

# Birds of Ansupa

Susanta Nanda  
Dr. Samrat Gowda  
Dr. Fanindra Bhusan Nanda  
Tuhinansu Kar

BIRDS OF ANSUPA

Thou wast not born for death,  
Immortal bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night  
was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown  
-John Keats



ISBN 978-93-539121-1-6



9 789353 912116

**Chilika Development Authority**

Plot No. 493(P), Palaspalli, Pokhariput Road, Bhubaneswar  
PIN-751020, Dist.-Khordha Email: chilika@chilika.com





# Birds of Ansupa





# Birds of Ansupa

*Written by:*

Susanta Nanda

Dr. Samrat Gowda

Dr. Fanindra Bhusan Nanda

Tuhinansu Kar



**Chilika**

**CHILIKA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Plot No. 493(P), Palaspalli, Pokhariput Road, Bhubaneswar  
PIN-751020, Dist.-Khordha      Email: [chilika@chilika.com](mailto:chilika@chilika.com)

# Birds of Ansupa

**Susanta Nanda**  
**Dr. Samrat Gowda**  
**Dr. Fanindra Bhusan Nanda**  
**Tuhinansu Kar**

*Published by*  
**CHILIKA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Plot No. 493 (P), Palaspalli, Pokhariput Road,  
Bhubaneswar-751020, Odisha, India  
Phone/Fax: 91(674)2590485  
Email: Chilika@chilika.com  
Website: www.chilika.com

*First Published:*  
2019

© *Chilika Development Authority/ Authors*

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronics, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise without the prior permission of the copyright owner*

*For educational purpose can be sited as: Nanda, S., S. Gowda, F.B. Nanda and T. Kar (2019). Birds of Ansupa. Chilika Development Authority, Bhubaneswar: 200p.*

**Front Cover:** Red-crested Pochard by **Dr. Samrat Gowda**

**Back Cover:** Asian Openbill by **Tuhinansu Kar**

**Design & Layout:**  
**Khired C Pati, Bhubaneswar**

**Printed at:**  
Duduly Process & Offset, Bhubaneswar

**ISBN:** 978-93-5391-211-6



# CONTENTS

Author's Note	8
Acknowledgement	10
I. Introduction	11
II. Birds in Indian culture and literature: a comprehensive analysis	18
III. Species Description	
1. Lesser Whistling Duck	23
2. Bar-headed Goose	25
3. Ruddy Shelduck	27
4. Red-crested Pochard	29
5. Garganey	31
6. Northern Shoveler	33
7. Gadwall	35
8. Indian Spot-billed Duck	37
9. Northern Pintail	39
10. Common Teal	41
11. Cotton Teal	43
12. Little Grebe	45
13. Slaty-breasted Rail	47
14. Baillon's Crake	49
15. White-breasted Waterhen	51
16. Watercock	53
17. Purple Moorhen/Purple Swamphen	55
18. Common Moorhen	57
19. Eurasian Coot	59
20. Painted Stork	61
21. Asian Openbill	63
22. Yellow Bittern	65
23. Cinnamon Bittern	67
24. Black Bittern	69



25. Black-crowned Night Heron	71
26. Indian Pond Heron	73
27. Cattle Egret	75
28. Grey Heron	77
29. Purple Heron	79
30. Great Egret	81
31. Intermediate Egret	83
32. Little Egret	85
33. Black-headed Ibis	87
34. Little Cormorant	89
35. Indian Cormorant	91
36. Great Cormorant	93
37. Oriental Darter	95
38. Eurasian Thick-knee	97
39. Great Thick-knee	99
40. Black-winged Stilt	101
41. Pacific Golden Plover	103
42. Little Ringed Plover	105
43. Kentish Plover	107
44. River Lapwing	109
45. Yellow-wattled Lapwing	111
46. Grey-headed Lapwing	113
47. Red-wattled Lapwing	115
48. Greater Painted Snipe	117
49. Pheasant-tailed Jacana	119
50. Bronze-winged Jacana	121
51. Black-tailed Godwit	123
52. Temminck's Stint	125
53. Little Stint	127
54. Common Snipe	129.
55. Common Sandpiper	131
56. Green Sandpiper	133
57. Common Greenshank	135



