

Humayun Abdulali

3, New Reshma Apartment,
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel. : 648 3006

29th Sept '98

Dear Reshmi,

A few days ago I noticed in a recent (?) issue of Pitt
~~or~~ a ref. to Mangifera indica and Tectaria grandis as exotics to
India. I have no immediate reference available, but wonder if
there is no slip-up somewhere.

And I see that you have covered Kumar Ghoshale. He
certainly writes well and has access to quite a bit of literature and
knowledge but — ? What do you think?

There's been a bit of trouble in your area but I hope it's all
settled down. The USA H.S. have written to your university asking for
a list of the birds collected by Salim Ali, and also, I think, the others.
Will you pl. try and get them to reply soon. There's a general stall-walk
in collecting & collections, and would appear to be the right time to assess
what we have in hand and what we need.

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Humayun

And do know if Siraj Taher got the dozen stamps I'd posted to him about
a month ago? Our job is getting worse and worse.

अन्तर्देशीय पत्र व
INLAND LETTER CARD



to Ashesh Pitte
14-7-370 Begum Bazar,
Hydrabad 500012

SENDER'S NAME & ADDRESS

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Humayun Abdulali

13/6
98

3, New Reshma Apartment,
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel. : 648 3006

8th June 1998

My dear Rakesh,

Red Crested Cuckoo Whistler in his report on Hyderabad birds refers to 9 birds from that area having their wings 144-154 mm but places them among the small resident race in south India. Yesterday's Indian Express carried a front page photograph of a specimen at BNHS, which is said to be from S. Africa. The same bird can occur in both S. Africa and India but need not migrate from one place to the other - and there is no evidence of their doing so. Perhaps the migration is in India itself. I would like to check on all possible records and can I trouble you to look up the specimens available there and let us have the place names, dates + wing measurements of 144 or larger and collector name.

I have still to write to them about the birds collected by Sahi Ali. Do they have any more obtained before or after

Let's try & fill up such gaps as we can. Perhaps some are easier to handle than has appeared so far.

Thank you and all good wishes,

Sincerely,

Humayun

अन्तर्वेशीय पत्र कार्ड
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Mr. Ashish Pittie,
14-7-370 Begum Bazaar
Hydrabad 500012
(A.P.)

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A. Ashish Pittie
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Aasheesh Pittie
8-2-545 "Prem Parvat", Road No. 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500034, India.
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E-mail: AASHEESH@HD1.VSNL.NET.IN

Ref: Yours of 29-8-1998

8 September, 1998

Mr Humayun Abdulali
3, New Reshma Apartment
13 Pali Hill
Bandra (W)
MUMBAI 400050

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

Thank you for your above letter. I hope you and Mrs. Abdulali are both in good health!

In *Pitta* # 88 (August 1998), teak and mango were referred to as 'exotic' to the immediate area of the Park under consideration. The area has scrub vegetation and therefore these trees are present only because of planting. I think we should have been more specific. I will put in an 'Errata' in the forthcoming issue. Thank you for pointing out the error.

Regarding Kumar Ghorpade, I am quite happy that he writes for our bulletin. He is a good friend who helps in many ways - ranging from an overabundance of, to very pertinent advice and lots of ideas, scientific papers, other clippings and extracts, etc. His greatest drawback (according to me) is an unnaturally excessive urge to criticize others. He is extremely intolerant of slipshod (according to his standards) work and makes no bones about his feelings, much to the chagrin or public-humiliation of the victim! Though I have been at the receiving end of his vituperation, I hold no grudges since he is a good 'teacher' and solid 'buddy' once you fathom him. I could get more personal but wouldn't like to. Perhaps when we meet... As a scientist and taxonomist, I think he is one of the very few left in this country who give quite willingly to enquiring amateurs, with the sole object of encouragement. He is an excellent editor of scientific material and likes the English language. Only he likes to 'edit' a lot more than he should. If given a chance, his Editor's Comments at the end of somebody's paper will be longer and more informed than the contributor's paper!

There was some trouble in the city, yes, but it has been dealt with and things are normal now.


I will speak to the people of the Zoology Dept., at the Osmania University regarding Dr Salim Ali's collection and revert back to you. I have to speak to them about the Pied Crested Cuckoo quereles¹ which you had raised in an earlier letter. Give me a while and I'll get back regarding both these items.

