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January 4, 2003

Dr B.F. Chhappgar
C/o Bombay Natural History Society
Hornbill House
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road
Mumbai 400023

Dear Dr Chhappgar,

As you are aware, I have been occupied, for some time now, with bibliographic work on the ornithology of the Indian region. In this connection, I happened to go through your co-authored publication, *Salim Ali's India*, in some detail. This has thrown up certain aberrations, which I have taken the liberty of highlighting for your kind attention, in an extract of the entry from my bibliography, which I append below. I would be glad if you could check on these and correct me so that the database I maintain, is rectified suitably. You will realise that the John Gould set in the BNHS library is improperly bound, which is of significant interest and import. The title and caption (Tailor Bird) of the plate on page 44 do not seem to match the artwork (a species of sunbird). Could you please check the original and tell me what this species is and send me a suitably abbreviated caption? o/

Your help will help me make the bibliography more accurate.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,

Bibliographic extract [Copyright material].

Kothari, Ashok S. & Chhappgar, B.F. (Eds.) (1996): *Salim Ali's India*. 1st ed. (Assisted by Shubhangi R. Puradkar.) Bombay Natural History Society & Oxford University Press, Mumbai.

Hbk. (24 x 32.3cm, illus. dust cover), pp. 1-171+1, 48 pll. [col. by; Elizabeth Gould (pp. 21,25,43,101,117); E. Neale (pp. 22,28); John Gould & Henry C. Richter (dust cover front; pp. 27,33,39,49,55,68,94,99,104,106,110,119,123,126,141,143; back endpapers); John Gould & William Hart (pp. 64,103,109,121); H. Grönvold (Front endpapers; pp. 35,36,131,144); James Forbes (pp. 41,44; dust cover back); G.E. Lodge (pp. 52); John F. Campbell (p. 59); Lionel Inglis (p. 83); Thomas Williamson & Samuel Howitt (pp. 89,136); K. Nixon (p. 112); J.G. Keulemans (pp. 129,132); E.C. Stuart Baker (pp. 134,138); Robert Melville Grindlay & William M. Daniell (p. 154); W. Westall (p. 158); W. Westall & J.B. Hogarth (p. 161); Anonymous (p. 76)], 2 pll. (col., endpapers), 2 pll. (col., dust cover), 2 pll. [monochrome (pp. 51,152)], 5 photographs (b&w. 4 courtesy: Bombay Natural History Society (pp. 14,16-18). 1 by; F.W. Bond (p. 79)], 14 line drawings [by; Pushpa Gandre (pp. 5,10,12-13,47,57,61-62,66,71,74,114-115,148)], line drawings (pp. 73,85,87,96,150,159), 2 maps (pp. 73,146).

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Contents: Half-tit., tit., imprint, ded. (pp. 1-5); Contents (pp. 6-7); Colour plates (pp. 8-9); Foreword (pp. 10-11, by; B.G. Deshmukh); Preface (p. 12, by; Editors); Acknowledgements (p. 13); text (pp. 14-167); Bibliography (pp. 168-169); Sponsors (pp. 170-171); Credits (p. 171).

This sumptuous anthology of dated writing on Indian natural history, is dedicated "to the memory of Sálím Ali on the occasion of his birth centenary, November 12, 1996," (p. 5).

Chapters of ornithological interest include: "Unforgettable Sálím Ali," [pp. 14-18, by; J.C. Daniel (as told to Mohan Sivanand)]; "Ornithology in India: Its past, present and future," (pp. 19-31, by; Sálím Ali); "Mystery birds of India," (pp. 32-38, by; Sálím Ali); "The joy of the Sarus Crane meeting the old master," (pp. 40-42, by; James Forbes); "Swifts and terns at Vengurla Rocks," (pp. 45-48, by; Humayun Abdulali). From the Chapter, "Gleanings from the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society," (pp. 100-145), the following are of interest to the ornithologist: "Sandgrouse in northern Gujarat," (pp. 107-108, by; C.G. Nurse); "The Great Indian Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)," (pp. 116-118, by; R.A. Spence); "The nesting of the Malabar Grey Hornbill," (pp. 135-136, by; Humayun Abdulali).

The plates are presented by the editors: "the best tribute to this great ornithologist [Sálím Ali] would lie in reproducing many of the pictures which gave him such immense joy," (p. 12). In several instances however, the "colour illustrations and their extended captions are unrelated to the text," (p. 12).

The plates have been selected from the following works: John Gould's *A Century of Birds from the Himalaya Mountains* (pp. 21,25,43,101,117); John Gould's *The Birds of Asia* (Dust cover front; pp. 27,33,39,49,55,64,68,94,99,103-104,106,109-110,119,121,123,126,141,143, back endpapers); Hume & Marshall's *The Game Birds of India, Burmah, and Ceylon* (pp. 22,28); *The Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* (pp. 35-36,112,129,131-132,134,138,144); James Forbes' *Oriental Memoirs* (pp. 41,44?,dust cover back); E.C. Stuart Baker's *Fauna of British India. Birds* (Front endpapers; pp. 52); Ernest Young's *Daring Deeds of Hunters and Trappers* (pp. 59); Frank B. Simpson's *Letters on Sport in Eastern Bengal* (p. 83); Thomas Williamson's *Oriental Field Sports* (p. 89,136); Robert Grindlay's *Scenery, Costumes and Architecture, Chiefly on the Western Side of India* (p. 154,158,161).

It seems that John Gould's volumes of *Birds of Asia*, in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society, to which the editors had access, were not bound according to the sequence recommended in part XXXV of that work. The bibliography lists 6 volumes of *Birds of Asia* (p. 168), whereas the distribution of plates, as planned by Bowdler Sharpe, was to have resulted in 7 volumes.

The sources of 2 plates, (p. 76, 124), though cited on the plates, are not listed in the bibliography. The title and caption of the plate on p. 44 do not match the artwork.

The scientific names of taxa have been changed to those currently used, on the plate titles and the respective captions.

All the plates in the work and each paper have been sponsored by a well-wisher.

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