58. Common Redshank	137
59. Wood Sandpiper	139
60. Marsh Sandpiper	141
61. Little Pratincole	143
62. Indian Skimmer	145
63. Little Tern	147
64. Whiskered Tern	149
65. River Tern	151
66. Black-bellied Tern	153
67. Osprey	155
68. Western Marsh Harrier	157
69. White-bellied Sea Eagle	159
70. Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	161
71. Blue-tailed Bee-eater	163
72. Common Kingfisher	165
73. Pied Kingfisher	167
74. Stork-billed Kingfisher	169
75. White-throated Kingfisher	171
76. Peregrine Falcon	173
77. Western yellow Wagtail	175
78. Grey Wagtail	177
79. Citrine Wagtail	179
80. White-browed Wagtail	181
81. White Wagtail	183
82. Streak-throated Swallow	185
83. Red-rumped Swallow	187
84. Wire-tailed Swallow	189
85. Barn Swallow	191
IV. Glossary	192
V. Bibliography	195
Appendix-I	197



## AUTHORS' NOTE

Ansupa is the largest freshwater lake of Odisha. The lake and its catchment area, is the home to many bird species. As it is not coming under any protected area like Chilika, Hirakud etc, this region failed to drag the attention of researchers and scientists. Due to lack of systematic survey and effort the figure was uncertain for years. Recently sporadic attempts were made to understand the species richness and abundance of the landscape. So to fulfill this information gap, book on '*Birds of Ansupa*' was prepared.

The community composition of birds is often used as an important parameter by many ecologists and researchers. For the sustainability of wetland ecosystem, presences of waterbirds are utmost important. The birds which reside in the wetland for foraging, breeding, roosting etc. are known as 'waterbirds'. Apart from these, few birds, partially dependent on wetlands are known as 'wetland dependent birds'. Both are collectively called as 'wetland birds'. These birds have profound impact on wetlands. They played a significant role in maintaining the wetland biodiversity, weed management; fish stock management, insect pest control, nutrient and biogeochemical cycling etc. These birds are very much sensitive to any kind of structural and chemical changes to wetlands, known as bioindicator. Therefore, wetland birds can be used as a model to understand the ecological health status of wetlands.

Among all waterbirds, few species are residents to this region; some are local and long distant migrant. India is the major part of Central Asian Flyway as it provides stopover site to 90% of bird species of this migratory path. In India, Odisha is the eastern most state. Due to the geographic position and topography, diverse types of wetlands have been created in the state. These wetlands harbour numerous wetland birds as per their characteristics.

This book provides extensive information on 85 species of wetland birds of Ansupa and its catchment area. Subsequently, a



tentative checklist of 109 species of Landbirds (Appendix-I) is given. This book follows Kumar et al. (2005) to avoid the confusion on categorizing wetland dependent birds. The latest and updated taxonomy of the book follows Praveen et al. (2016). The introduction part put light on wetlands further provides basic information about Ansupa lake and its catchment area such as its location, topography, water and soil quality, climatic condition, water level maintenance, biodiversity and habitat diversity. This part further continues to explain the socioeconomic importance and livelihood opportunities at the lake, successful story of weed management and restoration. This ends with an important section the background of avian research at the lake. A special segment is given which analyzes on cultural and literary aspects of birds in India. This part justifies the importance of birds in our cultural heritage. Species description part covers the Common name, Scientific name, Family, Order, Size, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list Status, Wildlife Protection Act (1972) schedule, Residential status, Local Name, Field characters, Habits and habitat, Food and Nesting ecology. In case of migratory birds, their resident countries are mentioned by following Balachandran et al. (2009). In this book, colour photographs of wetland birds are taken from various wetlands of Odisha, not necessarily taken from Ansupa Landscape. Utmost care has been taken to maintain the quality of the photographs. Finally, the supportive literatures which are used to prepare the book are given in the bibliography section. Those literatures will be helpful for Bird Researcher and enthusiastic persons to know more about birds.

