

# Samsad News

THE PRAKRITI SAMSD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 21 No. 7

JULY 2003

## Birds of Darjeeling and Sukna

SUCHITRA GHOSH

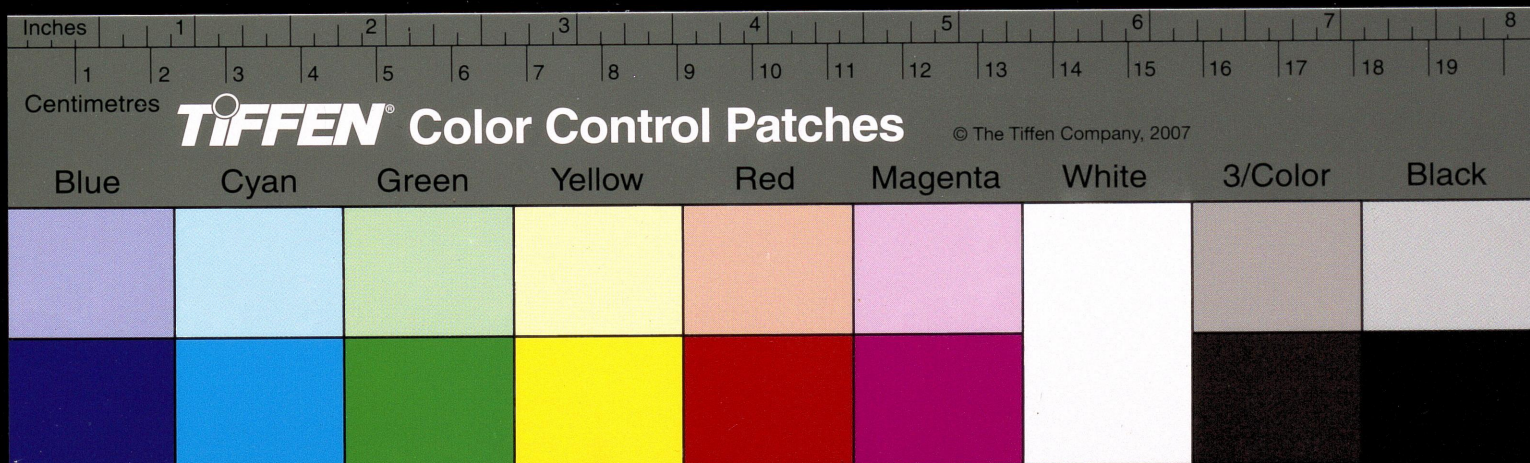
We applied for both Sukna and Latpunchur FRH to the Divisional Forest Officer, Wildlife Division-I, Darjeeling. Both the reservation slips with same dates of reservation reached us only on the date of our journey to the Queen of the Hills, Darjeeling. Now it was a tough job to decide where to go. Anyway we had to proceed to Darjeeling to get one cancelled (Latpunchur) and to extend period of stay at Sukna. The Christmas day, 2002, was not much rewarding for us in Darjeeling though friends told us about the interesting birdlife there. We saw a Green-tailed Sunbird visiting flower after flower for nectar. Rufous-bellied Hawk Eagle flying overhead in search of prey. A host of Tree-Sparrow flew past while we were roaming aimlessly in the Mall. Black Capped Sibia communicating and asking for the whereabouts of the partner since morning. The Hill Myna remained busy in talking among themselves in the nearby trees. The Green-Backed Tit singing at a very close range sitting on an electric wire just outside the window of our hotel room, once the fog dispersed momentarily. The Common Myna, the House Crow and the Jungle Crow searching for the day's meal. We, however, enjoyed the fog though it restricted the visibility to even less than 5 feet and we would not move earlier to Sukna, which we could do.

Sukna presented us with birding opportunities and the weather was ideal for it. Only a little bit of morning mist forced us to stay inside till seven in the morning. Here we stayed at Forest Rest Shed of Eco-Tourism, Wildlife Division-I. Just across the Siliguri-Darjeeling Highway, opposite the Sukna FRH campus, a large flock of hunting parties comprising Large Wood Shrike, Short-billed

Minivet, Scarlet Minivet, Maroon Oriole, Bronze Drongo, Spangled Drongo and Greater Racket Tailed Drongo used to break the morning silence almost every day. The Grey-headed Flycatcher as well as the Streaked Spider Hunter was seen intermittently. Within this patch of tall trees, every morning we used to come across all the four species of woodpeckers that we saw at Sukna.

The north-northeast side of the FRH, just across the dried up stream, was good for Fairy Blue Birds, Pin-Tailed Pigeon, Pompadour Pigeon, Oriental Pied Hornbills and Great Pied Hornbills. Dear friends, don't be jealous of us as we were fortunate enough to watch the beautiful Fairy Blue Bird – males with blackish-blue body, copper-blue wings and red eyes and females with blackish-blue feathers with metallic-blue tinge on the back and wings. Every time we saw them, they were feasting on kainjol *Bischofia javanica* fruit. I wanted to find out why the kainjol fruit attracted Fairy Blue Bird, Pin-Tail Pigeon, Pompadour Pigeon and Barbets. I collected a fully ripe fruit, smashed it with my fingers and licked the juice. Believe me or not, the taste was sweet and beautiful. Have you ever tasted a ripe fruit of kendu? It was almost like that. Five Oriental Pied Hornbills were generous enough to give us 'darshan' every day in the morning, in the afternoon as well as in the evening while feasting on the fruit of the hukusey (no one could give us the scientific name of it) tree. Inside the thick foliage of the hukusey tree, the hornbills could easily hide themselves. Greater Pied Hornbill sighting was really rare and we saw only one female in seven days, although we heard the bird

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## Birds of Darjeeling and Sukna

From Page 1

calling everyday. To our knowledge, one pair used to roost in the vicinity of the Sukna FRH. Birding ended with Black-Backed Forktail, River Lapwing and Clamorous Reed Warbler. for Fairy Blue Birds, Pin-Tailed Pigeon, Pompadour Pigeon, Oriental Pied Hornbills and Great Pied Hornbills.