Mr Siraj Taher has confirmed receipt of the packet of stamps and resolved to write to you today!

Both of us (S Taher and myself) will be in Mumbai from 15-20 Sept 1998, to attend the workshop being organized by the BNHS. Perhaps we can meet at that time!

With best wishes and regards

Yours sincerely



Aasheesh Pittie

8-2-545 Road No. 7, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500 034. India.

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10 September, 1998

Mr Humayun Abdulali
3, New Reshma Apartment
13 Pali Hill
Bandra (W)
MUMBAI 400050

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

I am enclosing a list of papers authored by you either individually or with a co-author, for your perusal. This is an un-edited list and many entries are in capital letters, or have occasional odd characters inserted in them. Please excuse this.


I wonder if you could go through this list and either compare it with another that you have or mention on this any missed entries, so that I can update my database and send you a fresh, updated printout.

If you require an ornithological, bibliographic index on species or areas for the Indian Sub-continent, please write to me and I will gladly send you a printout.

As you can see from the enclosed list, I have indexed papers on a database (approximately 8900 citations) which is now easily useable. In the enclosed list, the words within brackets, below each citation, are 'key-words'.

With best wishes and regards,

Yours sincerely



Encl: a/a

Humayun Abdulali

23/9/98

3, New Reshma Apartment,
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050.
Tel. : 648 3006

20th Sept 1998

My dear Ashed,

When I said, a couple of days back, that I'd read your list I made a mistake for I'd not yet seen your letter of 10th Sept '98. Together with 17 pages of the list of ornithological papers ^{from May 20th} I was referring to the bibliography which you had given to me some time back. I got your letter and enclosure at home when I got back from the meeting along with letters spread over a month! Our post....

Curious, I've just prepared a similar list covering mammals, birds, reptiles, wild life etc, including people, ending from 1931 - 1997, which total 269. These are chronologically arranged, which I'm afraid I cannot understand the arrangement and set-up in your list.

I am afraid I do not have the energy to compare the 2 lists but if you would care to do so, I will send you a copy. You must then give me serial number of those which have been omitted in either list. And an explanation of the apparently mixed-up arrangement in your list would be appreciated.

I am sorry I could not attend yesterday, but I hope you were present when I made the few remarks at the meeting. I still do not know what it is proposed to do, and how. The negotiations have been carried out by members of the staff of BNHS without the knowledge of the Com. This is grossly irregular and having got involved in it myself, I think I should place the facts before the BNHS membership. Considering the small number of people interested in this matter, I cannot help feel that the present tendency to have more and more institutes is harmful for it only means a duplication and a waste of manpower, effort and postage. I agree it would be difficult to do in Bombay what you achieve with Peter,

but you must keep ~~in mind~~ ^{in mind} the momentum of 115 years of the Society and the fact that many of the efforts are one-way coverups, and must end with the man — who is bound to end (eg. stray feathers) &

And this is a subject which is linked with and dependent upon the person concerned. The success and standing of the BNHS (and Pittin) are very obvious examples. But you could write a book or several volumes on this aspect of natural history.

I am sorry we have not had the opportunity of a sit-down talk — it may be worth while and of benefit to both.

Looking forward to meeting you again. Would be very glad to have you join me at a meal at home if you ever have the time. And if you have the time and are willing to try ^{pot-luck} ^{smile} perhaps, you can invite yourself almost any time.

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Harold

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Ref: Yours of 20-9-1998

6 October, 1998

Mr Humayun Abdulali
3, New Reshma Apartment
13, Pali Hill
Bandra (W)
MUMBAI 400050

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

It was such a pleasure meeting you in Mumbai recently! My only regret is that I could not spend some more time with you and *learn* 'things' in your company. I remember with great fondness the years when we (Siraj Taher and I) were compiling our A.P. checklist, and I had the good fortune of your active participation in that project. I spent a day at your house while you went through the proofs with a fine-toothed comb! The best part was referencing with you. I would have to get up and pick out a book from your shelves and place it back immediately after it was used, no matter the same book was used again and again! Therein lay a lesson. It was on that trip I learnt how reference cards are used and kept - after seeing your notes on cards!

