



ASHOKA
UNIVERSITY



FAUNA IN AND AROUND ASHOKA UNIVERSITY

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Ashoka University lies in the heart of Haryana. Around 50 km from the national capital, New Delhi, Ashoka is surrounded by agricultural fields—acres of maize, mustard and sugarcane interspersed with rows of eucalyptus trees.

This book is a field guide to all the wildlife in and around the campus—birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. It comprises the findings of students and professors over four years.

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This is the first in several iterations of this guide, where subsequent findings will be added.

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FOREWORD

It is a privilege to write a foreword for a book on the fauna of the Ashoka University campus and its wider setting. This short guide does not come a moment too soon. The campus will complete ten years of its existence in August 2024, and the first extension will have been commissioned and in service by then.

Ashoka has earned a place on the educational map due to the energy of its students, numbering over 3000, and its Faculty and staff, collectively over 500. But there is much more to the university than the bipedal primates whose hearts, heads and minds inhabit the buildings and walk its paths. The university is part of a mosaic, a living landscape, and this tract is a small but joyous celebration of life in its various forms.

The great naturalist M Krishnan often said that the love of land could not only be about its cultures and music, its literature, and ways of life. After all, these cultural motifs and forms, in so many ways, bear the imprint of the natural world we are intrinsically a part of.

I first stepped into the campus on a winter morning to be greeted not only by the row of Kachnar or Bauhinia trees along the entry road but also by birds so familiar. Along with the ubiquitous and nosy mynah were pied wagtails that may well have flown all the way from Siberia. Brown rock chats hop around outside the windows and on terraces. That great co-inhabitant of human dwellings whose wonderful cooing and courtship displays warm the heart even as its droppings are the bane of any inhabited building, the blue rock pigeon. The Dhaba, for some reason, often features a shikhra, a hunter of the treetops, possibly one of the smallest tamed for falconry by princes and landed classes alike. Come monsoon, and there are rows of green bee-eaters sprightly and all bright sharing space on wires with the black drongo.

Ashoka student of the batch to graduate in 2024, Ishan Shanavas, does more than celebrate these well-known markers of bird life on the campus. Along with the 126 (yes, that many) species of birds, there is also a host of fauna. There are 14 reptiles and amphibians, including the rat snake, a skink, and the famous cobra. Near and around are animals great and small that bring life to the scrub jungle and grassland that this part of northwest India is well known for: from the handsome jackal whose Latin name, the *Canis aureus* or the golden jackal, does it more justice and the largest Asian antelope, the nilgai, which due to no persecution for centuries can be seen even on the roadside.

The publication is but a small step in a larger journey. The author draws on his own knowledge but also the larger pool of ideas and observations of those who live, study and work on the campus. A university is more than a place of learning; it is a place where multiple life forms can find refuge, home, breeding ground and staging place. Many changes have taken place over these many years.

The fig trees attract a host of fruit eaters; bushes bring in nectar-sipping sunbirds. But there may well be many opportunities ahead: to plant native tree species that harbour more insects and birds, to grow drought-resistant local bushes like the Capparis that can host butterflies. Even more, observing not just identifying birds, trees, and other life forms can do more than evoke curiosity and wonder; they can help test and work on ideas of behaviour and ecology in the everyday. It could also bridge gaps so commonplace between the natural sciences and the study of the humanistic disciplines. After all, the nilgai or the jackal, as much as the mynah or the cobra, have long been so important to the way humans in this landscape view not only the animals but each other. There may be much to learn from those who cultivate or tend the land around us, not only in Sonipat but Haryana at large, to know how to cohabit with such diverse life forms. I do very much hope this will be available in Hindi as well as other national languages to help spread awareness and knowledge.

This tract opens up windows. It is both a time to celebrate the diversity of life in and around the campus and also to comprehend it better. Like the stride of the wagtail or the trill of the mynah, it marks conviviality as well as reminds us of our wider duty to enrich, not impoverish, the wealth of nature around us.

Mahesh Rangarajan

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Common Birds



01. Red-wattled Lapwing

This bird is probably the most iconic bird on campus. If there ever had to be an Ashokan bird, it is this bird.

They have a black cap and breast, a red bill, a white underbelly, and yellow legs. They regularly call in the evening with its classic, agitated, penetrating "did he do it" calls. They are usually alone, but few sometimes gather together.

They're most often seen prancing or foraging across the university lawns. During the breeding season, the males perform a courtship ritual by puffing their feathers and pointing their beaks upwards, shuffling around the female. The eggs take about a month to hatch.

Scientific name: *Vanellus indicus*

Size: 32-35 cm



"Red-wattled lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) Photograph by Shantanu Kuveskar" by Shantanu Kuveskar is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

02. Brown Rock Chat

This bird will be familiar to anyone in AC04. They skulk outside the building, sometimes flying right up to the window or zooming in and out of the classic Ashokan lattice design of the building.

There are a few that live in between AC02 and RH2. They are brown all over, with their tails slowly cocked and spread, and are often seen in pairs.

Scientific name: *Cercomela fusca*

Size: 17 cm



"A Brown Rock chat in its habitat" by [Hari K Patibanda](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

03. Rose-ringed Parakeet

These birds are perhaps as loud as the students on campus. They hang on the top of all the buildings and can often be seen flying between them and the trees.

They're green all over with long tail feathers and a red beak. The males have a black neck ring, hence the name.

These birds colour throughout the day and are most often seen along the rooftops of the residence halls.

Scientific name: *Psittacula Krameri*

Size: 42 cm



PC: Ishan Shanavas

04. White Wagtail

This bird is a common sight in the winter season. Often near the mess or by the poolside, these birds can be seen walking along the ground, wagging their tails (hence the name).

Their plumage is highly variable, with a black and white head, grey or black mantle and large white to large black wing coverts. Their call is a sharp "chisick".

Scientific name: *Motacilla alba*

Size: 19 cm



"White Wagtail" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

05. Common Pigeon

Apart from the house crow, the common pigeon is one of the most recognizable birds worldwide. They can be seen around the campus, single or in giant flocks that can harbour 30 birds or more. Students in the residence halls can see them sitting on the window ledges. When windows are left open, they often enter the rooms!