### Birds seen at Darjeeling

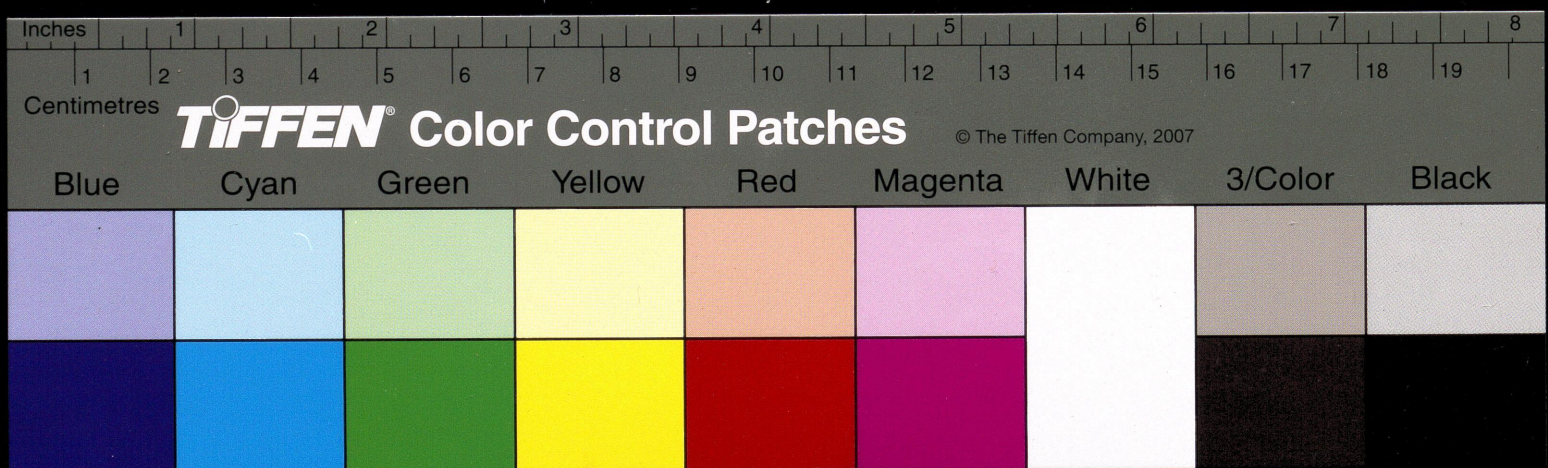
SL NO	COMMON NAME*	SCIENTIFIC NAME
01	Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus kienerii</i>
02	Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>
03	Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>
04	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
05	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
06	Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>
07	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
08	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
09	Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>

### Birds seen at Sukna

SL NO	COMMON NAME*	SCIENTIFIC NAME
01	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
02	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
03	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
04	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
05	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
06	Collared Falconet	<i>Microhierax caerulescens</i>
07	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
08	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
09	River Lapwing	<i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i>
10	Oriental Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>
11	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>

### Birds seen at Sukna

SL NO	COMMON NAME*	SCIENTIFIC NAME
12	Barred Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia unchall</i>
13	Pompadour Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora</i>
14	Pin-tailed Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron apicauda</i>
15	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
16	Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>
17	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultia</i>
18	Asian Barred Owllet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>
19	Crested Tree-Swift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
20	White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smymensis</i>
21	Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>
22	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaultia</i>
23	Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthraceros albirostris</i>
24	Great Pied Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>
25	Lineated Barbet	<i>Magalaima lineata</i>
26	Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Magalaima asiatica</i>
27	Small Yellow-naped Woodpecker	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>
28	Large Yellow-naped Woodpecker	<i>Picus flavinucha</i>
29	Black-naped Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>
30	Greater Golden-backed Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>
31	Nepal House-Martin	<i>Delichon nipalensis</i>
32	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba leucopsis</i>
33	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba dukhunensis</i>
34	Large Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>
35	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
36	Oriental Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsonii</i>
37	Large Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Coracina macul</i>
38	Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>
39	Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>
40	Short-billed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus brevirostris</i>



**Birds seen at Sukna** CONTD

SL NO	COMMON NAME*	SCIENTIFIC NAME
41	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
42	Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis gularis</i>
43	Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>
44	Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
45	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>
46	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
47	Gold-fronted Chloropsis	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
48	Orange-bellied Chloropsis	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>
49	Asian Fairy-Bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
50	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
51	Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>
52	Blue Whistling-Thrush	<i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>
53	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
54	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
55	Plumbeous Redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>
56	Black-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus immaculatus</i>
57	Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>
58	Blyth's Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
59	Oriental Great Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i>
60	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
61	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
62	Red-throated Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>
63	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>
64	Grey-headed Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
65	Black-naped Monarch-Flycatcher	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
66	Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta castanea</i>
67	Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>
68	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
69	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
70	Grey-headed Starling	<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>

SL NO	COMMON NAME*	SCIENTIFIC NAME
71	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
72	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
73	Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthomus</i>
74	Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>
75	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>
76	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>
77	Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
78	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
79	Indian Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>
80	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
81	Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>

\*According to BUCEROS, Vol.6 No.1 (2001) published by Bombay Natural History Society

**In the News**

**AFGHAN WETLANDS "ALMOST DRIED OUT"**

BY ALEX KIRBY

BBC News Online

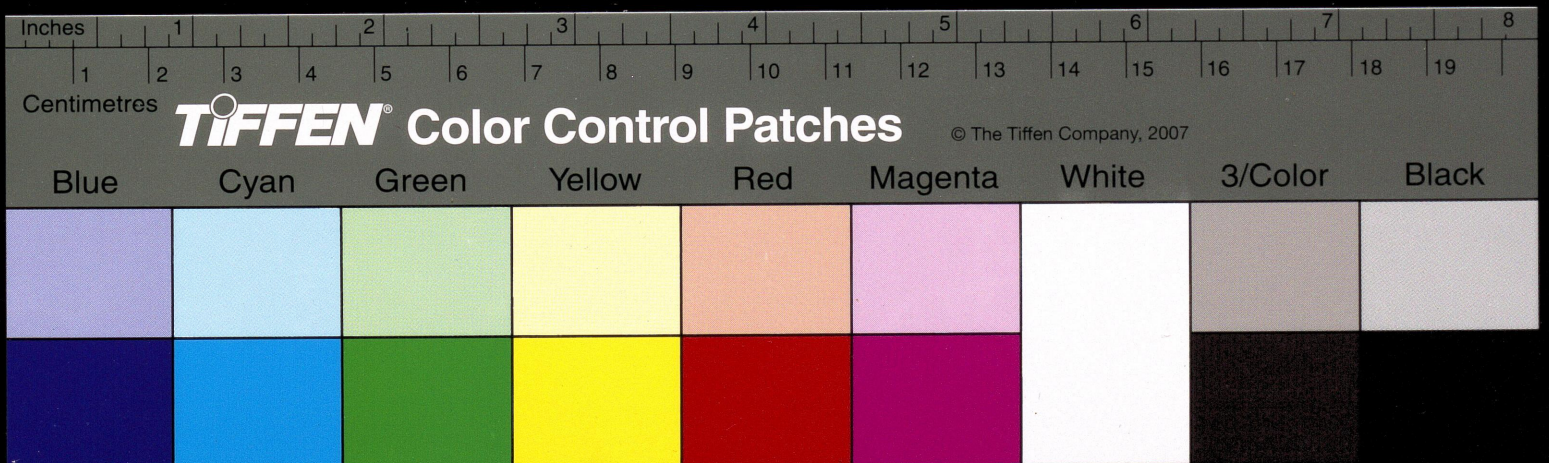
An internationally important wetland area of Afghanistan is now almost completely dry, the UN says. Satellite imagery shows 99% of the Sistan wetlands, which stretch over the frontier into Iran, have dried out since 1998. The Helmand River, which flows into the Sistan area, is running far below its normal level. Afghanistan says it needs international help if it is to save the wetlands. The findings come from a study of Afghanistan undertaken by the Post-Conflict Assessment Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme (Unep). The unit's main report was launched in Kabul on 29 January, but details of the Sistan damage were given to Unep's governing council, meeting here until 7 February. Dr Ahmad Yusuf Nuristani is Afghanistan's Minister of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment. He said: "The report makes it clear how conflict causes environmental destruction. "Similarly, continued environmental depletion and scarcity of natural resources will cause further conflict. Effective environmental management is the key to breaking this vicious cycle."

