is.	48 A 4
Chimray,	Kashmir	35 E 3	Circars, Northern,	Madras	44 E 2
China Bakir,	Hanthawaddy Dist., Burma	47 C 4	Clara I.,	Mergui Arch., Burma	48 C 4
● Bakir (To) R.,	Hanthawaddy, Burma	47 C 4	Closetpet,	Bangalore Dist., Mysore	43 B 3
Chinartu,	Afghanistan	49 D 4	Cocanada,	E. Godavari Dist., Madras	44 D 3
Chinchani,	Thana Dist., Bombay	39 C 3	Cochin,	Cochin State, Madras	43 B 5
Chincholi,	Gulbarga Dist., Hyderabad	42 B 3	Cochin,	State, Madras States	43 B 4
Chinchu (R.),	Bhutan	32 A 2	Coco Channel,	Andaman Is.	48 A 3
Chindwin, Lower,	Dist., Burma	46 B 4	Coco I., Gt.,	Andaman Is.	48 A 2
Chindwin R.,	Burma	46 B 3	Coco I., Lit.,	Andaman Is.	48 A 3
Chindwin, Upper,	Dist., Burma	46 B 3	Coimbatore,	Dist. and Town, Madras	43 B 4
Chingleput,	Dist. and Town, Madras	43 D 3	Colachel,	Travancore State, Madras	43 B 5
Chin Hills,	Dist., Burma	46 A 4	Colair L.,	W. Godavari Dist., Madras	44 C 3
Chini,	Bashahr, Punjab States	34 F 2	Coleroon and R.,	Tanjore Dist., Madras	43 C 4
Chini,	Sadiya Frontier Tract, Assam	32 D 1	Colgong,	Bhagalpur Dist., B. & O.	31 C 2
Chinot,	Jhang Dist., Punjab	34 C 2	Colonelganj,	Gonda Dist., U.P.	33 C 3
Chinna Ganjam,	Guntur Dist., Madras	44 C 4	Combermere Bay,	Burma	47 A 3
Chinnakimedi,	Ganjam Dist., Madras	44 E 2	Comilla (Tippera),	Tippera Dist., Bengal	30 C 4
Chinnur,	Adilabad Dist., Hyderabad	42 C 2	Comorin and C.,	Travancore State, Madras	43 B 5
Chinsura,	Hooghly Dist., Bengal	30 B 4	Concord Pk.,	Afghanistan	49 B 2
Chintalapudi,	W. Godavari Dist., Madras	44 C 3	Conjeeveram,	Chingleput Dist., Madras	43 C 3
Chintalnar,	Bastar State, C.P.	41 C 4	Contai,	Midnapore Dist., Bengal	30 A 5
Chipa Barod,	Kotah, Rajputana	36 E 3	Cooch Behar,	State and Town, Bengal	30 B 2
Chiplun,	Ratnagiri Dist., Bombay	39 C 4	Coondapoor,	S. Kanara Dist., Madras	43 A 3
Chipurupalle,	Vizagapatam Dist., Madras	44 D 3	Coonoor,	Nilgiris Dist., Madras	43 B 4
Chirakkal,	Malabar Dist., Madras	43 A 4	Coorg,	Province, S. India	43 A 3
Chirala,	Guntur Dist., Madras	44 C 4	Cooum R.,	Chingleput Dist., Madras	43 C 2
Chiras,	Afghanistan	49 C 3	Coral Bank,	Nicobar Is.	48 A 5
Chirawa,	Jaipur, Rajputana	36 D 1	Coral Bank,	Nicobar Is.	48 A 6
Chirial,	Nalgonda Dist., Hyderabad	42 C 2	Coral Bank, Middle	Andaman Is.	48 A 3
Chirmistan,	Afghanistan	49 C 4	Coringa,	E. Godavari Dist., Madras	44 D 3
Chitaldroog,	Dist. and Town, Mysore	43 B 2	Coromandel Coast,	Madras	43 D 3
Chitalwana,	Jodhpur, Rajputana	36 B 3	Cossimbazar,	Murshidabad Dist., Bengal	30 B 3
Chitor,	Udaipur, Rajputana	36 D 3	Cotteliar R.,	Chingleput Dist., Madras	43 D 3
Chitrakut,	Banda Dist., U.P.	33 C 4	Covelong,	Chingleput Dist., Madras	43 D 3
Chitral,	State, N.W.F.P.	35 B 1	Cowcolly (Geonkhali),	Midnapore Dist., Bengal	30 A 5
Chitral,	Chitral State, N.W.F.P.	35 B 2	Cox's Bazar,	Chittagong Dist., Bengal	30 C 5
Chitral R.,	Chitral, N.W.F.P.	35 C 1	Cuddalore,	S. Arcot Dist., Madras	43 C 4
Chitravati R.,	Anantapur Dist., Madras	43 B 2	Cuddapah,	Dist. and Town, Madras	43 C 2
Chitrod,	Cutch, W.I.	38 C 4	Cumbum,	Kurnool Dist., Madras	43 C 2
Chittagong,	Dist. and Town, Bengal	30 C 4	Cutch,	State, W.I.	38 B 4
Chittagong Hill Tracts,	Dist., Bengal	30 D 4	Cutch, Gt. Rann of,	W.I.	38 C 3
Chittoor,	Dist. and Town, Madras	43 C 3	Cutch, Gulf of,	W.I.	38 C 4
			Cutch, Lit. Rann of,	W.I.	38 C 4
			Cuttack,	Dist. and Town, B. & O.	31 C 4