They are grey all over, with some black on the wings and an iridescent neck.

Scientific name: *Columba livia*

Size: 33 cm



"[Common pigeon at Waterlow Park, London 01](#)" by [Satdeep Gill](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

06. Laughing Dove

A less common bird around the campus is the laughing dove. It's called so because of its soft, humorous "coo-rooroo-rooroo" calls.

They can be seen perched on the trees around the campus or in the middle. On occasion, they also perch on the window sills of the residence halls but are often bullied off the sills by the larger common pigeon.

They are brownish all over with a slightly rufous chest with a light black stippling across the upper breast.

Scientific name: *Spilopelia senegalensis*

Size: 27 cm



"Laughing Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*)" by Lip Kee is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/).

07. Black Kite

One of the most common raptors in the country, these birds are covered in dark, rufous feathers all over with some patterning on the wing.

They don't typically perch on campus. They usually fly above, sometimes just at the building tops, but more often high up in the heat column, soaring in the dozens.

They can sometimes be seen perching on the street lamps right outside campus.

Scientific name: *Milvus migrans*

Size: 58-66 cm



"Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)" by gilgit2 is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/).

08. Scavenger Vulture

Also called the Egyptian vulture, these birds occasionally fly above the campus lawns. They have also been seen perched on the top of the residence halls.

They are small for a vulture, with long pointed wings, small and pointed heads, and wedge-shaped tails. Adults are dirty white with a bare yellow head and black flight feathers.

Scientific name: *Neophron percnopterus*

Size: 60-70 cm



"Egyptian Vulture" by Koshyk is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/).

Birds



01. Black Francolin

Scientific name: *Francolinus francolinus*

Size: 34 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, tea estates, tall grass and scrub in plains and hills



Resident

"Black Francolin" by ahisgett is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

02. Grey Francolin

Scientific name: *Francolinus pondicerianus*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry open grass plains and thorn scrub, often near dry cultivation, and stony semi-desert



Resident

"Grey Francolin" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

03. Indian Peafowl

Scientific name: *Pavo cristatus*

Size: M 180-230 cm, F 90-100 cm

Preferred habitat: Undergrowth of deciduous forests near streams, villages and cultivation



Resident

"Indian Peafowl" by Christopher Kray Visuals is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

04. Indian Spot-billed Duck

Scientific name: *Anas poecilorhyncha*

Size: 58-63 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater, marshes, lakes, irrigation tanks, and pools with extensive vegetation



Resident

"Indian spot-billed duck in the marsh" by Nagarjun is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

05. Ruddy Shelduck (Brahminy Duck)

Scientific name: *Tadorna ferruginea*

Size: 61-67 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds around high altitude lakes and swamps, winters in large open lakes and rivers, especially with sandbanks and sandy islets



"Ruddy shelduck" by akk_rus is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

06. Little Grebe

Scientific name: *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Size: 25-29 cm

Preferred habitat: Lakes, ponds, village tanks, reservoirs, ditches, and slow moving rivers



"Little Grebe" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

07. Woolly-necked Stork

Scientific name: *Ciconia episcopus*

Size: 75-92 cm

Preferred habitat: Flooded grassland, marshes, irrigated fields and riverine areas usually near open wooded country



"Asian Woolly-necked Stork-1" by Chuck Gates is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

08. Black-headed Ibis

Scientific name: *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

Size: 75 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater marshes, tanks, lakes, rivers, flooded grasslands, paddy fields, tidal creeks and mudflats, salt marshes and coastal lagoons



"A Black headed Ibis landing in a field" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

09. Red-naped Ibis

Scientific name: *Pseudibis papillosa*

Size: 68 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry grassland, fallow fields, edges of lakes and marshes, near rubbish dumps



"Red-naped Ibis" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

10. Glossy Ibis

Scientific name: *Plegadis falcinellus*

Size: 55-65 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater marshes and large lakes, flooded grassland and paddy fields



"glossy ibis" by calvinfix is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

11. Indian Pond Heron

Scientific name: *Ardeola grayii*

Size: 42-45 cm

Preferred habitat: Marshes, flooded paddy fields, lakes, village tanks, ditches, mangroves, creeks and tidal mudflats



PC: Ishan Shanavas

12. Grey Heron

Scientific name: *Ardea cinerea*

Size: 90-98 cm

Preferred habitat: Inland and coastal waters, lakes, marshes, estuaries, mangroves, tidal creeks, rocky offshore islands and coral reefs



"Grey Heron" by Ratsiola is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

13. Black-crowned Night-Heron

Scientific name: *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Size: 58-65 cm

Preferred habitat: Ponds, tanks, lakes, streams, mangroves estuaries, tidal creeks and coastal lagoons



"Black Crowned Night Heron" by Charles Patrick Ewing is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

14. Cattle Egret

Scientific name: *Bubulcus ibis*

Size: 48-53 cm

Preferred habitat: Damp grassland, paddy fields, grass banks of villages, tanks, canals and lakes, also rubbish dumps and forest clearings



"Cattle Egret" by SivamDesign is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

15. Little Egret

Scientific name: *Egretta garzetta*

Size: 55-65 cm

Preferred habitat: Lakes, rivers, marshes, flooded paddy-fields, also estuaries, tidal creeks and mangroves, prefers freshwater. Resident



"Little Egret" by wwarby is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

16. Intermediate Egret

Scientific name: *Mesophoyx intermedia*

Size: 65-72 cm

Preferred habitat: Marshes, flooded grassland, well-vegetated pools; also shores of lakes and reservoirs, mangrove swamps and tidal creeks



"Intermediate Egret 2" by PaulBalfie is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

17. Little Cormorant

Scientific name: *Phalacrocorax niger*

Size: 51 cm

Preferred habitat: Rivers, lakes, reservoirs, village tanks, marshes, canals, estuaries, saltpans and coastal waters



Resident

"Little Cormorant" by Tareq Uddin Ahmed is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

18. Black Kite



Scientific name: *Milvus migrans*

Size: 58-66 cm

Preferred habitat: Cities, towns and villages, also mountains



Resident

"Black Kite in Flight" by wwarby is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