Dr Nuristani said the Afghanistan Transitional Authority aimed to complete its first national budget by the end of March, and he was asking for nearly \$20m for his ministry's environment work.

The Unep report says the Helmand river, which drains 31% of Afghanistan's land area, has been flowing as much as 98% below its annual average in recent years. But what Unep calls "uncoordinated management of the river basin's dams and irrigation schemes" during two decades of conflict has been worsened by four years of drought.

Lacking a stable water source, much of the Sistan basin's natural vegetation has died or been used for fuel. This has increased soil erosion and the spread of sand on to roads, fields and settlements.

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## Samsad Notes

### Annual Camp 2003

The annual camp of Prakriti Samsad is planned to be held from 8 to 13 December 2003 (Guwahati to Guwahati) at Kaziranga National Park, Assam. Camp charges Rs 3500/per person inclusive of accommodation and food. Travel expenses to and from Guwahati, camera charge, entrance fee at the park etc will be borne by the participants, separately. Registration fee Rs 2000.00 by 30 August 2003 to the Treasurer. Cancellation will forfeit the amount paid to reserve your accommodation. We leave on the 7<sup>th</sup> morning by Kanchanjangha Express from Sealdah.

### Silver Jubilee Photo Exhibition

An exhibition of nature photography by members of Prakriti Samsad is planned as part of our Silver Jubilee celebrations. It is likely to be held around February 2004. Members are invited to submit their best photographs for inclusion in the exhibition. Please contact Kushal Mookherjee (2412-7612) or Chandan Chaudhuri (2466-1442, 6 — 9 pm) for details.

### Safar

10 August 2003 – We meet at Gol Park (Traffic Island) in front of Ruby General Hospital by 6.45 a.m. We move to the place of bird watching sharp at 7 a.m. (Here better late than never will not help you!)

14 September 2003 – Central Park (Banobitan), Salt Lake City. Meeting place and time. 7 a.m. in front of the gate opposite Bikash Bhavan. Each participant will pay the entrance fee, if required.

October 2003 – There shall be no safar. However, if there is a World BirdWatch organized by BirdLife International, we shall participate in it. Be prepared to be a volunteer (members only) because we shall need you to make the event a huge success as in previous occasions. We shall keep you informed, if there is any development.

09 November 2003 – Bally Jaipur beel on 79 bus route. Reach the bus stop either from Bally Halt or Bally railway station, after a short walk. Meeting place and time: 7 a.m. at the railway station or 7.30 a.m. at Jaipur beel stop.

23 November 2003 – Rajhat via Bandel. Meeting place and time: Bandel railway station near the subway stairs at 9 a.m. This is a day long trip. Therefore, come prepared with sustenance and water.

21 December 2003 – DVC Canal, Baidyabati. Meeting place and time: Baidyabati railway station at 7.30 a.m.

28 December 2003 – Wetlands around Dankuni railway station. Meeting place and time: Platform No. 1 Dankuni railway station at the foot of the over-bridge at 7.30 a.m. Train No. DK569 Sealdah d. 0635 Dankuni a. 0725; C247 Howrah d. 0715 Dankuni a. 0737.

January 2004 – We are likely to organize a Migratory Bird Watch; probably on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. We shall inform you of the exact dates later on. Besides, as in previous years, we shall participate in the Mid-Winter Waterfowl Census during this month. Members willing to participate in the census may contact the Secretary, Assistant Secretary (94330 94681) or the Treasurer (2466 1442 between 6 and 9 p.m. except Sundays and holidays) in the month of December 2003, for details.

For all outings please carry water (absolute must) and some snacks.

### Membership

Have you renewed Samsad's membership for April 2003 - March 2004? If not, please send Rs 200.00 by 30 June 2003, giving your full address.

Please ignore this notice if the amount has already been paid or if renewal is not applicable.

### Wildlife Tour in Ladakh

One of our members, Mr Kamalesh Kamila is organising a wildlife tour to the Cold Desert National Park and Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary in Ladakh. If you are interested in joining him, call him at 98311-38379.

### AFGHAN WETLANDS

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The wetlands used to be crucially important to birds. In 1975 half a million waterfowl from 150 species were counted on Hamouni-e-Puzak, two-thirds of which lies in the Afghan part of Sistan. They included eight globally threatened migrants like the Dalmatian pelican and the marbled teal. In 2002, in central Afghanistan, Unep found the national waterfowl and flamingo sanctuaries at Dasht-e-Nawar and Ab-e-Estada were completely dry. The critically endangered Siberian crane has not been seen at Ab-e-Estada since 1986. But there is some better news: Band-e-Amir, Afghanistan's first national park, is said to be "in good hydrological condition", supporting populations of ibex and urial (a species of sheep).

Although parts remain heavily mined, Unep says it offers significant potential for nature tourism. Dr Nuristani told BBC News Online: "We very badly want to restore eco-tourism. It's one of the things we're planning most aggressively, and I hope it will be up and running in a year or two.

"We want visitors to come and see our endangered wildlife - species like the snow leopards, the markhor and the bears. "And although it will be difficult, I think we'll be able to restore the Bamiyan Buddhas, the statues the Taliban destroyed in 2001."

The mines and unexploded ordnance littering parts of Afghanistan are an obvious deterrent to intending tourists, and also prevent Afghans from using good farming land. But the assessment unit's chairman, Pekka Haavisto, said his team had found no sign of chemical contamination from the bombing campaign in the places it had visited.

It was the long years of conflict that appeared to have done the worst environmental damage, he said.