Ref: Your No: 573/97 dt. 12-2-1997.

18 February, 1997

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Unnithan
Bombay Natural History Society
Hornbill House
Dr. Salim Ali Chowk
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road
MUMBAI 400023

Dear Dr. Unnithan,

Thanks a lot for your above letter. I have written a note for the *JBNHS*, which is enclosed, and hope you will comment on it. Only after hearing from you will I send it to the editors.

Cumbum seems to have jumped into Ongole after we Indians decided to draw lines across our maps and reorganise / create districts at will, either for votes or convenience! Anyway, the coordinates are the same.

The Baya, is a mystery. Mostly it was a breeding plumage of the bird. My friend, who has the captive bird, is out of town and so cannot give you an upto-date answer. Will get back, however, shortly.

Awaiting your reply.

Thanking You

Yours sincerely



Encl: Draft mss. of note on wagtail - 1 page

**EXTENSION OF RANGE OF WHITE WAGTAIL *MOTACILLA ALBA LEUCOPSIS*
SIGHTED AT POCHARAM LAKE, MEDAK DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH**

AASHEESH PITTIE, M.S. KULKARNI, RAJEEV MATHEW

On 12th January 1997, we visited Pocharam Lake, 18°8'N 78°10'E (part of Pocharam Wildlife Sanctuary, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh), with the purpose of counting waterfowl for the Asian Waterfowl Census. For this purpose we sat on the eastern shore of the Lake, approximately 50 feet from the edge of the water. The shore was covered with stubble grass, a few *Prosopis* sp. bushes and littered with small stones and broken boulders. Among the various species of birds present on this narrow margin of land between the water's edge and us, we noticed what seemed like two different races of the White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*.

On closer examination through binoculars and scope (Audubon Swift 8.5 x 44, Bushnell Discoverer 15-60 x 60), we confirmed that there were indeed two different races of the White Wagtail, quite clearly distinguishable from each other by the differences in their plumage. One was readily "separated" as either *Motacilla alba dukhunensis* or *M. a. baicalensis*. Two specimens of the former race have been collected in Andhra Pradesh earlier (Ali & Whistler, 1932 and Majumdar, 1984), and so it is possible that these birds were *dukhunensis*. Though there is nothing to prevent them from being *baicalensis*, as both are indistinguishable from each other in winter - except that there is no record (specimen) of *baicalensis* from South India (Unnithan, *in litt*).

The other race in question could be identified with more conviction and accuracy. There were 2 birds which had a **black back, black cap, white forehead, white sides of head and neck (including the lores region) and a black bib**. The only 2 races (Ali & Ripley, 1987) which have a black back are *M. a. alboides* and *M. a. leucopsis*. The former has **black ear-coverts**, while the latter, **white ear-coverts**. The birds we saw certainly *did not have black ear-coverts* (a sketch was made in the field). This is therefore, an extension of the known range of this race, which is reported from N.E. India, with the western-most record from eastern Uttar Pradesh. Also Andaman Islands (Ali & Ripley, 1987). The possibility also remains that they are spread over a much larger area all the time, but have been overlooked as just another "White Wagtail"!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The senior author would like to thank Mr. Humayun Abdulali and Dr. (Mrs.) S. Unnithan for their comments on the above note.

