

11. SOME BIRDS FROM NEPAL

During the past seven years, the senior author has had an opportunity of collecting birds in various parts of Nepal. The Nepali collection now numbers 552 birds of about 250 species. From these data we extracted the most significant finds for this paper.

Birds were collected with 32, 410 and 12 gauge shotguns; specimens are now in Chetrapati, Kathmandu. Scientific terminology follows that given by Ripley (1961).

***Botaurus stellaris* (Linnaeus)**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Changu Dole, 10 km. NE. Kathmandu, 1340 m. Sex undetermined; wing 330 mm.

Remarks. The Bittern has not been recorded in Nepal since Hodgson's time (see Biswas 1960:298). A single Bittern standing in a rice field on 9 November 1968. No others were seen.

***Amaurornis fuscus* (Linnaeus)**

Specimens examined: 4. Kathmandu Valley, 3 to 4 km. N. Kathmandu, 1340 m. All adult males in breeding condition; wings 101, 102, 103 and 107 mm.

Remarks. The Ruddy Crake, although recently reported from Nepal (see Fleming & Traylor 1964:518-519; Fleming & Fleming 1970:2), is not a well-known species here. Apparently this is a breeding bird in Kathmandu. According to our local informants, the birds nest in rice paddies where the young hatch in about mid-August. All our birds were taken from 1 to 9 July 1970.

***Streptopelia senegalensis* (Linnaeus)**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Balaju, 3 km. N. Kathmandu, 1340 m. Female; wing 115 mm., tail 98 mm.

Remarks. This is the first record of the Little Brown Dove from Nepal. Although it is frequent in parts of western and central India, this species does not appear to be common here. Only one individual was seen and then collected from a fruit tree on 2 December 1967. Numbers of Spotted Doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) were also in the neighbourhood at that time.

***Lanius excubitor* Linnaeus**

Specimens examined: 1. Bardiya District, Gauhna Village, 20 km. W. Nepalganj, 120 m. Female; wing 109 mm.

Remarks. The migratory Great Grey Shrike has not been taken

in Nepal before. Our individual, the only one seen, was perched on a bush top near Gauhna Village. Collected on 8 February 1969.

***Sturnus pagodarum* (Gmelin)**

Specimens examined: 1. Bardiya District, Semra Village, 20 km. E. Galuria, 120 m.

Remarks. Since Hodgson's time, the Brahminy Myna now has been collected twice in Nepal. The first specimen was from the extreme SW. corner of Nepal (see Fleming & Traylor 1968:169) so our bird extends the range of this species eastwards to near Nepalganj in the Nepal Tarai. Our specimen was one of a flock of 15 or 16 birds feeding in low thorn bushes. 9 February 1969.

***Acrocephalus stentoreus* (Jerdon)**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Balaju, 3 km. N. Kathmandu, 1340 m. Male; wing 81 mm.

Remarks. This is the first notation of the migratory Indian Great Reed Warbler in the Kathmandu Valley; it is the second find since Hodgson (see Fleming & Traylor 1968:179). Our specimen was solitary, in bushes bordering rice fields on 26 December 1966.

***Lonchura malacca* (Linnaeus)**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Sangala Khola, 8 km. N. Kathmandu, 1525 m. Male; wing 55 mm.

Remarks. The Chestnut Mannikin is not common in Nepal. Our specimen, collected on 14 December 1969, is the first from Kathmandu since the 1870's (see Biswas 1963:389). This bird was one of a small flock associating with Nutmeg Mannikins (*Lonchura punctulata*).

***Emberiza melanocephala* Scopoli**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Balaju, 5 km. N. Kathmandu, 1340 m. Male; wing 96 mm., tail 69 mm.

Remarks. The Blackheaded Bunting, although a common migratory bird in western India, has not been found before in Nepal. Our individual was with a large (c. 200 birds) flock of Yellowbreasted Buntings (*E. aureola*) that had settled in bushes and hedges around rice fields. This bird appeared larger than the others and was collected on 17 November 1969.

***Emberiza spodocephala* Pallas**

Specimens examined: 1. Kathmandu Valley, Balaju, 3 km. N. Kathmandu, 1340 m. Male; wing 76 mm., tail 65 mm.

Remarks. Several times small parties (3 to 4 birds) of these Black-faced Buntings were seen flying into 'Nilkanta' bushes just at dusk.

Apparently they roosted here at the edge of the fields. This species has not been reported in Nepal since Hodgson's time (see Biswas 1963: 192). Our specimen was taken on 12 January 1967.

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12. CROCODILE (*CROCODILUS PALUSTRIS*) BREEDING AT THE JAIPUR ZOO

Thirty-three eggs, oval in shape and hard-shelled were laid by the female crocodile at the Jaipur Zoo on 5th May, 1971. Two young ones were found dead in the eggs and four eggs were sterile. Thus 27 young ones survived, which gives a hatching success of 82 per cent. The female laid eggs in the dry portion of the cage. The eggs were buried by the mother in a 2 feet deep pit. Leaves and plant debris were used by her to cover the pit.

The average weight of the eggs was 115 gm. and diameter 70 mm.

The female crocodile sat at the place where the eggs were concealed once or twice in a day for half to 2 hours. Occasionally the mother looked around to make sure that the brooding place was un-



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