19. Oriental Honey-buzzard

Scientific name: *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Size: 57-60 cm

Preferred habitat: Well-wooded country



Resident

"Oriental Honey Buzzard" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

20. Egyptian Vulture



Scientific name: *Neophron percnopterus*

Size: 60-70 cm

Preferred habitat: Towns, villages and city outskirts, rubbish dumps and slaughter houses



Resident

"Egyptian Vulture" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

21. Indian Spotted Eagle

Scientific name: *Aquila hastata*

Size: 59-67 cm

Preferred habitat: Wooded areas interspersed with cultivation in lowlands



Resident

"Indian Spotted Eagle Perched atop a power pole" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

22. Shikra



Scientific name: *Accipiter badius*

Size: 30-36 cm

Preferred habitat: Open wooded country



Resident

PC: Ishan Shanavas

23. Black-shouldered Kite

Scientific name: *Elanus caeruleus*

Size: 31-35 cm

Preferred habitat: Grassland interspersed with cultivation or with scattered trees, and scrub desert



Resident

"Black Shouldered Kite" by jeans_Photos is licensed under CC BY 2.0

24. Eurasian Kestrel

Scientific name: *Falco tinnunculus*

Size: 32-35 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, grassland, and semi-desert in hills and plains, and open subalpine slopes



Winter Visitor

"Eurasian Kestrel" by Becky Matsubara is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

25. Eurasian Marsh-Harrier

Scientific name: *Circus aeruginosus*

Size: 42-54 cm

Preferred habitat: Reedbeds, marshes, lakes, flooded fields



Winter Visitor

"Eurasian marsh harrier mid-air" by Nagarjun is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

26. Peregrine Falcon

Scientific name: *Falco peregrinus*

Size: 38-51 cm

Preferred habitat: Desert and semi desert, mainly in foothills and mountains



Winter Visitor

"Peregrine Falcon" by Sai Adikarla is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

27. White-breasted Waterhen

Scientific name: *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Size: 32 cm

Preferred habitat: Thick cover close to fresh water



Resident

PC: Ishan Shanavas

28. Common Moorhen

Scientific name: *Gallinula Chloropus*

Size: 32-35 cm

Preferred habitat: Lakes, marshes and irrigation tanks



Resident

"Common Moorhen" by btrentler is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

29. Indian Thick-knee

Scientific name: *Burhinus (oedicnemus) indicus*

Size: 40-44 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry scrub, stony dry riverbeds with scrub



Resident

"Indian Thick-knee (*Burhinus indicus*)" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

30. Black-winged Stilt

Scientific name: *Himantopus himantopus*

Size: 35-40 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater wetlands, brackish marshes, irrigation tanks and saltpans



Winter Visitor

"Black-Winged Stilt" by btrentler is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

31. Yellow-wattled Lapwing

Scientific name: *Vanellus malabaricus*

Size: 26-28 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry stubbles, fallow fields, stony ground and open dry country



Resident

"Yellow-wattled Lapwing" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

32. Red-wattled Lapwing

Scientific name: *Vanellus indicus*

Size: 32-35 cm

Preferred habitat: Open flat ground near water



Resident

"Red-wattled Lapwing" by wildexplorer is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

33. Ruff

Scientific name: *Philomachus pugnax*

Size: M 26-32 cm, F 20-25 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater lakes, pools and marshes, flooded fields, grassland and intertidal mudflats



"Ruff in the Snow, Martin Mere January 2010" by Gidzy is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

34. Temminck's Stint

Scientific name: *Calidris temminckii*

Size: 13-15 cm

Preferred habitat: Vegetation at wetland edges, brackish marshes, mudflats and tidal lagoons



"Temminck's stint" by vaidyarupal is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

35. Little Stint

Scientific name: *Calidris minuta*

Size: 13-15 cm

Preferred habitat: Mudflats, costal lagoons, tidal creeks, marshes, paddy-fields and lakes



"Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

36. Greater Painted Snipe

Scientific name: *Rostratula benghalensis*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater marshes, vegetated pools



"Greater Painted Snipe female" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

37. Common Snipe

Scientific name: *Gallinago gallinago*

Size: 25-27 cm

Preferred habitat: Marshes and dry stubble



Winter Visitor

"Common Snipe III" by callocx is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

38. Green Sandpiper

Scientific name: *Tringa ochropus*

Size: 21-24 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater wetlands



Winter Visitor

"Green Sandpiper" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

39. Marsh Sandpiper

Scientific name: *Tringa stagnatilis*

Size: 22-25 cm

Preferred habitat: Mainly freshwater wetlands



Winter Visitor

"Marsh Sandpiper, *Tringa stagnatilis* at Borakalalo National Park, South Africa" by Derek Keats is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

40. Wood Sandpiper

Scientific name: *Tringa glareola*

Size: 18-21 cm

Preferred habitat: Freshwater and coastal wetlands



Winter Visitor

"Wood Sandpiper, *Tringa glareola*" by Derek Keats is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

41. Common Redshank

Scientific name: *Tringa totanus*

Size: 27-29 cm

Preferred habitat: Fresh and coastal waters



"Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*"
by Andreas Trepte is licensed under
CC BY-SA 2.5.

42. Common Pigeon



Scientific name: *Columba livia*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Villages and towns, cliffs and ruins



"Pigeon" by detsang is licensed under
CC BY 2.0.

43. Oriental Turtle Dove

Scientific name: *Streptopelia orientalis*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest



"Oriental Turtle Dove" by Koshyk is licensed
under CC BY 2.0.

44. Eurasian Collared Dove



Scientific name: *Streptopelia decaocto*

Size: 32 cm

Preferred habitat: Open dry country with cultivation and groves



"Eurasian collared dove" by Marie Hale
is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

45. Spotted Dove



Scientific name: *Spilopelia chinensis*

Size: 30 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, habitation and open forest



Resident

"Spotted Dove" by Hafiz Issadeen is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

46. Laughing Dove



Scientific name: *Spilopelia senegalensis*

Size: 27 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry cultivation and scrub covered hills



Resident

"Laughing Dove" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0..

47. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon

Scientific name: *Treron phoenicopterus*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous forest and fruiting trees around villages and cultivation



Resident

"Yellow-footed Green Pigeon (*Treron phoenicoptera*)" by Arindam Mitra.... is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

48. Alexandrine Parakeet



Scientific name: *Psittacula eupatria*

Size: 53 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous forest and well-wooded areas



Resident

"Alexandrine Parakeet" by nb- is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

49. Rose-ringed Parakeet

Scientific name: *Psittacula Krameri*

Size: 42 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous forest, well-wooded areas and cultivation



"Rose ringed Parakeet" by Hafiz Issadeen is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

50. Common hawk-cuckoo

Scientific name: *Hierococcyx varius*

Size: 34 cm

Preferred habitat: Well-wooded country



PC: Ishan Shanavas

51. Grey-bellied Cuckoo

Scientific name: *Cacomantis passerinus*

Size: 23 cm

Preferred habitat: Wooded country



"A Grey Bellied Cuckoo on a lovely perch" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

52. Asian Koel

Scientific name: *Eudynamys scolopaceus*

Size: 43 cm

Preferred habitat: Open woodland, gardens and cultivation



"Alexandrine Parakeet" by nb- is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

53. Greater Coucal



Scientific name: *Centropus sinensis*

Size: 48 cm

Preferred habitat: Tall grassland, scrub, groves and thick cover adjacent to wetlands



Resident

PC: Thomas Job

54. Barn Owl



Scientific name: *Tyto alba*

Size: 36 cm

Preferred habitat: Habitation and cultivation



Resident

"Barn Owl in a barn" by charlieishere@btinternet.com is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

55. Spotted Owlet



Scientific name: *Athene brama*

Size: 21 cm

Preferred habitat: Habitation and cultivation



Resident

PC: Ishan Shanavas

56. Little Swift



Scientific name: *Apus affinis*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Habitation, cliff and ruins



Resident

"Little swift, *Apus affinis*, at Kruger National Park, South Africa" by Derek Keats is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

57. Common Hoopoe

Scientific name: *Upupa epops*

Size: 31 cm

Preferred habitat: Open country, cultivation and villages



"Common Hoopoe" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

58. Indian Roller

Scientific name: *Coracias benghalensis*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, open woodland, gardens



"Indian Roller" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

59. White-throated Kingfisher

Scientific name: *Halcyon smyrnensis*

Size: 27-28 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, forest edges, gardens, and freshwater and coastal wetlands



PC: Ishan Shanavas

60. Green Bee-eater

Scientific name: *Merops orientalis*

Size: 16-18 cm

Preferred habitat: Open country with scattered trees, sandy areas on coasts, also semi deserts and grazing land



"A Juvenile Green Bee Eater" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

61. Blue-tailed Bee-eater

Scientific name: *Merops philippinus*

Size: 23-26 cm

Preferred habitat: Near water in more wooded areas



"Blue Tailed Bee Eater" by innlai is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

62. Indian Grey Hornbill

Scientific name: *Ocyrceros birostris*

Size: 50 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest and wooded areas with fruiting trees



"Indian Grey Hornbills looking for more company" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

63. Brown-headed Barbet

Scientific name: *Megalaima zeylanica*

Size: 27 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved forest, wooded areas and trees near habitation



"Brown-headed Barbet" by Hafiz Issadeen is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

64. Coppersmith Barbet

Scientific name: *Megalaima haemacephala*

Size: 17 cm

Preferred habitat: Open wooded country, groves and wooded urban gardens



"Coppersmith Barbet" by Ankit Gita is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

65. Eurasian Wryneck

Scientific name: *Jynx torquilla*

Size: 16-17 cm

Preferred habitat: Summers in open forest; winters in open scrub and cultivation edges



"Eurasian Wryneck (EXPLORED)" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

66. Bay-backed Shrike

Scientific name: *Lanius vittatus*

Size: 17 cm

Preferred habitat: Open dry scrub and bushes in cultivation



"Bay-backed Shrike, *Lanius vittatus*" by gailhampshire is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

67. Black Drongo



Scientific name: *Dicrurus macrocercus*

Size: 28 cm

Preferred habitat: Habitation and cultivation



"Black Drongo {*Dicrurus macrocercus*}" by - Ariful H Bhuiyan - is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

68. Rufous Treepie

Scientific name: *Dendrocitta vagabunda*

Size: 46-50 cm

Preferred habitat: Open wooded country



"Rufous Treepie 1" by Ganesh-B.R.Hills is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

69. House Crow



Scientific name: *Corvus splendens*

Size: 40 cm

Preferred habitat: Human habitation and cultivation Resident



Resident

"House crow" by Aries Tottle is licensed under CC BY 2.0..

70. Large-Billed Crow

Scientific name: *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Size: 46-49 cm

Preferred habitat: Wide habitat range



Resident

"Large-billed Crow" by Mike Prince is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

71. Plain Martin



Scientific name: *Riparia paludicola*

Size: 12 cm

Preferred habitat: River streams and lakes



Resident

"Brown-throated martin, *Riparia paludicola*, at Marievale Nature Reserve, Gauteng, South Africa." by Derek Keats is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

72. Dusky Crag Martin



Scientific name: *Ptyonoprogne concolor*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Hilly and mountain areas with cliffs, gorges and caves; also lowland areas around ancient forts and old buildings in towns and cities



Resident

"dusky crag martin" by T_Monk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

73. Pale Sand Martin (Pale Martin)

Scientific name: *Riparia diluta*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Around large waterbodies



"Sand Martin" by Mike Prince is licensed under CC BY 2.0

74. Wire-tailed Swallow

Scientific name: *Hirundo smithii*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Open country and cultivation near lakes, rivers, and canals; also wet paddy-fields



"Wood Sandpiper, *Tringa glareola*" by Derek Keats is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

75. Barn Swallow

Scientific name: *Hirundo rustica*

Size: 18 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, lakes, and rivers in open country



"barn swallow touch down" by Katsura Miyamoto is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