However, it is not claimed that the checklist of birds given in the book, is final and complete. There is always a scope for new addition, which will further strengthen the database.

Hope this book will be serving as a supportive material to know more about birds for researchers, scientists, wetland managers, tourists and forest workers to know more about this unexplored landscape.

***Authors***

*Chilika Development Authority*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors are thankful to Dr. R.N. Samal, Mr. M. K. Jena, Mr. B. K. Acharya, Mr S. K. Mohanty, Mr. P. K. Mohapatra and Dr. K. S. Bhatta and for their valuable discussion and suggestions during the preparation of manuscript.

Our heartiest thanks to Dr. Jajnaseni Rout for preparing the map and satellite imageries for the book.

While preparing this book the staffs of Ansupa Lake has provided help in identifying the local name of different birds and helped us in studying the nesting patterns. They assisted in survey work inside the Lake and its periphery. We extended our heartiest thanks to them.

We are thankful to Dr. Subrat Debata, Amit Kumar Bal, Gayatri Devi, Arajush Payra, Pijush Payra, Sudhir Kumar Jena, Bibhu Prasad Panda and Swarup Fullonton for permitting us to use some of their photographs in this book. We extend our heartiest thanks to Prof. Chitta Ranjan Mishra & Sri Kalidas Mohapatra for their help to improve the manuscript.

We are thankful to Shri Khirod Chandra Pati for designing the book.

We express our thanks to all the staffs of Chilika Development Authorities, for their constant cooperation during the preparation of book.



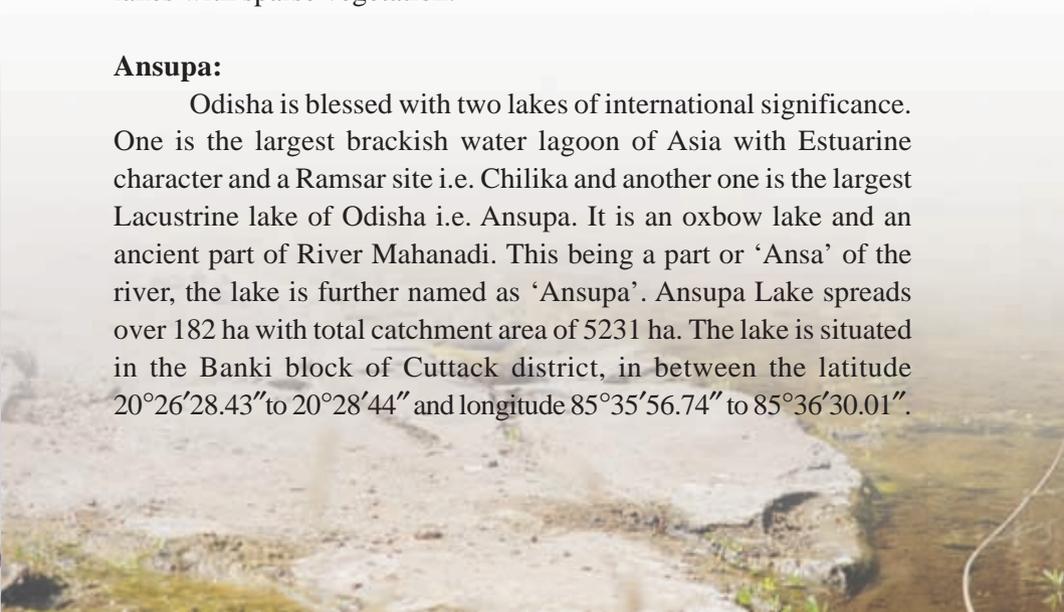
## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Wetlands:**

Since time immemorial, humans are related to wetlands. Human civilisation started and proliferated in the shoreline of wetlands. Wetlands provide many ecosystem services and are super market of nature for their high productivity. Survivals of most developed civilisations were highly dependent on the survival of wetlands. These are the most diverse habitat which constitutes nearly 6% of Earth's surface area. Being the transitional zone in between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem, it supports spectacular abundance of biological diversity. Generally wetlands have two key characteristic features i.e. hydrophytes and hydric soil, which provide the uniqueness to this ecosystem. These features have played a vital role for growth of biotic community. Cowardin et al., (1979) classified the wetlands in to five types on the basis of water depth (2m), source of salinity (coastal or inland) and vegetation pattern in the deeper portion as Marine, Estuarine, Lacustrine, Palustrine and Riverine respectively. Out of these, Lacustrine lakes are mainly shallow, open, freshwater lakes with sparse vegetation.

