

Recent Literature : Ornithology

Abdulali, H.

1970 & 1971. A catalogue of the birds in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society—6,7, & 8.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **67**:51-56, 279-298 & **68**:127-152.

1970. Occurrence of the Great Snipe *Capella media* (Latham) in Burma and India.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **67** : 109-110.

Three previously mis-identified specimens in the BNHS collection come from India (2) and Burma (1). These are the 4th & 5th records from India, and the first for Burma. This latter bird came from Moulmein, so the species should also be looked out for in Thailand in winter.

Amandon, D.

1970. Taxonomic categories below the level of genus: theoretical and practical aspects.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **67** : 1-13.

A useful summary of a Zoological point of view.

Davis, T.A.

1971. Baya Weaverbird nesting on human habitations.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **68** : 246-248.

About 0.3% of colonies of *Ploceus philipinus* observed in a survey of over 1300 sites were on buildings, often in busy places.

Foo Juat Chin & Medway, Lord.

1970. Nest records of the Yellow-vented Bulbul and the Magpie Robin.

Malay Nat. J. **23** : 145-148.

Analysis of the 83 cards for *Pycnonotus goiavier* and the 27 for *Copsychus saularis* in the University of Malaya nest record scheme. The bulbul's breeding season is mostly February to May in Singapore, but nests with

eggs or young were found in all months from January to September in Malaya. Eggs hatched in 82% of bulbul nests, young flew in 52% of those in which some hatched. The breeding season of the Magpie Robin extends from January to July. Eggs hatched in 82% of nests, but in only 60% of these did young fly. The figures for fledging success are given as 77% and 86% respectively in the paper, but this does not agree with the figures in the tables.

Futehally, Z.

1970. 10th General Assembly and 11th Technical Meeting of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

J. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc. 67 : 30-39.

A summary of the papers given and decisions taken at the Delhi Congress, with special emphasis on those referring to India. "The failure of the Government of India to protect its forests and vegetation . . . is largely due to the triumph of the short-term over the long-term. The politician pacifies his more ignorant voter at the cost of all the unborn". (Dr. B.D. Deshmukh). Other Asian countries differ little; the Government of Thailand should take note. The rapid decline of the Tiger *Felis tigris* populations received considerable attention at the assembly. The Bangkok trade in skins must play a very important part in this decline. The assembly passed declarations urging governments to accept conservation and protection of long-term values as a basic principle of development.

Kahl, M.P.

1970. Observations on the breeding of storks in India and Ceylon.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 67 : 453-461.

Breeding dates, behaviour, ecology, morphology and taxonomic relationships of the 6 species of Ciconiidae nesting in the area are discussed. The author recommends some name changes by uniting similar genera : *Ibis* in *Mycteria* (which has priority), *Dissouria* in *Ciconia* and *Xenorhynchus* in *Epphipiorhynchus*. Visitors to Wat Phai Lom should study the section on the Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*,

Mathew, D.N.

1971. A review of the recovery data obtained by the Bombay Natural History Society's bird migration study project.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **68** : 65-85.

Mostly data from the years 1959 to 1969. Recoveries are reported from various species of duck (Anatidae), several waders (Scolopacidae), 2 wagtails (*Motacilla*), 2 sparrows (*Passer hispaniolensis* and *P. domesticus*) and a bunting (*Emberiza melanocephala*). The recovery rates are very low; most foreign reports are from Russia (Kazakhstan etc.), Pakistan and East Bengal. The recoveries in Russia of migratory sparrows are interesting. (Note : There is a further list of recoveries in the same issue, pp. 249-273).

Medway, Lord & Lim, R.P.

1970. Post-juvenile dispersal of Night Herons in Malaya.

Bird Banding **41** (4) : 265-274.

A report on 55 recoveries from 7450 nestling *Nycticorax nycticorax* ringed at Kuala Gula, Perak, the only colony in Malaya. Most birds reported were caught or killed by Man, only 7 of the 55 being reported as "found dead". 80% of the recoveries occurred in the first 6 months after ringing, indicating that the very young birds are native and easily caught. 75% of the birds were found within 80 km. of the colony, mostly in the rice growing areas on the coastal plain of northwest Malaya.

Medway, Lord & Yong Ghong Chong

1970. Barn Owl pellets from Kulai, Johore.

Malay Nat. J. **23** : 171-172.

Barn owls *Tyto alba* on an oil palm plantation fed entirely on rats *Rattus* spp., probably *R. tiomanicus*, the major pest species on the plantation. The rats were decapitated before being eaten, not swallowed whole as is usual in Barn Owls.

Mukherjee, A.K.

1971. Food habits of water birds of the Sundarban, 24—Parganas district, West Bengal, India—II : Herons and Bitterns.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **68** : 37-64.

Stomach analyses from 6 species : *Ardea cinerea* (76 specimens), *A. purpurea* (70), *Butorides striatus* (26), *Ardeola grayii* (105), *Nycticorax nycticorax* (78) and *Ixobrychus cinamomeus* (8).

Rajasingh, S.G. & I.V. Rajasingh

1970. Birds and mammals eating the fruit of the Yellow Oleander *Thevetia peruviana*.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **67** : 572-573.

Thevetia contains glycosides which are very toxic to man, but goats *Capra* were observed eating the fruit without ill effect. Domestic fowl *Gallus gallus* and 5 species of wild bird have been recorded as feeding on this species, as have rats and bats. The editors add that it is known that *Rattus norvegicus* can tolerate up to 50 times the dosage fatal to man of these glycosides.

Rao, T.R. & P.K. Rajagopalan

1970. Arthropod fauna of the nests of some common birds in Poona, India, with special reference to blood-sucking forms.

J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. **67** : 414-429.

Nests of *Corvus splendens* (56), *Ploceus phillippinus* (35), *Sturnus tristis* (14), *Passer domesticus* (4), *Hirundo concolor* (4) and *Copsychus saularis* (1) were studied. Among blood-suckers, mites (*Ornithonyssus bursa*, *Pelonyssus* sp., & *Lealaps* spp.), ticks (*Hamaphyslais* & *Argas*), flies (*Culicoides* (4 spp.) & a sandfly), a louse and 2 anthocorid bugs were found. Infestation rates were very variable : up to 10,000+mites were found in some nests, while numbers of Anthocoridae and *Culicoides* were up to 50 per nest. No fleas (Siphonaptera), Cimicids or Hippoboscids were found.

A.S. Cheke