76. Red-rumped Swallow

Scientific name: *Cecropis daurica*

Size: 16-17 cm

Preferred habitat: Summers in upland cultivation and over open grassy hill slopes; rocky gorges and cliffs



"A Red Rumped Swallow Taking Flight" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

77. Streak-throated Swallow

Scientific name: *Petrochelidon fluvicola*

Size: 11 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation and open country near water: rivers canals, reservoirs and lakes



"streak-throated swallow" by Afsar Nayakkan is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

78. Indian Bushlark

Scientific name: *Mirafra erythroptera*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Stony scrub and fallow cultivation in open plains and plateau



"Hume's Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus humei*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

79. Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark

Scientific name: *Eremopterix griseus*

Size: 12 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, open dry scrub and dry tidal mudflats



"Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

80. Crested Lark

Scientific name: *Galerida cristata*

Size: 18 cm

Preferred habitat: Desert, semi-desert, dry cultivation and coastal mudflats



"Crested Lark" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

81. Bengal Bushlark

Scientific name: *Mirafra assamica*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Open grassy areas, often slightly wet ground



"Bengal bushlark" by ChanduBandi is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

82. Red-whiskered Bulbul

Scientific name: *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest, scrub jungle, gardens, orchards, and bushes around villages and cultivation



PC: Ishan Shanavas

83. Red-vented Bulbul

Scientific name: *Pycnonotus cafer*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Open deciduous forest, secondary growth, gardens and light scrub



PC: Ishan Shanavas

84. Ashy Prinia

Scientific name: *Prinia socialis*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Tall grass and scrub, open secondary growth and reedbeds



"An Ashy Prinia with a catch" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

85. Plain Prinia

Scientific name: *Prinia inornata*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Tall crops, reeds, grasslands, scrub and tall grass, and mangroves



"Plain prinia" by Tareq Uddin Ahmed is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

86. Yellow-Bellied Prinia

Scientific name: *Prinia flaviventris*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Tall grass by wetlands



"Yellow-bellied Prinia - *Prinia flaviventris*" by billbacon1968 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

87. Zitting Cisticola

Scientific name: *Cisticola juncidis*

Size: 10 cm

Preferred habitat: Fields and grasslands



"Fuinha-dos-juncos, Zitting Cisticola" by Luiz Lapa is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

88. Common Tailorbird



Scientific name: *Orthotomus sutorius*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Bushes in gardens, cultivation edges and forest edges



PC:Thomas Job

89. Hume's Warbler

Scientific name: *Phylloscopus humei*

Size: 10-11 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds in subalpine forest; winters in forest and secondary growth



Winter Visitor

"Hume's Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus humei*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

90. Lesser Whitethroat

Scientific name: *Sylvia curruca*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Scrub and deciduous woodland



Winter Visitor

"Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

91. Blyth's Reed Warbler

Scientific name: *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Bushes and trees and edges of forest, cultivation and in wooded areas



Passage Migrant

"Blyth's Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus dumetorum*) ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പൊള്ളിപ്പാമ്പൻ. (32384189820)" by Rison Thumboor from Thrissur, India is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

92. Greenish Warbler

Scientific name: *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Size: 9.5-10.5 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds in forest and subalpine shrubberies; winters in well-wooded areas



Passage Migrant

"Greenish Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

93. Sulphur-Bellied Warbler

Scientific name: *Phylloscopus griseolus*

Size: 11 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds on stony bushy slopes; winters in rocky areas and around old buildings



"Sulphur-bellied Warbler (*Phylloscopus griseolus*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

94. Booted Warbler

Scientific name: *Iduna caligata*

Size: 12 cm

Preferred habitat: Scrub and deciduous grass jungle



"Booted Warbler (*Iduna caligata*) ചിനൻകുളി (32246872555)" by Rison Thumboor from Thrissur, India is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

95. Clamorous Reed Warbler (Indian Great Reed Warbler)

Scientific name: *Acrocephalus stentoreus*

Size: 19 cm

Preferred habitat: Reedbeds and bushes around wetlands



"Clamorous reed warbler(കൈതക്കളുൽ) (23092679626)" by Rison Thumboor from Thrissur, India is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

96. Jungle Babbler

Scientific name: *Turdoides striata*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous forest, cultivation and gardens



"Jungle Babbler" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

97. Yellow Eyed Babbler

Scientific name: *Chrysomma sinense*

Size: 18 cm

Preferred habitat: Tall grass and bushes



"A Yellow-Eyed Babbler on a fence" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

98. Large Grey Babbler

Scientific name: *Turdoides malcolmi*

Size: 28 cm

Preferred habitat: Open dry scrub, cultivation and gardens; avoids wooded areas



"Large Grey Babbler (49116306017)" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

99. Common Babbler

Scientific name: *Turdoides caudata*

Size: 23 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry scrub in plains



"Common Babbler" by Mike Prince is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

100. Common Chiffchaff

Scientific name: *Phylloscopus collybita*

Size: 11 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest, bushes, crops and reedbeds



"Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*" by Carlos Eduardo Joos is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

101. Common Myna



Scientific name: *Acridotheres tristis*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Habitation and cultivation



Resident

"Common Myna" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

102. Asian Pied Starling

Scientific name: *Gracupica contra*

Size: 23 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, damp grassland, habitation, refuse dumps and sewage



Resident

"A Yellow-Eyed Babbler on a fence" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

103. Black-throated Thrush

Scientific name: *Turdus atrogularis*

Size: 26.5 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest, forest edges, cultivation and pastures with scattered trees



Winter Visitor

"Black-throated Thrush" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

104. Bluethroat

Scientific name: *Luscinia svecica*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Summers in scrub along streams and lakes, winters in scrub and tall grass



Winter Visitor

"Pisco-de-peito-azul, Bluethroat" by Luiz Lapa is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

105. Oriental magpie-robin

Scientific name: *Copsychus saularis*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Gardens, groves and open broadleaved forest



PC: Ishan Shanavas

106. Indian Robin

Scientific name: *Saxicoloides fulicatus*

Size: 19 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry stony areas with scrub and cultivation edges



