

Coraciiformes Birds of Ratlam Madhya Pradesh

Abstract

The checklist of birds belonging to Coraciiformes in and around Ratlam district, Madhya Pradesh, is prepared. In this final checklist 11 species of birds belonging to four families are being reported as actually sighted and photographed by the authors.

Keywords: Birds, Coraciiformes, Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh.

Introduction

Ratlam (23°19'0"N 75°04'0"E) is a city in the northwestern part of the Malwa region in Madhya Pradesh. The city lies 1,575 feet (480 meters) above sea level. Like most of Madhya Pradesh this city also has humid subtropical climate (Cfa) zone. Three distinct seasons are observed: summer, monsoon and winter. Ratlam gets moderate rainfall of 35 to 38 inches (890 to 970 mm) from July through September, due to the southwest monsoon.

Birds live worldwide with approximately ten thousand living species. More than 50% of these are passerine. Many species migrate annually great distances. The majority of birds are socially monogamous.

Birds are excellent models for understanding the key issues in ecology, animal behavior, evolution and conservation (Urfi, 2011). Diversity of birds is one of the most important ecological indicators to evaluate the quality of habitats. The diversity of birds however is decreasing day by day due to destruction of habitat and human intervention (Bhadja and Vaghela, 2013). Their abundance indicates healthy status of environment and food sources (Joshi, 2012).

The Coraciiformes is an extant order of colorful birds including the kingfishers, the bee-eaters, and the rollers. This also includes the hoopoes and the hornbills. Birds are important members of food chain in environment. They feed on various harmful insect and pests. India being a mega diversity centre harbors 1,200 species of birds which contributes to 13 percent of the world avian species.

Little previous work has been carried out on the avifauna of the Ratlam. However some reports from other parts of Madhya Pradesh are reviewed (Pasha and Sankar 1996, Pasha 1998).

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to estimate bird diversity in Ratlam.

Material and Methods

The area under the present study was mainly Grassland, Open scrub jungle, or Wetland.

The terrain is gently undulating and is dissected by a number of seasonal streams and nullahs.

The present list is the outcome of bird observations mostly carried out between July, 2016 to July, 2019. The birds were identified following Ali 1941. The area was regularly surveyed for birds in all the major habitats. Birds seen were identified and recorded along with habitat type and status (resident or winter visitor). On the basis of the frequency of sighting, the bird species were assigned categories of abundance (rare, uncommon, occasional and common).

The study was designed to evaluate bird's diversity and distribution of Ratlam. Observations were carried out, using distance count method.

Habitat codes

Gr Grassland

Os Open scrub jungle

Cs Countryside / Cultivation

WI Wetlands (river, streams, ponds, and reservoir)

Frequency codes

C Common



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O Occasional
 U Uncommon X Rare
Status codes
 R Resident
 W Winter visitor

Results and discussion

A total of 11 species were sighted from survey (see Table). A total of 9 resident species, 2 winter migrants, were recorded in the study area. A total of 9 bird species were found to be common, 1 species is occasional and remaining 1 species was considered uncommon for Ratlam.

Among the most abundant species found in Ratlam are: Common kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, White-throated kingfisher and Indian roller.

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Table: 1 Checklist of Birds

Species	Habitat	Frequency	Status
Common kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Cs, WI	C	R
Pied kingfisher (<i>Ceryle rudis</i>)	WI	O	R
White-throated kingfisher (<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>)	Cs, WI	C	R
Black-capped kingfisher (<i>Halcyon pileata</i>)	WI	C	R
Small bee-eater (<i>Merops orientalis</i>)	Cs	C	R
Blue-cheeked bee-eater (<i>Merops persicus</i>)	Cs	C	W
Blue-tailed bee-eater (<i>Merops philippinus</i>)	Cs	C	W
Blue-bearded bee-eater (<i>Nyctyornis athertoni</i>)	Cs	C	R
Indian roller (<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>)	Cs	C	R
Hoopoes (<i>Upupa epops</i>)	Os	O	R
Indian grey hornbill (<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>)	Cs	C	R

Plate

2. Pied kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)
3. White-throated kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)
4. Common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)
5. Small bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*)
6. Blue-tailed bee-eater (*Merops philippinus*)
7. Indian roller (*Coracias benghalensis*)
8. Hoopoes (*Upupa epops*)
9. Indian grey hornbill (*Ocyrceros birostris*)