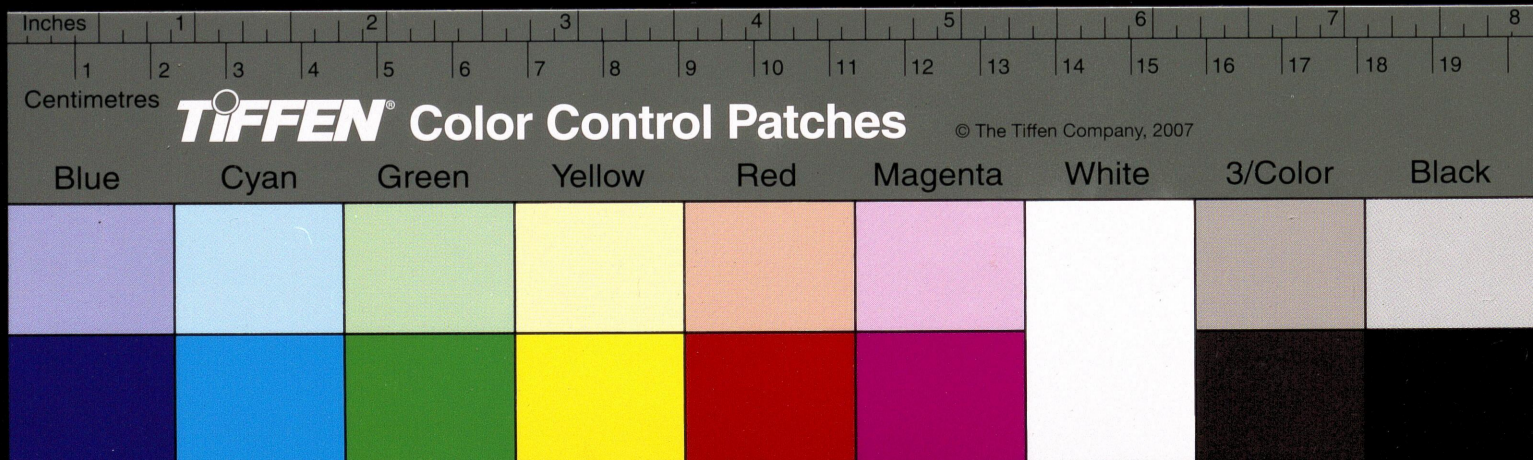


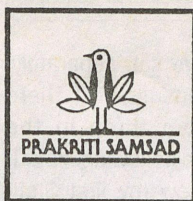
### Our Silver Jubilee

We have turned twenty-five. The celebrations have started and will continue over the next few months. Get in touch with the Secretary to know what we have lined up to celebrate the occasion.

Printed and published on behalf of Prakriti Samsad by the Secretary from 65 Golf Club Road, Kolkata 700 033, India  
Phone: +91-33-2337-4031, 2466-1442 (6-9 pm) E-mail: kushal\_m@vsnl.com or sujan75@vsnl.net

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# Samsad News

THE PRAKRITI SAMSAAD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 21 Nos. 9 & 10

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2003

## Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

SUCHITRA GHOSH & N N CHATTERJEA

It was a warm day in April (13, 2003) when we arrived, late in the afternoon, at Kolsa (20°10'.04N - 79°30'.13E) range of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. We travelled along Mul Road from Chandrapur until we reached Chinchpali. Here we turned left and gained the dirt road, which would take us to Kolsa. This road passed through a number of villages. Even Kolsa range borders on a village that has a sizeable population.

The trees on both sides of Mul Road (mostly Teak and Bamboo) were bare of leaves. The day was generally still. Yet at some places we heard a noise similar to a baby's rattle. We wondered if it was due to wind blowing through the few dried leaves that remained on the trees, or was made by some insects. We were curious but could not stop to investigate. We were late and in a hurry to reach the lodgings.

As we proceeded along the dirt road we noticed one plant that was very abundant and could vie with the dominant species such as teak and bamboo. It was *Calycopteris floribunda* (Combretaceae). It is a straggly climber. The flowering was over but the plant was decked with clusters of calyx that from a distance looked like flowers. We found only one bunch of flowers that were white.

Kolsa is a pretty little place. It has a water body that fills up during monsoon, attracts a number of wintering waterfowl and gradually loses much of the water by summer. When the water starts receding with the onset of warm weather there is a succession of small herb like plants on the drying bed. They are quite interesting to observe. The water body is within a few paces of the bungalow. A varied number of trees, and patches of grass, surround it.

This water body and the dyke in its west were our beats for bird watching which we did up to nine, nine-thirty in the morning and from about five in the afternoon till it became very dark to see. We did not venture far and wide because the area surrounding the water body was good enough for us. The woodland adjoining the dyke was a veritable aviary where Green Pigeon were very common. They came feasting on the figs of *Ficus glomerata* and such other fruits as were available. The raptors were seen around this area.

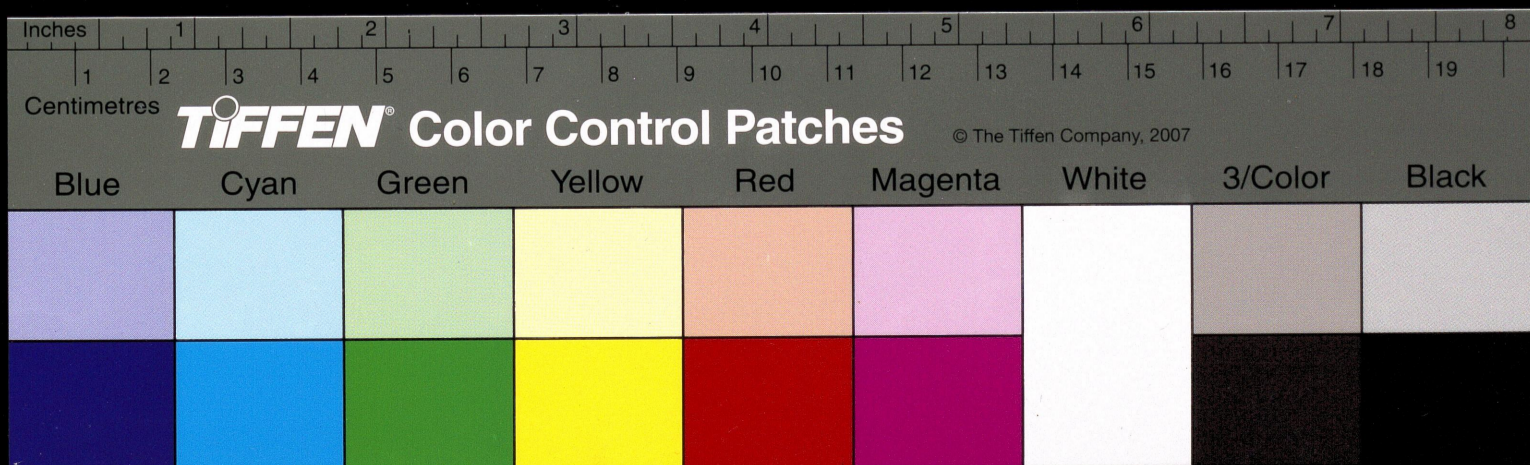
It was nearly an hour before sunset and still very hot. We saw an owlet settling on dried branch of a tall tree. We

wondered if it could be a Forest Owlet and started observing it intently. However, it turned out to be a Spotted Owlet. As we moved towards the water body, we heard shrill whistle of a bird. Looking up we saw a brownish-grey bird with prominent white spot on wings, which was flying overhead. We knew it was a nightjar. The loud, shrill and penetrating single note *sweesh* (like a whiplash in the air) identified it as Franklin's Nightjar. We also heard Indian Jungle Nightjar (*chuck-chuck-chuck-chuck*) and Common Indian Nightjar (*chuck-chuck-chuck-chuck-r-r-r*).

One afternoon we went on foot to Hiridi watchtower that was not very far. En route we came across scats of the bear that had gorged on the ripe fruit of *Diospyros melanoxylon*. We asked our guide (it is compulsory to engage a guide for going round the park) if he could get us some ripe tendu fruit. There was a tree close by which was full of fruit. What he did to get the fruit quite amused us. He (a slip of a man) picked up a large stone (which weight we thought would topple him over but did not). Moving a few paces away he sprinted to the tree and hit it with the stone. There was a shower of ripe fruit which we ate and quite liked the taste. It was sweet and mildly astringent.