"Indian Robin" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

107. Black Redstart

Scientific name: *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds in Tibetan steppe habitat; winters in cultivation and plantations



"Black Redstart" by Andy Morffew is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

108. Pied Bushchat

Scientific name: *Saxicola caprata*

Size: 12-13 cm

Preferred habitat: Mainly cultivation and open country with scattered bushes or tall grass



"Pied Bushchat Male" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

109. Red-breasted Flycatcher

Scientific name: *Ficedula parva*

Size: 11.5-12.5 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest, scrub and cultivation edges, orchards and roadside trees



Resident

"Male Red-Breasted Flycatcher" by Nick Goodrum Photography is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

110. Purple Sunbird



Scientific name: *Cinnyris asiaticus*

Size: 10 cm

Preferred habitat: Open deciduous forest and gardens



Resident

"Purple Sunbird" by Yogendra174 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

111. House Sparrow



Scientific name: *Passer domesticus*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds in habitation; also cultivation in winter



Resident

"MALE House Sparrow" by pete. #hwcp is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

112. Indian Silverbill

Scientific name: *Euodice malabarica*

Size: 11-11.5 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry cultivation, grassland and thorn scrub



Resident

"Indian Silverbill Finch" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

113. Baya Weaver

Scientific name: *Ploceus philippinus*

Size: 17 cm

Preferred habitat: Grassland and scrub with scattered trees



"Baya Weaver 001" by Flickr user NatureAtYourBackyard. Photo uploaded to commons by user Itshears is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

114. Scaly-Breasted Munia

Scientific name: *Lonchura punctulata*

Size: 10.7-12 cm

Preferred habitat: Open secondary forest, bushes and cultivation



"Scaly Breasted Munia" by AntoGros is licensed under CC BY 2.0

115. White Wagtail

Scientific name: *Motacilla alba*

Size: 19 cm

Preferred habitat: Grasslands, seashores, rocky shorelines, sand beaches, tidepools, rivers, lakeshores, farmland, gardens, and parks



"White Wagtail" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

116. Yellow Wagtail

Scientific name: *Motacilla flava*

Size: 18 cm

Preferred habitat: Damp Grasslands



"Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), Laskowiec-Zajki meadows, Polska" by Frank.Vassen is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

117. Citrine Wagtail

Scientific name: *Motacilla citreola*

Size: 19 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds in high altitude wet grassland; winters in freshwater wetlands



"Citrine Wagtail" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

118. White-browed Wagtail

Scientific name: *Motacilla maderaspatensis*

Size: 21 cm

Preferred habitat: Banks of rivers, pools, lakes, canals and irrigation barrages



"A White Browed Wagtail resting on a ledge" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

119. Paddyfield Pipit

Scientific name: *Anthus rufulus*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Short grassland



"Paddyfield Pipit" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

120. Rosy Pipit

Scientific name: *Anthus roseatus*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds on slopes above tree line; winters in marshes, damp grassland and cultivation



"Rosy Pipit" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

121. Tree Pipit

Scientific name: *Anthus trivialis*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Breeds on grassy slopes at tree line, winters in fallow cultivation and open country



"Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)" by sussexbirder is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

122. Olive-backed Pipit

Scientific name: *Anthus hodgsoni*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest



"Olive-backed Pipit, Doi Ang Khang, Chiang Mai, Thailand" by Jason Thompson is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

123. Indian White-eye (Oriental White-eye)



Scientific name: *Zosterops palpebrosus*

Size: 10 cm

Preferred habitat: Open broadleaved forest, groves, gardens, orchards and mangroves



PC: Ishan Shanavas

124. Brown Rock Chat



Scientific name: *Cercomela fusca*

Size: 17 cm

Preferred habitat: Buildings and rocky areas



"A Brown Rock chat in its habitat" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

124. Siberian Stonechat

Scientific name: *Saxicola maurus*

Size: 12 cm

Preferred habitat: Open rough scrubland or rough grassland with scattered shrubs



"Common Stonechat Female" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

125. Tricolored Munia (Black-headed Munia)

Scientific name: *Lonchura malacca*

Size: 11 cm

Preferred habitat: Marshy areas with tall grass or reeds



"A Tricolored Munia : Finch on a lovely perch" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS





"baum-bronzenatter, common bronzeback tree snake, daudin's bronzeback" by Chayant Gonsalves is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

01. Common Bronzeback Tree Snake

Scientific name:
Dendrelaphis tristis
Size: 90-169 cm
Preferred habitat:
Trees and bushes



"common wolf snake, gewöhnliche wolfszahnatter, indian wolf snake, 白环蛇" by Viral joshi is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

02. Common Wolf Snake

Scientific name:
Lycodon capucinus
Size: 50 cm
Preferred habitat:
dense forests, open forests, rocky terrain and human habitations



PC: Ishan Shanavas

03. Indian Rat Snake

Scientific name: *Ptyas mucosa*
Size: 1.5-1.95 m
Preferred habitat:
Wide range of habitats —coastal, arid, wet, mountainous, open fields and forests



"A Checkered Keelback basking in the sun" by Hari K Patibanda is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

04. Checkered Keelback

Scientific name:
Xenochrophis piscator
Size: 60 cm
Preferred habitat:
Water bodies and fields



"Indian spectacled cobra" by Scorius is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

05. Spectacled Cobra

Scientific name: *Naja naja*
Size: 90-150 cm
Preferred habitat:
Forests and farmland



"brown sand boa, indian sand boa, persische sandboa), red sand boa" by Hopeland is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

06. Red Sand Boa

Scientific name: *Eryx johnii*
Size: 75 cm
Preferred habitat:
Dry, semi-desert scrub plains and rocky dry foothills



"Hemidactylus flaviviridis" by dhobern is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

07. Northern House Gecko



Scientific name: *Hemidactylus flaviviridis*

Size: 7.5-15 cm

Preferred habitat: Human habitation



"My New Friend - Oriental Garden Lizard XOKA3677s" by Phuketian.S is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

08. Oriental Garden Lizard



Scientific name: *Calotes versicolor*

Size: 37 cm

Preferred habitat: Undergrowth and open habitats



"Monitor Lizard" by abdul : yunir is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