REFERENCES

- Ali, Salim & Ripley, S.D. (1987): *Compact Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan*. 2nd edition. O.U.P. Delhi.
- Ali, Salim & Whistler, H. (1933): The Hyderabad State ornithological survey. Part 3. *JBNHS* 36(4): 898-919.
- Majumdar, N. (1984): Records of the ZSI. Miscellaneous Publication Occasional Paper No. 65. On a collection of birds from Adilabad District, Andhra Pradesh. ZSI. pps. 1-63.

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DR. SHANKAR DAYAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT OF INDIA

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B.G. DESHMUKH
I.A.S. (Retd.)

Handwritten signature
22/3
57

Ref: 1047/97

20-03-1997

Mr. Asheesh Pittie
8-2-545, "Prem Parvat"
Road No. 7, Banjara Hills
Hyderabad 500 034
India.

Dear Aasheesh,

Received your letter and the draft of the note. I think it is alright. I again checked the Wagtail specimens and my comment is the same as in the last letter. You can send it for publication.

Please enquire about the *Ploceus benghalensis* plumage. I am going to do a project quite soon, and this bird will be one in the first lot and will be troubling you a lot in Hyderabad.

With love and regards,

Handwritten signature: S. Unnithan
Dr. (Mrs.) Unnithan
Scientist, Bird Room

SU:/mog

Message-ID: <37EF0339.308F1960@bom4.vsnl.net.in>

Date: Mon, 27 Sep 1999 11:10:09 +0530

From: SARASWATHI UNNITHAN: Bombay Natural History Society <bnhs@bom4.vsnl.net.in>

To: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@hd1.vsnl.net.in>

Subject: (no subject)

Dear Aashish,

Congrats for the fine article in JBNHS, have you seen it? I sent a correction to one of the articles in teh latest 'Pitta'. Hope you got it. Your email address given in Pitta is wrong. I sent 2 messagers to you from home which were returned. Is it posible to get a pair of Ploceus benghalensis in Hyderabad if I come there. Mr Daniel will write to the Forest Dept./Wildlife Warden for the necessary permission. Hope to hear from you soon.

With best regards

Thanking you

Yours sincerely
Saraswathy Unnithan

Please reply to my personel email : saraswathy@hotmail.com

Thanks!

Subject: Thanks!

Date: Mon, 27 Sep 1999 14:31:55 +0530

From: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN>

To: saraswathy@hotmail.com

Dear Mrs Unnithan,

Thank you for your email of 27.ix.1999 and the sentiments expressed therein. I have received my copy of the JBNHS and also the reprints etc.

I had also received your correction regarding Zafar Futehally's letter. It is being published in the PITTA for October 1999. The e-mail address given in PITTA is correct -- now you would realize that as your message has come through to me!

Regarding 'getting' a pair of Ploceus benghalensis in Hyderabad, you will have to get permission from both the A.P. Forest Department (Chief Wildlife Warden, Mr T Ramakrishna) and the Director General of ICRISAT. If letters to that effect are sent to the former directly (or to me to take to him) and the latter to me (addressed to The Director General, ICRISAT, Patancheru, Medak), I could try and do something. What are the specimen for by the way?? Are you going to try and see whether they are a race?? In that case, you might want to get specimens from north India

and northeast India also! Awaiting your response.

--

Best wishes and regards!

Aasheesh Pittie

8-2-545 Road No 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500034, INDIA.

PHONES: Work: 91-40-3352269 / Res: 91-40-3350683 / Fax: 91-40-3356064

E-MAIL: AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN / ICQ: 35044430.