From the watchtower we saw Gaur *Bos gaurus*, Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* and Spotted Deer *Axis axis*. This tower is good for animal viewing. On our way back we saw a flock of quail (possibly Jungle Bush Quail) that the guide called *Bater*.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> we moved to Tadoba (20°19'.45N - 79°17'.11E). There is some change since we visited the place in October 2001. We then could go around on foot. Now that is a thing of the past. You must go round the park in car and not get down. However, you can alight at two watchtowers - Pandarpauni and Katajharl. The former has open vista around it (where we saw the Dhole *Cuon alpinus*) and the latter is amid a wooded area. This is due to an increase in the tiger *Panthera tigris* population. We saw one tiger resting in the shade of a bamboo clump, and another removing its kill (a Sambar) from our view. Besides tiger and dhole, we saw Common Langur *Presbytis entellus*, Small Indian Civet *Viverricula indica*, Sloth Bear *Melursus ursinus*, Indian Porcupine *Hystrix indica*, Gaur, Nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Sambar *Cervus unicolor* and Chital.



There is a large, perennial, water body known as Tadoba Lake. This we understood attracted waterfowl in winter. We did not see much of waterfowl at Tadoba as compared to Kolsa. In October 2001 we walked a large part of the lake's shore. Now it is taboo. Only the stretch between the office and the Youth Hostel you can cover on foot. This lake has a number of mugger crocodile. Some of them are of no mean size. The one we saw was pretty large.

We generally see (Sterculiaceae) *Sterculia urens* Roxb. growing among rocks (as a lithophyte). In Achanakmar we saw it, standing in majesty, on a desolate hill slope. At Canary Hill, Hazaribagh (so many of them), Maithan or Mayur Pahar, Purulia, we found them growing in cracks of boulders. Tadoba has some fine specimens growing on terra firma. But the ones that impressed us most were those that stood wraithlike among the leafless teak trees. It was quite a sight.

Tadoba range conducted an Animal Census on 16 April 2003. The Deputy Conservator of Forests and The Forest Range Officer of Tadoba very kindly permitted Sri Amitava

Biswas and me (SG) to participate in it. We sat, separately, in two *machan* with a guide each to ensure that there was no bias. We had to stay put from three in the afternoon till seven in the morning of the following day. It was quite an experience for us. I (SG) saw my first Sloth Bear and Biswas his first Porcupine. We shall cherish this for a long time. After a very rewarding holiday, both at Kolsa and Tadoba, we left Tadoba on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

If you are planning a holiday, we recommend Kolsa to you. You can have an idyllic holiday there. You bird watch and relax or relax and bird watch — whichever you prefer!

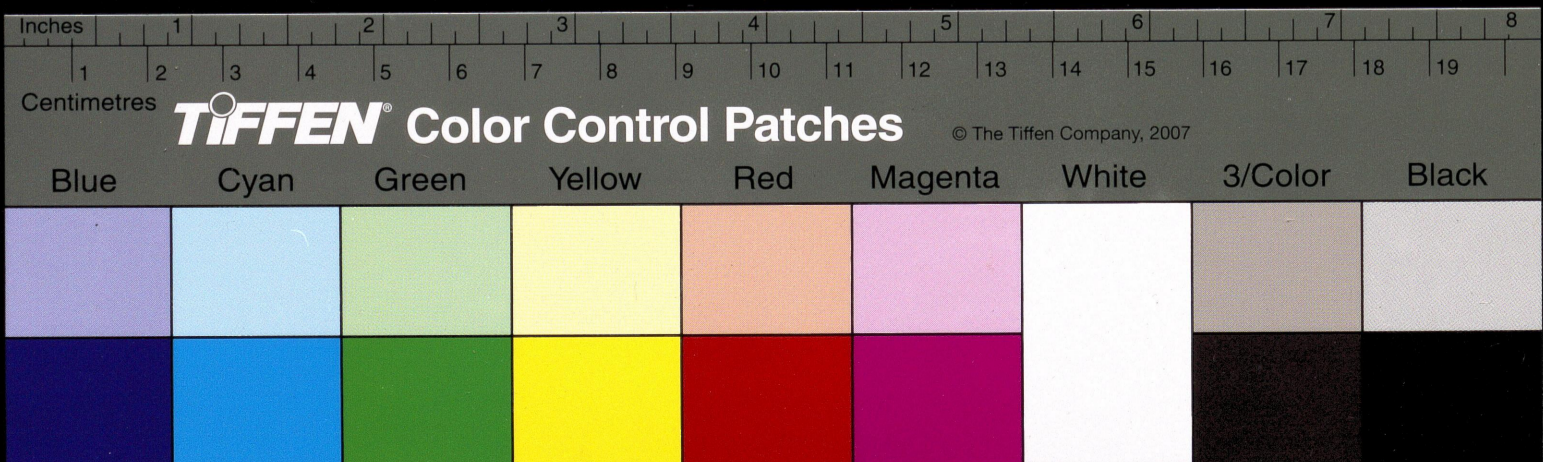
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Amitava Biswas and I (SG) are indeed grateful to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, TATR, and the Range Forest Officer, Tadoba, for permitting us to take part in the Animal Census on 16 April 2003 at Tadoba. We thank Dr S M Bhuskute, Principal, Bhawabhuti Mahavidyalaya, Amgaon, who very kindly identified Kukuranji and Lanjan/Lanzan for us.

**Checklist of Birds of Kolsa and Tadoba (13-19 April 2003)**

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
1 Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	+	+	+
2 Indian Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>			+
3 Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			+
4 Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>			+
5 Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	+	+	+
6 Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			+
7 Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>			+
8 Large Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	+	+	+
9 Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>			+
10 Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>			+
11 Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>			+
12 Asian Openbill-Stork	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	+	+	
13 Lesser Adjutant Stork	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>			+
14 Oriental White Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	+	+	
15 Black Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	+	+	
16 Lesser Whistling Teal	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	+	+	
17 Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>			+
18 Oriental Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	+	+	
19 Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>			+
20 Greater Grey-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>			+