09. Monitor Lizard

Scientific name: *Varanus bengalensis*

Size: 61-175 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry semi arid desert habitats to floodplains, scrubland, moist forest, agricultural lands



"*Duttaphrynus melanostictus* (Asian Common Toad or Black-spectacled Toad)" by GeeC is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

10. Common Asian Toad

Scientific name:
Duttaphrynus melanostictus



"Common Skittering Frog" by Mike Prince is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

11. Common Skittering Frog

Scientific name:
Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis



"Indian Bullfrog" by Kingshuk Mondal is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

12. Indian Bullfrog

Scientific name:
Hoplobatrachus tigerinus



"*Duttaphrynus stomasticus* (Marbled Toad) (1) 15" by Nikhil More is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

13. Indus Valley Toad

Scientific name:
Duttaphrynus stomasticus



"common dotted garden skink, common snake skink, gefleckter schlankskink, punctate supple skink" by Rajesh Balakrishnan is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

14. Common Dotted Garden Skink

Scientific name:
Riopa punctata



ON CAMPUS

MAMMALS





"nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus*" by Paul and Jill is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

01. Nilgai

Scientific name: *Boselaphus tragocamelus*

Size: 1-1.5 m

Preferred habitat: Plains, scrub jungle, agricultural lands



"*Herpestes auropunctatus*" by dhobern is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

02. Small Indian Mongoose

Scientific name: *Urva auropunctata*

Size: 23-65 cm

Preferred habitat: Deserts, forests, agricultural areas and urban areas



"rhesus macaque *Macaca mulatta*" by Paul and Jill is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

03. Rhesus Macaque



Scientific name: *Macaca mulatta*

Size: 47-67 cm

Preferred habitat: Open scrub, forests and parks.



"Northern Palm Squirrel (*Funambulus pennantii*) also called the Five-striped Palm Squirrel" by brian.gratwicke is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

04. Five Striped Squirrel



Scientific name: *Funambulus pennantii*

Size: 13-15 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry forests, rainforests, scrub, urban areas, parks and gardens and grasslands



PC: "Indian crested porcupine (*Hystrix indica*)" by Davidvraju is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

05. Indian Porcupine

Scientific name: *Hystrix indica*

Size: 60-90 cm

Preferred habitat: Rocky hillsides, open countryside, deciduous forest, thick bush and tall grass



"asian house shrew, house shrew" by OnePlanet is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

06. House Shrew



Scientific name: *Suncus murinus*

Size: 15 cm

Preferred habitat: All habitats, including deserts and human habitations



"Black Napped Hare : Indian Hare" by bikashdas is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

07. Black Naped Hare

Scientific name: *Lepus nigricollis*

Size: 40-70 cm

Preferred habitat: Large tracts of bush and jungle alternate with farmland



"Jungle Cat Felis chaus" by Dr. Tarak N Khan is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

08. Jungle Cat

Scientific name: *Felis chaus*

Size: 56-76 cm

Preferred habitat: Swamps, wetlands, littoral and riparian areas, grasslands and shrub