### **Ansupa:**

Odisha is blessed with two lakes of international significance. One is the largest brackish water lagoon of Asia with Estuarine character and a Ramsar site i.e. Chilika and another one is the largest Lacustrine lake of Odisha i.e. Ansupa. It is an oxbow lake and an ancient part of River Mahanadi. This being a part or 'Ansa' of the river, the lake is further named as 'Ansupa'. Ansupa Lake spreads over 182 ha with total catchment area of 5231 ha. The lake is situated in the Banki block of Cuttack district, in between the latitude 20°26'28.43" to 20°28'44" and longitude 85°35'56.74" to 85°36'30.01".



**Topography:**

Biogeographically, the lake is situated amidst undulating hilly ranges of Eastern Ghats. Some hills, which surround the Ansupa are Saranda (124m) on the west, Bishnupur (65m) on the East, Dhangarh (160 m) on the North and Betlapahad (105 m) on the North-west direction. The length of Ansupa Lake is about 3 Km and the width varies in between 250 m to 500 m.

**Geology, Soil, Bathymetry and Other Parameters:**

The rock formations of the area are mainly from pre-cambrian age and are composed of Khandalite and Charnokite rocks. The Soil of the lake is silt loam or clay loam and the adjacent area is mainly sandy in nature mixed with clay. In Ansupa, maximum depth of 2.64 m was recorded at the central part of the lake whereas minimum depth was recorded 0.31 m. with mean depth of the lake being 2.51 m, with seasonal variation. The area of the lake was recorded as 182 ha in monsoon and it shrinks to 142 ha in the summer season. The Hydrogen ion Concentration (pH) value of Lake Water is 8.74, which indicate that the water is slightly Alkaline in nature. Turbidity of the lake is 19.4 NTU whereas Dissolve Oxygen (DO) Content of the Lake is recorded 5.5 ppm which is ideal for propagation of wildlife and Fisheries. Similarly Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) is recorded 3.74mg/l in the lake.

**Climate:**

The climate of Ansupa is Tropical with three distinct season i.e. summer, monsoon and winter, and is influenced by South-West Monsoon. The maximum temperature is 43°C during hottest month May and minimum 12°C during January with the mean 28°C temperature round the year. It receives 1020.9 mm rainfall annually with the mean precipitation 85.1 mm. Average wind speed recorded is 10 km/h.



### **Water level Maintenance:**

It is a floodplain wetland as it receives and stores flood water from the river Mahanadi through three inlet-outlet channels. Those are 'MayuriChannel', 'HulhulaNallah' and 'KabulaNallah'. These Nallahs and Channels serve as the medium of effective water exchange between river and Ansupa, which ultimately increases the water storage capacity of the lake by removing siltation and aquatic weed. It also helps in improving riverine fish stock.

### **Biodiversity:**

The lake and its catchment area is a treasure of biodiversity. Faunal diversity includes 61 species of Fishes, 3 species of Prawns, 10 species of Amphibians and Reptiles, 54 species of Dragonflies and Damselflies, 88 species of Butterflies, 194 species of Birds and 26 species of Mammals. Similarly, 244 species of macrophytes were recorded from the lake including 182 species of semi-aquatic and 62 species of aquatic microphytes. It is also home to 32 species of Zooplanktons and 44 species of Phytoplanktons.