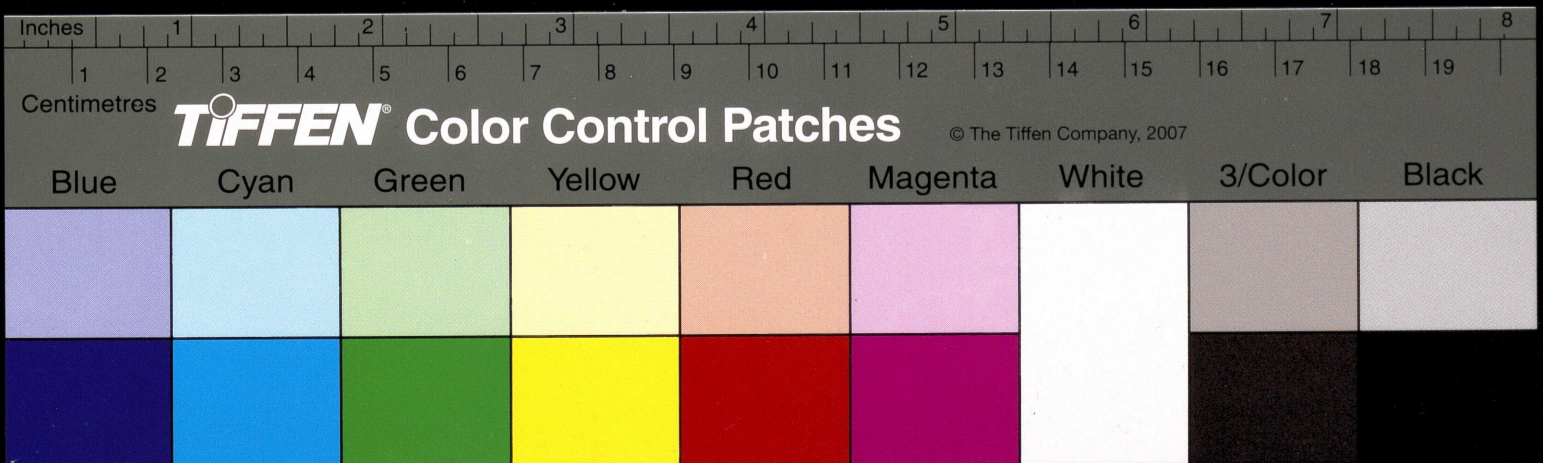
COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
21 Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>			+
22 Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	+	+	+
23 Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraetus fasciatus</i>			+
24 Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatous</i>			+
25 Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetes</i>			+
26 Grey Francolin	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i>			+
27 Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	+	+	
28 Jungle Bush-Quail	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>			+
29 Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	+	+	+
30 White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>			+
31 Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>			+
32 Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>			+
33 Greater Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>			+
34 Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>			+
35 Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	+	+	+
36 Snipe	Unidentified			+
37 Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>			+
38 Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			+
39 Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			+
40 Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>			+
41 Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>			+



## Checklist of Birds of Kolsa and Tadoba (13-19 April 2003) contd

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
42 Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		+	
43 Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>			+
44 Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			+
45 Little Brown Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>			+
46 Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	+	+	+
47 Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	+	+	+
48 Yellow-legged Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>	+	+	+
49 Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>			+
50 Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	+	+	+
51 Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>		+	+
52 Brainfever Bird	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>			+
53 Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>		+	+
54 Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>		+	+
55 Oriental Scops-Owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>			+
56 Collared Scops-Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>			+
57 Mottled Wood-Owl	<i>Strix ocellata</i>			+
58 Asian Barred Owllet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>		+	+
59 Jungle Owllet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>		+	+
60 Spotted Owllet	<i>Athene brama</i>			+
61 Indian Jungle Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>		+	+
62 Common Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>			+
63 Franklin's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>		+	+
64 Crested Tree-Swift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>	+	+	+
65 Small Blue Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		+	+
66 Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon capensis</i>			+
67 White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>		+	+
68 Lesser Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		+	+
69 Small Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>		+	+
70 Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			+
71 Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	+	+	+
72 Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrocus birostris</i>		+	+
73 Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylonica</i>		+	+
74 Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>		+	+
75 Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos nanus</i>			+

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
76 Stripe-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos atratus</i>			+
77 Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	+	+	+
78 White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>			+
79 Heart-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Hemicircus canente</i>			+
80 Rufous-tailed Lark	<i>Ammomanes phoenicurus</i>			+
81 Eastern Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>			+
82 Common Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	+	+	
83 Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>			+
84 Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			+
85 Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>			+
86 Large Cuckoo Shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>	+	+	+
87 Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>			+
88 Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>			+
89 Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	+	+	+
90 Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	+	+	+
91 Jerdon's Chloropsis	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>	+	+	
92 Bay-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius vittatus</i>			+
93 Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zosterops citrina cyanotus</i>	+	+	+
94 Tickell's Thrush	<i>Turdus unicolor</i>			+
95 Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	+	+	+
96 Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>			+
97 Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>		+	+
98 Franklin's Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>		+	+
99 Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>			+
100 Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>		+	+
101 Blyth's Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>		+	+
102 Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	+	+	+
103 Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>			+
104 Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>			+
105 Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>			+
106 Greenish Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>			+
107 Red-throated Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>			+



Checklist of Birds of Kolsa and Tadoba (13-19 April 2003) contd

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
108 Ultramarine Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula supercilii</i>			+
109 Blue-throated Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis rubiculoides</i>			+
110 Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>		+	+
111 Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>	+	+	+
112 Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>		+	+
113 White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>		+	+
114 White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	+	+	+
115 Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	+	+	+
116 Tickell's Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>			+
117 Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>			+
118 Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>	+	+	+
119 Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>			+
120 White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>		+	+
121 House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	+	+	+
122 Yellow-throated Sparrow	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>		+	+

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	1	2	3
123 Grey-headed Myna	<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>	+	+	
124 Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnus pagodarum</i>			+
125 Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>		+	+
126 Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	+	+	+
127 Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>			+
128 Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	+	+	
129 Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	+	+	+
130 Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>			+
131 White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	+	+	
132 Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	+	+	+
133 Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>			+
134 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	+	+	+
135 Indian Tree Pie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	+	+	+
136 House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	+	+	+
137 Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	+	+	+
138 Unidentified Snipe				+

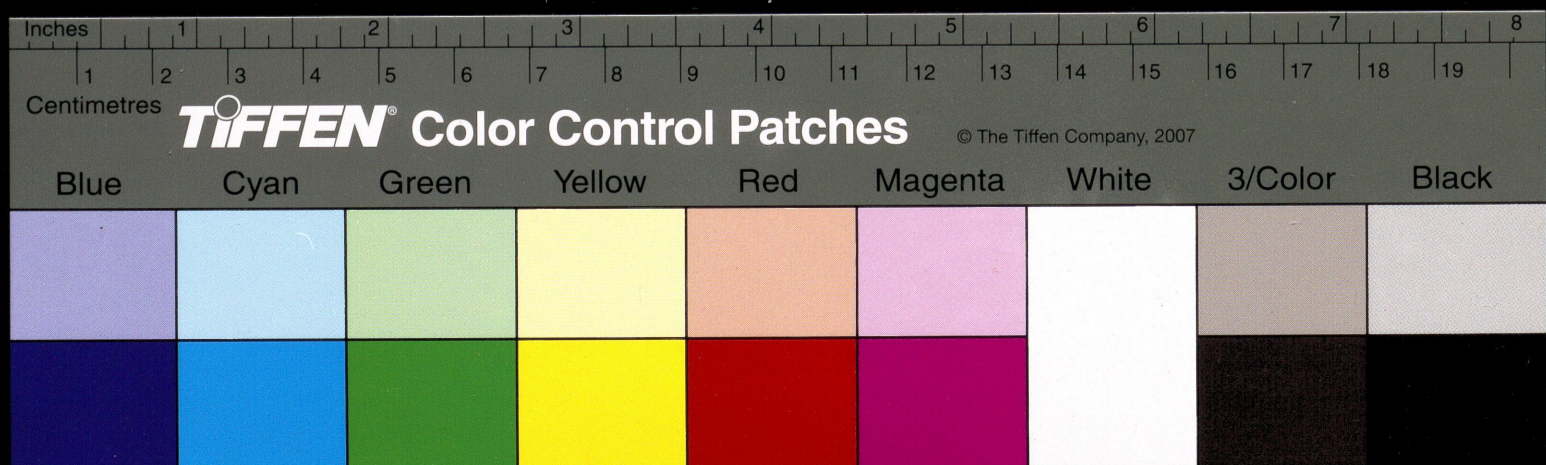
1=Tadoba (22-25 October 2001); 2=Kolsa (13-15 April 2003); 3=Tadoba (16-18 April 2003)