"Golden Jackal" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

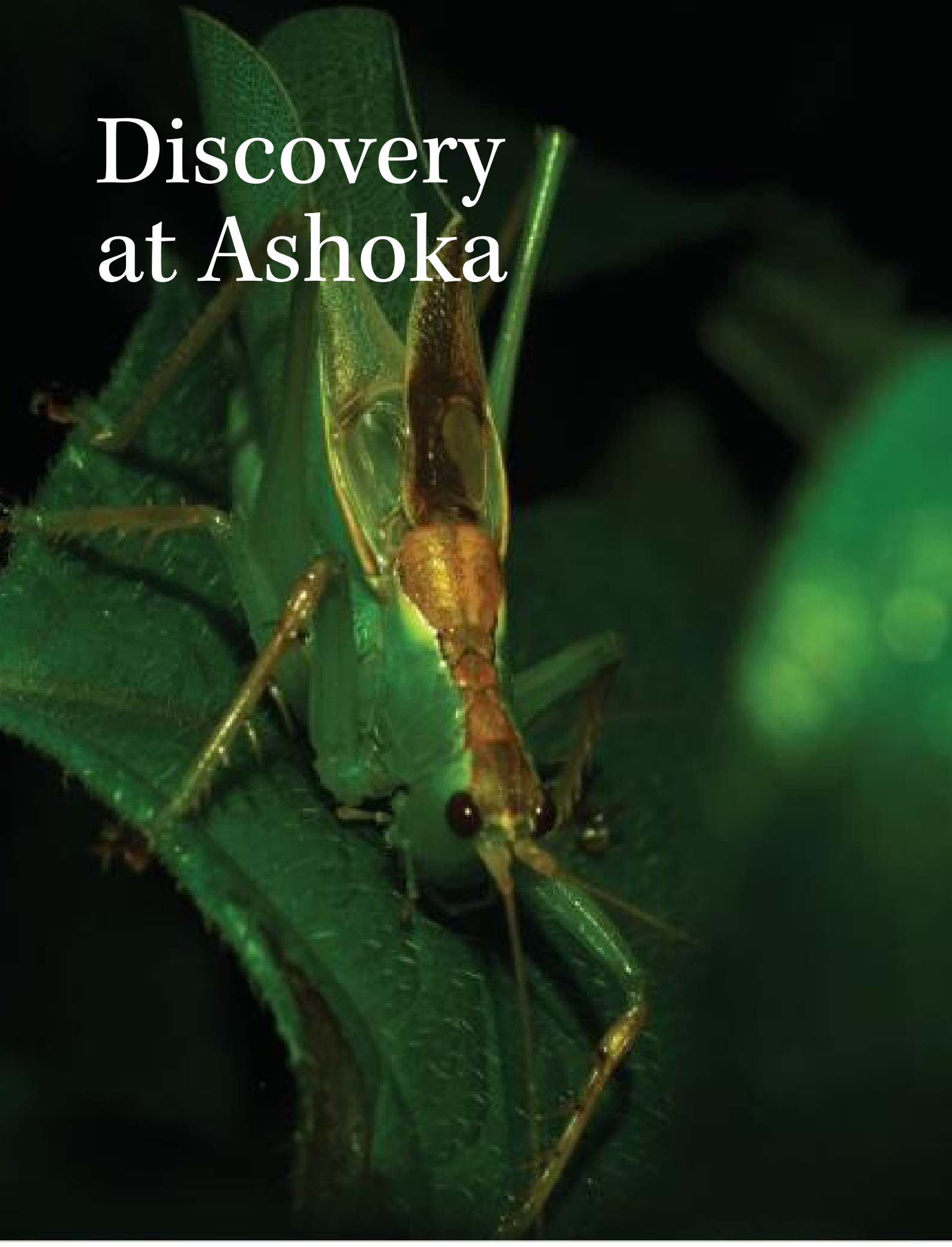
09. Golden Jackal

Scientific name: *Canis aureus*

Size: 70-85 cm

Preferred habitat: Open savannahs, deserts, and arid grasslands

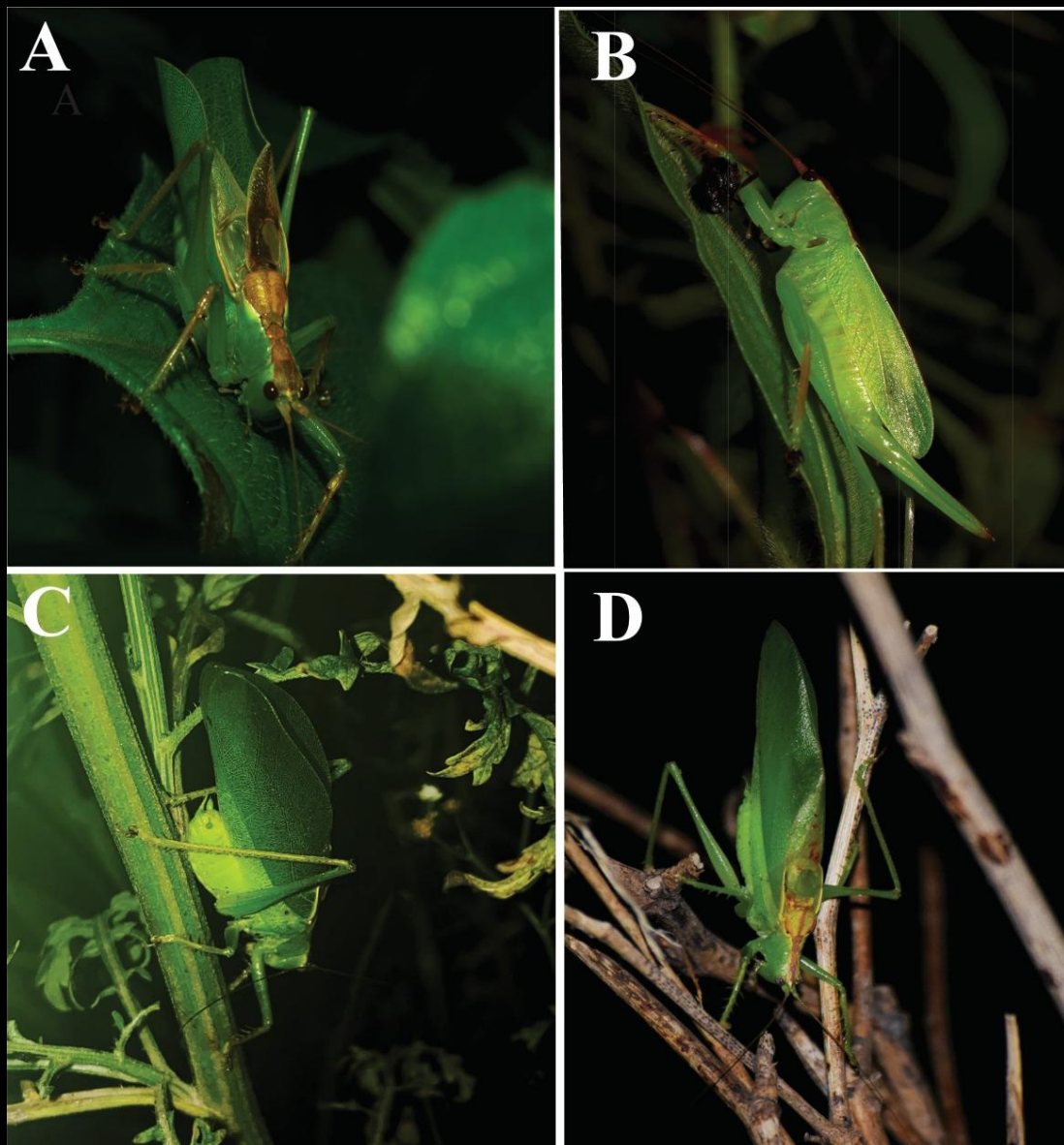
Discovery at Ashoka



In early 2023, researchers discovered a new species of crickets on the Ashoka campus by Aarini Gosh, Vivek Dasoju, Ranjana Jaiswara, Monaal Monaal, Anubhab Bhattacharjee, Shagun Sabharwal and Bittu Kaveri Rajaraman. It was appropriately named *Hexacentrus ashoka*.

Read More:

https://researchgate.net/publication/367395322_Description_of_three_new_species_of_predatory_Genus_Hexacentrus_Orthoptera_Tettigoniidae_from_India_with_bioacoustic_and_morphological_characterization



Source: Ashoka University Twitter handle

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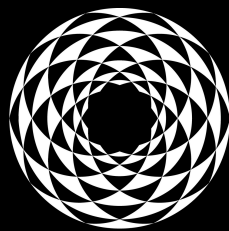
Ishan is an avid nature and wildlife enthusiast, writer, photographer and artist.

He has authored another field guide - "*Common Fauna of Kallar and Mankulam, Kerala*", and his work has been featured by Nature in Focus and Wildlife SOS.

He writes regularly on his blog and his email newsletter - The Owlet.

He is a student of Environmental Studies, Sociology & Anthropology at Ashoka University, and he is currently working on a memoir about the natural world.

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