### **Habitat:**

Ansupa Lake and its catchment area is broadly composed of diverse habitats including (a) Open water area of lake (b) Agricultural field (c) Bamboo Forest (d) Moist Deciduous Forest and (e) Riverine area. These habitats ultimately influence the species composition of the ecosystem. Besides the lake area, there are many small to medium-sized ponds situated in the catchment area which harbour waterbirds.

### **Socio-economic importance and livelihood opportunities at Ansupa Lake**

There are thirteen villages situated inside the catchment area of Ansupa with a population of around 18 thousand. The lake provides



### *Birds of Ansupa* ■ 14

ample livelihood opportunities for local communities in terms of fishing, agriculture, ecotourism and collection of aquatic plants etc. Abundant fish stock of the lake provides year around fishing opportunities for more than 65 families, belongs to Subarnapur and Malbiharpur villages in the lake. A majority of people also cultivates rice and vegetables in the adjacent areas of the lake. Humus soil with various organic fertilizers and nutrients, results in good crop productivity. Ansupa is famous for its scenic beauty and congregation of waterbirds. This has stimulated ecotourism opportunities for local communities. This is slowly gearing up and is peaking in winter. Ansupa and its adjacent area harbours so many edible and medicinal plants. Sustainable harvest of these plant parts may create opportunities for local villagers. For example; Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) flower has religious value which can be collected and sold. Additionally, seeds of this plant with high nutritional value can be used as vegetable. Furthermore, seeds of Makhana plant (*Euryale ferox*) can be used as vegetable & has plenty of medicinal value too. Similarly, fruits of Water Chestnut (*Trapa* sp.) are commercially important.

### **Weed Management and emergence of Water spread area of the Lake**

Heavy siltation and agricultural runoff from nearby areas of lake causes eutrophication in the lake. From satellite imagery data of Landsat Multi Spectral Scanner (MSS) taken on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1973, it was observed that the lake had good water spread area which gradually covered by Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia* sp.) and other aquatic weeds. The past twenty year analysis of the IRS LISS III data shows that the average water spread area of the lake is 205.09 Ha. Chilika Development Authority has been initiated the process of removing of the aquatic weeds manually by engaging local people as well as mechanically by utilizing a Amphibian Weed Harvester. This has given good result in reviving the lake.



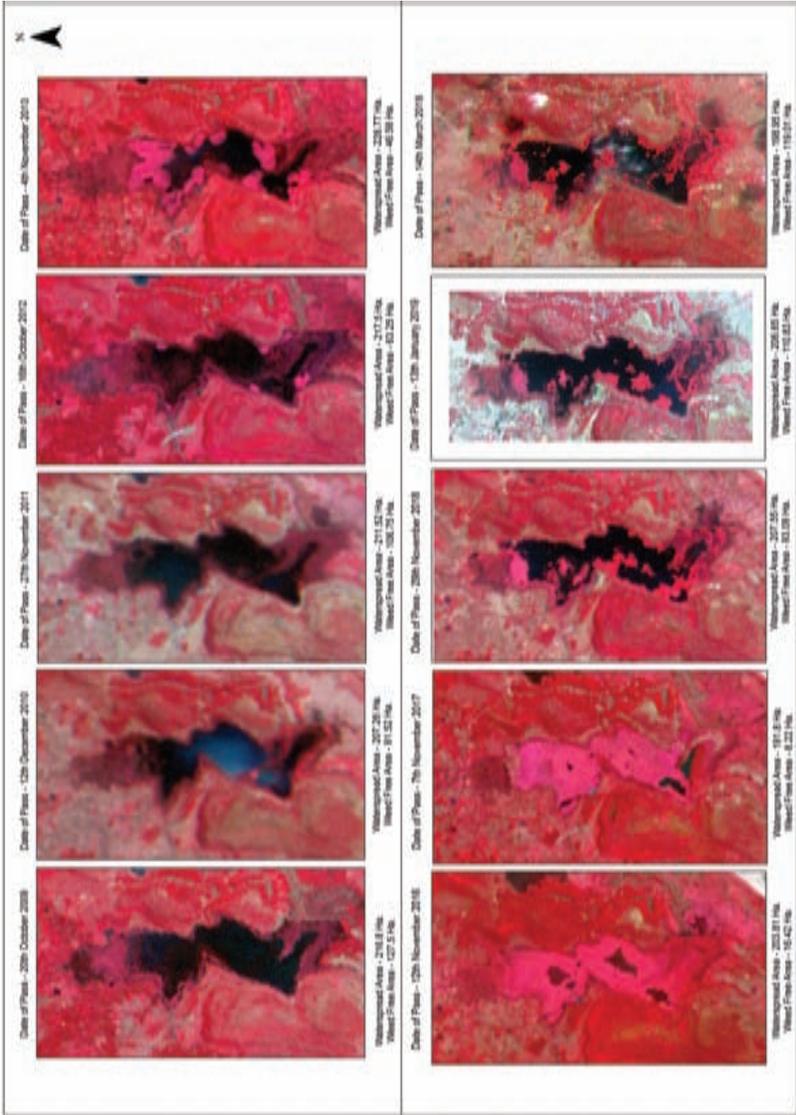
## **Background of Avian Research at Ansupa:**