Illustrative List of Local and Botanical Names of the Flora observed at Kolsa and Tadoba, District Chandrapur, State Maharashtra (13-19 April 2003)

SI No	Local Name	Botanical Name	Family	PF	Freq
1		<i>Dipteracanthus prostratus</i>	Acanthaceae	US	c
2	Kurdu	<i>Celosia argentea</i>	Amaranthaceae	H	o
3	Aghatha	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Amaranthaceae	SS	o
4	Arba	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Anacardiaceae	MT	f
5	Jial	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	Anacardiaceae	ST	f
6	Devdaru	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	Anonaceae	T	o
7	Kala kuda	<i>Wrightia tinctoria</i>	Apocynaceae	ST	o
8	Rui	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Asclepiadaceae	SS	o
9	Bahera	<i>Terminalia belerica</i>	Combretaceae	T	c
10	Ukshi	<i>Calycopteris floribunda</i>	Combretaceae	C	va
11	Kukuranj	<i>Calycopteris floribunda</i>	Combretaceae	C	va
12	Dhaura	<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>	Combretaceae	T	f
13	Ajuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Combretaceae	T	f
14	Ain	<i>Terminalia alata</i>	Combretaceae	T	c

SI No	Local Name	Botanical Name	Family	PF	Freq
15	Mashipatri	<i>Grangea maderaspatan</i>	Compositae	H	a
16	Gajar ghas	<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i>	Compositae	US	o
17	Tendu	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>	Ebenaceae	T	f
18	Sinduri	<i>Mallotus philipensis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	ST	o
19	Anla	<i>Emblia officinalis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	MT	o
20	Garari	<i>Cleistanthus collinus</i>	Euphorbiaceae	SS	o
21	Kutki	<i>Bridelia stipularis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	C	c
22	Asana	<i>Bridelia stipularis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	C	c
23	Bhariyel	<i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i>	Gramineae	B	va
24	Linja / Linza	<i>Litsea monopetala</i>	Lauraceae	ST	o
25	Kumbia	<i>Careya arborea</i>	Lecythidaceae	MT	f
26	Bahava	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	Leguminosae	MT	c
27	Karanj	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Leguminosae	MT	o
28	Palas	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	Leguminosae	ST	va
29	Satawamul	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Liliaceae	C	o

PF = Plant form; Freq = Frequency



**Illustrative List of Local and Botanical Names of the Flora observed at Kolsa and Tadoba, District Chandrapur, State Maharashtra (13-19 April 2003)**

SI No	Local Name	Botanical Name	Family	PF	Freq
30	Lende	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	Lythraceae	MT	f
31	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	Lythraceae	MT	f
32	Lalberela	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	Malvaceae	SS	o
33	Ban bhendi	<i>Urena lobata</i>	Malvaceae	SS	o
34	Ran bhendi	<i>Malachra capitata</i>	Malvaceae	SS	o
35	Ran kapasi	<i>Urena lobata var. sinuata</i>	Malvaceae	SS	o
36	Sahadevi	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	Malvaceae	SS	o
37		<i>Marsilea minuta</i>	Marsileaceae	H	o
38	Limba	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Meliaceae	T	o
39	Kolare chikal	<i>Nymphoides hydrophylla</i>	Menyanthaceae	H	o
40	Khatar	<i>Nymphoides hydrophylla</i>	Menyanthaceae	H	o
41	Kinhai	<i>Albizia procera</i>	Mimosaceae	T	f
42	Chikunda	<i>Albizia odoratissima</i>	Mimosaceae	T	f
43	Umbar	<i>Ficus glomerata</i>	Moraceae	T	c
44	Jaam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Myrtaceae	T	o
45	Shindi	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	Palmae	MT	o
46	Pivala dhotara	<i>Argemone mexicana</i>	Papaveraceae	US	o

SI No	Local Name	Botanical Name	Family	PF	Freq
47	Gunja	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Papilionaceae	C	o
48		<i>Moghania (=Flamingia) sp.</i>	Papilionaceae	SS	o
49	Sheral	<i>Polygonum glabrum</i>	Polygonaceae	H	f
50	Kanerballi	<i>Ziziphus oenopia</i>	Rhamnaceae	C	o
51	Bor, bera	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Rhamnaceae	ST	o
52	Phetra	<i>Randia uliginosa</i>	Rubiaceae	ST	c
53	Heddi	<i>Adina cordifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	T	o
54	Ghogari	<i>Gardenia latifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	T	o
55	Kalamb	<i>Mitragyna parvifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	T	f
56	Bheria	<i>Chloroxylon swietenia</i>	Rutaceae	T	c
57	Kusumb	<i>Schleichera oleosa</i>	Sapindaceae	T	o
58	Mahwa	<i>Madhuca indica</i>	Sapotaceae	T	f
59	Karai, Kandol	<i>Sterculia urens</i>	Sterculiaceae	T	f
60	Phalsi	<i>Grewia subinaequalis</i>	Tiliaceae	ST	o
61	Raimuniya	<i>Lantana camara</i>	Verbenaceae	SS	o
62	Teak	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Verbonaceae	T	va

PF = Plant form; Freq = Frequency

**In the News****Eagles fight rat menace**

Beijing, Sept.3: – To stop rat menace in the grasslands of Madoi country of Golog Tibetan autonomous prefecture in northern China, the local administration has used eagles to do the job. Over 8000 nests have been set up on poles around Gyaring and Ngoring lakes to attract eagles, which prey on rats. The eagles have worked to keep 65893 acres of grassland free of rats.

— The Statesman, 4 September 2003

**It's tiny, for an elephant, and you haven't ever seen it**

London, Sept.4 – A new sub-species of elephant, the "pygmy elephant", has been discovered in Borneo.

The elephant, which is thirty per cent smaller than an Asian elephant, has been genetically determined for the first time to be distinct sub-species. With a population of under 2000, it lives only in a remote corner of Borneo, around a thousand miles away and on a separate island from the nearest other Asian elephants.