The list I sent you with my letter of 10-9-1998 is rather mixed up in its chronology. I am sorry for the mix-up. I have now extracted one in chronological order and would like to compare it with the list which you have had prepared (vide your above letter). **If you could send me a copy of your list, I will compare it with my list and send you the additions, corrections, etc. I will also send you a fresh copy of my list.** This will however be only of your ornithological papers.

Thank you for your kind and generous invitation. The next time I'm in Mumbai, I will definitely make some time and visit you.

With best wishes to you and Mrs Abdulali,

Yours sincerely



Humayun Abdulali

11/11/98

3, New Reshma Apartment,
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel. : 648 3006

25th Nov 98

My dear Ashesh,

By sending me copies of Pitts you are asking for trouble. I have plenty of time doing nothing ^{can} in detail. Are all your Brewer's reliable & do they know their birds? eg. in Pitts 88 J.P. refers to 22 Green Sandpipers at Kundahar in Vijay Dtd on 27/2 and 1 Hoth Sandpiper + 2 redshank. The first is usually seen singly and around Bombay you'd have to travel long distances to see 22 together — Perhaps he misread the figures, but if correct there is a lot of interesting information in the article, but you must be careful. Once an item is printed it becomes gospel and it may take many years to correct — You have seen the removal of several birds from the Indian list — But people persist eg. after correcting a skin record, we have another signal record — & by a good way.

I have written to B. Raha, Nasik re some of his dates re. seep & wading which appear to be very different ^{or added to from} those for Bombay. I hope I don't shove him off your list. Some of them if reliable can go into ~~records~~ ^{signals}. For this reason I do advocate the publication of signal records but in view of international practice, we must agree to let's try and assure that there are no, or at least fewer, mistakes. The trouble is that even Hume (also Hume) & (Hume) and there is now the silly arrangement of changing the English names, let's call a spade by the name we've been using for a hundred years rather than change Victoria Ternier to EST and have China in India. I'd call it invasion. ... The trouble is that we're

21

isn't better to do, we enjoy a ^{man} wave with a handwriting almost
as bad as mine to make entries in the Register of Posts. And except
for doing it again after 20/30 years, and adding to the number of errors,
achieve nothing. As Palin used to say S.I.T.C. S.A.T.P. = such
is the country, such are the people

Can't be helped — But try for best,

Sincerely,

Hubert



NO ENCLOSURES ALLOWED

Hubert
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Hyderabad 400050

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P.O. Box 45 Bazaar Hill No.
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INLAND LETTER CARD



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Ref: Yours of 25-11-1998

December 1, 1998

Mr Humayun Abdulali
3 New Reshma Apartment
13 Pali Hill
Bandra (W)
MUMBAI 400050

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

The point you've made in your above letter is well taken. I will try and be stricter in reviewing material submitted for PITTA's *Birding Notes* column.

However, I presume that the 22 Green Sandpipers *Tringa ochropus* sighted at Kondakarla, Vishakhapatnam district, would have been counted during a walk along the shores of that lake. Not at one place. If that is the case, as I am confident it is, then it seems a valid record.

Your letter serves the purpose of sending PITTA to you. Such criticism, I would call it education, is what most "knowledgeable" ornithologists of our country are averse to give. Do keep sending your comments. We will learn and in the process better ourselves.

With best wishes and regards to Mrs Abdulali and yourself,

Yours truly,



Humayun Abdulali

3, New Reshma Apartment,
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel. : 648 3006

17th Dec 1998.

Dear Ashesh,

The enclosure recd. a few days back should perhaps have been forwarded to you earlier. It was presumably put into the wrong cover + came to me in error?!

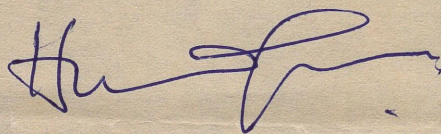
I have also a pair of letters of 1st inst which came in several days later - over post, is as the wave suggests - 1.

22 Green Sandpipers. I had not thought of the matter in the manner suggested - may be? But it takes many years to correct an error, sometimes never...

P. Raha from Noida is calling on me sometime today. I've met him for a few minutes only, but he appeared enthusiastic, and his notes on Pitta are interesting.

Let's keep on hoping - Birds continue to be birds!

Yours sincerely,



3 New Heights Apartment
13, Park Hill, Bhubaneswar (W)
Mumbai - 400 025
Tel: 011 3006

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