Wetlands constitute 4.43% of total geographical area of the state. Unfortunately, wetlands present outside the protected areas have drawn least attention. Though these are potential waterbird congregation sites, still the status is not very clear.

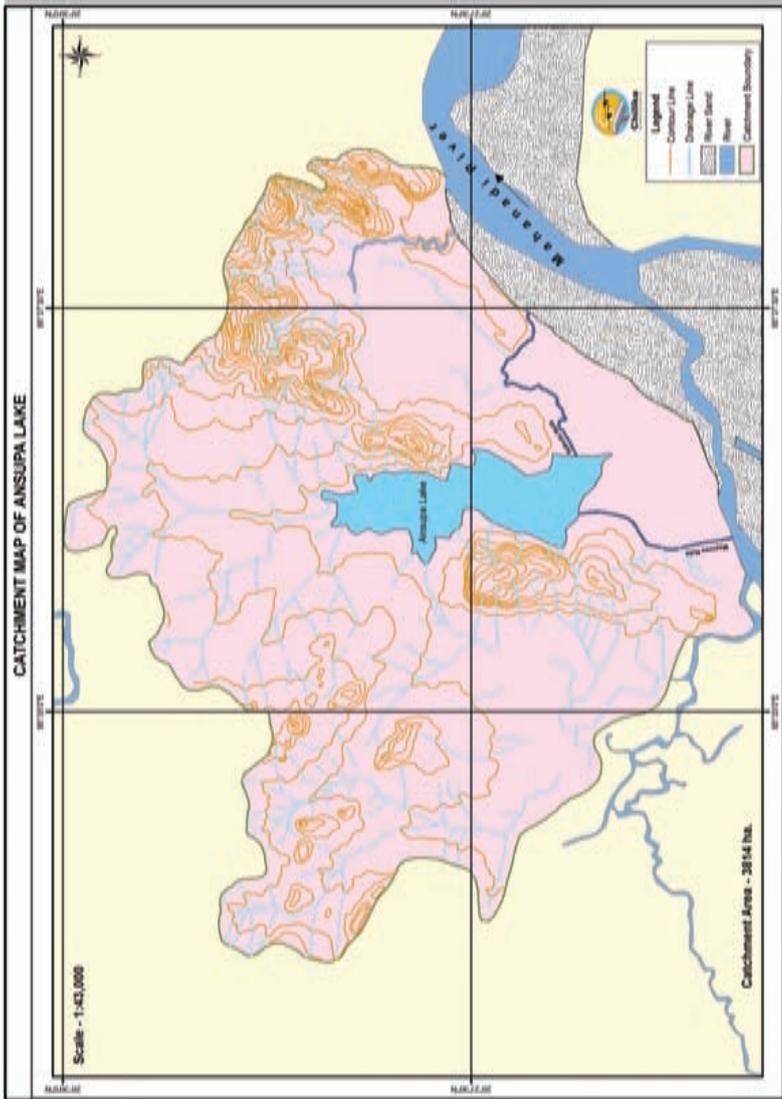
Ansupa is the largest freshwater lake of Odisha and a lake of national importance. But very few systematic studies have been carried out here to know the status of avifauna, an important component of the ecosystem. The lake was previously known as “Hansapata” as it supported thousands of migratory ducks (‘Hansa’ is the general term which is locally used for all species of migratory and resident ducks). The waterbird congregation of the lake attracted many poets and writers. In recent scientific literature, Vijayan et al. reported 42 species of birds in 2004 from Ansupa. Subsequently, in the book National Wetland Atlas: Orissa, it mentions regarding the presence of 20 species of birds from the lake in the year 2010. Later on Pradhan et al., 2013 recorded 60 species of birds from this region which includes waterbirds, wetland dependant birds and landbirds. In a recently published article, Payra et al. (2019) reported the occurrence of 147 species of birds from this landscape. Additionally, they reported the presence of Grey-necked Bunting *Emberiza buchanani* Blyth, 1845, as a first photographic evidence for the State, from this region.