It had previously been thought that they were a

feral population that had escaped from a collection given to the Sultan of Sulu by the British East Indian Company in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

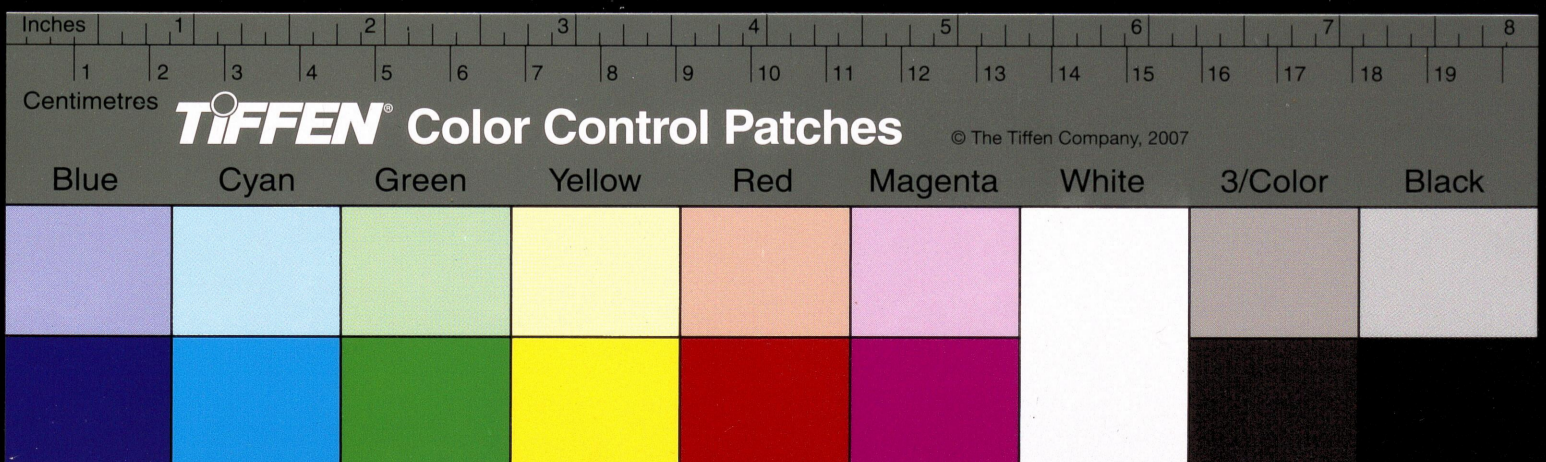
However, by studying the mitochondrial DNA of the animals, scientists discovered they had been on the island for around 300,000 years, long before man arrived there.

They are thought to have roamed there over a land bridge from Sumatra during an ice age, and were finally separated from the rest of the Asian elephants about 18,000 years ago when rising sea-levels severed the islands.

The research, funded by the conservation group WWF and reported in the scientific journal *Public Library of Science Biology*, concludes: "Borneo's elephants are indigenous to Borneo, have undergone independent evolution since a Pleistocene colonization, and are not descended from animals introduced by humans."

The Borneo elephant is not only the smallest of all elephants, but is also remarkably tame and passive, one reason scientists had thought it was descended from a domestic collection. But research suggests that this is because the Borneo elephant has no natural predators, unlike other Asian elephants, whose young are eaten by Asian

To Page 6





## Elephant Sub-species from Borneo

From Page 6

tigers, or African elephants, whose young are eaten by lions.

The discovery brings the number of sub-species of Asian elephant to four, the others being the Indian, the Sri Lankan and the Sumatran. A sub-species is any population of a species that shares group-wide characteristics which are distinct from the rest of the species.

— The Statesman, 5 September 2003

## Nitish pet project makes greens see red

Sept. 9 – Mr Nitish Kumar's dream project – the Rs 8000 crore Super Thermal Power Plant under construction at Barh – has incurred the wrath of the ornithologist, Salim Ali, albeit posthumously.

### Samsad Notes

#### Silver Jubilee Photo Exhibition

An exhibition of nature photography by members of Prakriti Samsad is planned as part of our Silver Jubilee celebrations. It is likely to be held around February 2004. Members are invited to submit their best photographs for inclusion in the exhibition. Please contact Kushal Mookherjee (2412-7612) or Chandan Chaudhuri (2466-1442, 6 – 9 pm) for details.

#### Safar

**09 November 2003** – Bally Jaipur beel on 79 bus route. Reach the bus stop either from Bally Halt or Bally railway station, after a short walk. Meeting place and time: 7 a.m. at the railway station or 7.30 a.m. at Jaipur beel stop.

**23 November 2003** – Rajhat via Bandel. Meeting place and time: Bandel railway station near the subway stairs at 9 a.m. This is a day long trip. Therefore, come prepared with sustenance and water.

**21 December 2003** – DVC Canal, Baidyabati. Meeting place and time: Baidyabati railway station at 7.30 a.m.

**28 December 2003** – Wetlands around Dankuni railway station. Meeting place and time: Platform No. 1 Dankuni railway station at the foot of the over-bridge at 7.30 a.m. Train No. DK569 Sealdah d. 0635 Dankuni a. 0725; C247 Howrah d. 0715 Dankuni a. 0737.

**January 2004** – We are likely to organize a Migratory Bird Watch; probably on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. We shall inform you of the exact dates later on. Besides, as in previous years, we shall participate in the Mid-Winter Waterfowl Census during this month. Members willing to participate in the census may contact the Secretary, Assistant Secretary (94330 94681) or the Treasurer (2466 1442 between 6 and 9 p.m. except Sundays and holidays) in the month of December 2003, for details.

For all outings please carry water (absolute must) and some snacks.

The Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Bombay Natural History Society and Sanctuary, an environment magazine, have launched a campaign in concert through the Internet against the 1980-MW power plant, which promises power to the electricity-starved state and abundance of popularity to the railway minister. The magazine has drafted a letter of opposition on the web asking the people to e-mail it to the Prime Minister, the Union energy minister and others concerned, it says, the plant is set to "ruin the wetland habitat and harm the aquatic life in and around the Ganga including the highly endangered Gangetic dolphin". The letter addressed to Mr AB Vajpayee with the icon connecting it to his e-mail address says: "The project plans to excavate 13.6 million cubic metres of sand and earth from the banks of the Ganges river to raise the ground level of the thermal plant site. This is extremely dangerous as it will not only ruin the wetland habitat, but also harm aquatic and riverine life in and around the Ganges, including the highly threatened Gangetic dolphin. The project authorities NTPC to dump the ash slurry left after burning the coal in low-lying areas near the Ganga. Ash slurry is toxic and will pollute the area. Ornithologists...have confirmed that the area is extremely rich in birdlife, with 149 species of migratory and resident water birds listed. On this basis, the Taal wetlands have been proposed for inclusion as an Important Bird Area (IBA)".

Mr Kumar, who used his clout to sanction this project at his Lok Sabha constituency fumed: "I will never allow these so-called environmentalists to subvert a development project." "Birds don't exist in isolation. Birds and people exist together," he said, describing the campaign as "ridiculous". The work on the mega power plant is on in the full swing as the government has already spent Rs 80.57 crore.

— The Statesman, 10 September 2003



### Our Silver Jubilee

We have turned twenty-five. The celebrations have started and will continue over the next few months. Get in touch with the Secretary to know what we have lined up to celebrate the occasion.

Printed and published on behalf of Prakriti Samsad by the Secretary from 65 Golf Club Road, Kolkata 700 033, India  
Phone: +91-33-2337-4031, 2466-1442 (6-9 pm) E-mail: kushal\_m@vsnl.com or sujan75@vsnl.net

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