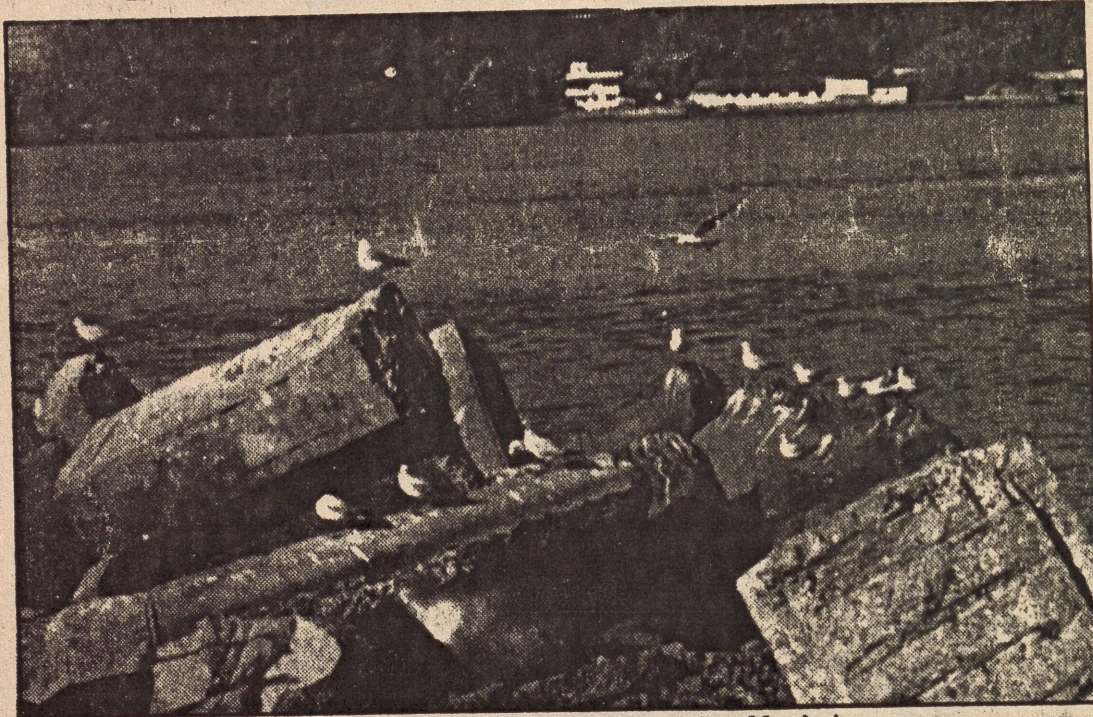


# A book for bird-watchers



Brown-headed gulls on the banks of the river Mandovi

## By Lloyd Rodricks

The need for well illustrated books on Indian birds keeps mounting as the numbers of birdwatchers in the country keeps increasing year by year. Carl D'Silva of Caranzalem is in the forefront of this activity as he is an expert Indian wildlife artist and his paintings have been exhibited in India and at International wildlife painting exhibitions.

Many amateur Indian ornithologists and a few professionals from UK and the USA are undertaking the serious study of Indian birds in the hope of producing texts and field-guides for the thousands of Indians who are showing keen interest in this fascinating outdoors activity.

Recently Shadid Ali was in Goa to meet Carl D'Silva in connection with the book they are jointly producing. These two experts have been watching and studying birds and other wildlife for a number of years and their accumulated knowledge is now being put for the benefit and guidance of Indian birdwatchers. Besides helping and guiding amateurs to observe and identify birds in the field, the book will attempt to get its users totally involved in this highly engrossing and diverse vocation.

Through the study of birds in their wild state, the problems of the ever-changing environment comes more easily into perception. When many wild birds and other wild creatures flourish in a particular area, it is a sure sign that the environment is in a healthy condition. This is of great importance to mankind whose many life supports such as soil, forests and atmosphere are undergoing rapid degradation these days.

Shadid Ali is the great-grand-nephew of the renowned Indian ornithologist, Dr Salim Ali. Shadid has vast experience in the study of wildlife and nature. He came under the influence of the famous Dr Salim Ali early in life and he considers that great man his mentor and guru Shadid's father who was in the Indian Airforce, kept being transferred to outlying stations and these places provided ideal conditions for Shadid's education and enjoyment of the wilds.

He submitted a thesis on "Ecology and Behaviour of the Grey Francolin" to the University of Bombay for the degree of Master of Science (Zoology). The study was undertaken over a period of 2 1/2 years in Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu and was an attempt to describe the salient

features and social organization and behaviour and identify some environmental parameters which affected the biology of the Grey Francolin (partridge) in this region. Later he studied Wildlife Management at the University of Maine, USA.

Like Shadid Ali he began his career at a very young age and through many challenges stuck resolutely to his calling. He is well-known as a wildlife artist and illustrator and was the Convenor of the exhibition; "Wildlife In Art" at the Menezes Braganza Hall organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature. He was a member of the survey team of the Bombay Natural History Association, who surveyed the bustard in Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra in 1984. In 1986 he undertook the study of the Lesser Florican. His paintings were selected by the London Society of Wildlife Artists and were exhibited among the works of renowned wildlife artists. Carl's work of Wildlife Art has appeared in numerous publications and he has been commissioned to illustrate important books on Indian Wild Birds.

The forthcoming text, "Understanding Indian Birds" by Shadid



Mr Carl D'Silva befriending the pigeons

Ali and illustrated by Carl D'Silva will go a long way to meeting a growing demand. In Goa, with its well wooded regions and its many cottages surrounded by scrubs and trees, bird-life is abundant. The book will help many birdwatching enthusiasts to enter more deeply into this enthralling environmental study.

Carl D'Silva is Goa's resident wildlife artist and he lives at Carn-

## Keeping folk-art a difficult time