Satellite Imageries of Ansupa



Map of Ansupa



## **Birds in Indian culture and literature: a comprehensive analysis**

Birds are cosmopolitan species and well known for its charismatic beauty. Since time immemorial, the various aspects of birds such as their flying skills, feather patterns, calls, courtship behaviour etc. have been hypnotizing human being. Therefore, they have occupied special position in our rich culture and literature with respect to different time period. Simply, they are undivided part of our heritage. In Vedic literature, such as Vedas, Samhitas, Bramhanas, Upanishads, Aranyakas and Sutras have frequently depiction of birds. Near about twenty species of birds were mentioned in above said literature such as Anya-vâpa (Cuckoos), Ulûka (Owls), Kapinjala (Partridges), Câsa (Wagtails) etc. The famous Mantra of Mundakopanishad which describes about the relationship in between Supreme soul and Soul through the symbolic representation of bird. That is

*‘Dvasuparnasayujasakhaya  
Samanamvrksamparisasvajaate!  
Tayohanyahpippalamsvaduatti,  
anashnananyoabhijakashiti’*

Like Vedic Literature, the great Indian epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, also depict the story of different birds. Regarding the creation of Ramayana it is said that sage Valamiki was overwhelmed with sorrow by witnessing that a Sarus Crane in distress after a poacher killed its partner. Sarus Crane is well known for their love and loyalty. This incident was inspired him to write the epic Ramayan so it is obvious that birds frequently appear in Ramayana. Major characters like Jatayu and Sampati are Vulture siblings; they protest the ill deeds of Ravana. Other than this, there is also description of birds in elsewhere of the epic such as Lake Pampa is thickly populated with varieties of song birds, waterfowls and Peafowls. A lot of stories are there based on birds are found in our ancient literature. This establishes a holistic relationship of human being with nature of mutual respect and kindness. ‘Panchatantra’, an ancient book of fables, is an amalgamation of stories about various birds and animals we come across in our daily life. Similarly, the tales of ‘Jatakakatha’, a very famous story book based on Lord Buddha’s past life incarnation, also depicts various species of birds. These stories convey, through the



birds and animals, various morals and philosophies to aid human beings lead a qualitative life.

Wide references are there to use birds as messengers of lovers are found In the Sanskrit drama and poetry of Kalidas and Bilhana. In 'Vikramarvasiyam', a play written by Kalidas, the protagonist Pururavas is seen in utilizing several birds to locate the whereabouts of his missing beloved. He engages Cuckoo, Duck and Goose for this purpose. 'Hansadutam', 'Maraladutam' and 'Koilikavyam' are some of the literary creations where birds play a vital role.

The 11<sup>th</sup> century lyrical poem 'Caurapanchasika' by Bilhana uses bird as metaphor in rich verses where the hero compares his beloved with a wild Goose. Another classic creation in Sanskrit in 12<sup>th</sup> century is "Naisadhacharita" by Shriharsha. It depicts the story of Nala and Damayanti. In this poem, a wild Swan is the main character. The deliberation of Swan with Nala is not only poetic but touches a philosophical height. Later the Swan plays the vital role in the union of two loved souls.