Subject: BIRDS

Date: Tue, 28 Sep 1999 14:47:57 +0530

From: Bombay Natural History Society <bnhs@bom4.vsnl.net.in>

To: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@hd1.vsnl.net.in>

Dear Aasheesh,

Thanks for the very prompt response. I was given an all capital letter e-mail address, we tried small letters also. Both did not go and precious time got wasted. Saturday and Sunday we tried on phone, I had only your old number, through exchange here and at Hyderabad we tried and they gave a number of an one and only Pittie at Banjara Hills and the number was permanently connected to fax so waited till Monday.

You are correct, I suspect two races for the *P. benghalensis*, one in Western UP and another at North East. The Hyderabad lot may be a disjunct population of the North East as you suggested. But most probably they are descendants of escaped cage birds brought from North East a la Pied Myna in Bombay. I am trying to get specimens from those regions also. I am depending on you for Hyderabad specimens, Mr Daniel also feels that Hyderabad specimens will not be difficult. I am sending the letters for permission at the earliest.

With best regards,

Yorus sincerely,

Dr (Mrs) S Unnithan

Subject: Bayas

Date: Tue, 28 Sep 1999 18:08:53 +0530

From: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN>

To: Saraswathy Unnithan <saraswathy@hotmail.com>

Dear Mrs Unnithan,

Dr Kumar Ghorpade of Bangalore thinks that there isn't a 'race' in
Ploceus benghalensis. This is for your information only.

--

Best wishes and regards!

Aasheesh Pittie

8-2-545 Road No 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500034, INDIA.

PHONES: Work: 91-40-3352269 / Res: 91-40-3350683 / Fax: 91-40-3356064

E-MAIL: AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN / ICQ: 35044430.

Re: Thanks!

Subject: Re: Thanks!

Date: Thu, 04 Nov 1999 03:17:55 GMT

From: "saraswathy unnithan" <saraswathy@hotmail.com>

To: AASHEESH@hd1.vsnl.net.in

Dear Aasheesh,

Wishing you and your family a very happy Diwali.

The birds specimens fm UP are on standby. I sent two letters in your name to collect birds fm Hyderabad. Did you receive it? How soon can we procure the birds fm Hyderabad? The Assam birds will take some more time but I may start the experiment before that. Hope to hear fm you soon.

thanking you,

yours sincerely,

Saraswathy.

Get Your Private, Free Email at <http://www.hotmail.com>

Re: Thanks!

Subject: Re: Thanks!

Date: Thu, 04 Nov 1999 11:42:04 +0530

From: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN>

To: saraswathy unnithan <saraswathy@hotmail.com>

Dear Mrs Unnithan,

Happy Diwali to all of you too!

I've received letters addressed to the AP Forest Dept & another to the DG, ICRISAT. I haven't been able to do anything about them yet, as have been pretty busy. Let me see what I can do after Diwali (next week). I'll get back to you then.

saraswathy unnithan wrote:

> Dear Aasheesh,

>

> Wishing you and your family a very happy Diwali.

>

> The birds specimens fm UP are on standby. I sent two letters in your name to collect birds fm Hyderabad. Did you receive it? How soon can we procure the birds fm Hyderabad? The Assam birds will take some more time but I may start the experiment before that. Hope to hear fm you soon.

>

> thanking you,

>

> yours sincerely,

>

> Saraswathy.

>

>

> Get Your Private, Free Email at <http://www.hotmail.com>

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Best wishes and regards!

Aasheesh Pittie

8-2-545 Road No 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500034, INDIA.

PHONES: Work: 91-40-3352269 / Res: 91-40-3350683 / Fax: 91-40-3356064

E-MAIL: AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN / ICQ: 35044430.

(no subject)

Subject: (no subject)

Date: Tue, 16 Nov 1999 14:34:43 +0530

From: Bombay Natural History Society <bnhs@bom4.vsnl.net.in>

To: Aasheesh Pittie <AASHEESH@hd1.vsnl.net.in>

Dear Aasheesh,

On Oct 1st, two letters signed by Mr. Daniel to the Director, ICRISAT and to Mr. T. Ramakrishna, Chief Wildlife Warden, were posted to your address. Did you receive it? In November with my Deepavali Greetings I had enquired about this. My husband has gone to Western U.P. for arranging the birds from there. I will be going to Assam soon for the same purpose. Could I depend on you for Hyderabad specimens, please let me know.

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,

S. Unnithan