Presence of birds are also influenced our traditions. Many Astrologers advices to feed the human dominated landscape associated birds such as Crows, Pigeons and Babblers etc. for good fortune. As tradition, Crows are offered food in annual death ritual of Hindu Culture known as Shraddha. It is believed that, Shraddha is not completed unless a crow has taken the food (Known as Kakabali).

Many birds have spiritual significance in Indian Culture and heritage. Pigeon is the symbol of peace. Crow is the messenger of ancestral good will. Peacock, the national bird of India, is associated with our deity. Even Crane, Heron and Pigeon are emulated in different yogic postures. Similarly, Eagle, Kite and Vulture stand for heroism and war.

As per Indian Mythology, Parrots, Doves and Partridges are the symbol of wisdom. The "Sukamuni" (Parrot saint) is believed to have conquered the limit of wisdom. He is well versed with the Vedic literature. Some birds permanently associated with Hindu God and Goddess. 'Kama Deva', or the God of love, is represented by a parrot. Owl is associated with Goddess Laxmi. Garuda or the Eagle is the vehicle of almighty Shree Vishnu. Peacock is highly associated with God Kartikeya. Swan is attached with Lord Brahma and Goddess Saraswati.



Many birds are related with Myth too, which is interpreted in many ways by different countries across the world. For an example, in India, Owl is treated as the symbol of sorrow and darkness. In China, it is considered as a sign of upcoming misfortune. In Mexican culture, Owl is regarded as sacred to the God of rain. The general notion of an Owl is that of an evil night demon.

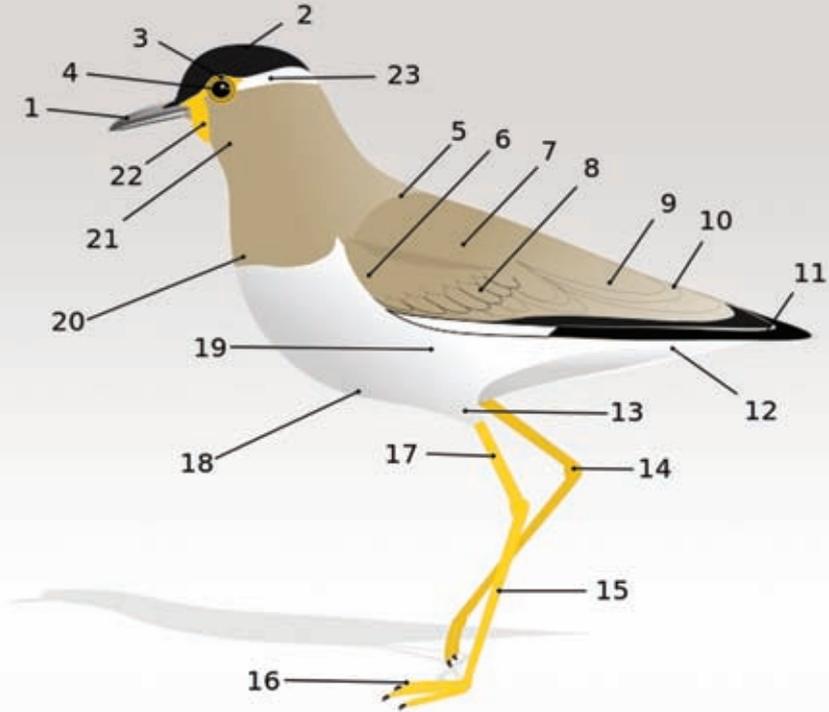
Like Sanskrit, mention of avifauna in the ancient Odia literature is manifold, starting from Sarala Mahabharat of 15th Century to till date. Most popularly, birds are used as strong metaphor in the poems which accelerates the charm of beauty. Metaphors like Maralagamini (walk like a Duck), Pikabachani / Kokilakanthi (voice like Cuckoo), Kokanamkarunaswaram (sad note of night bird -Shellduck), Hansamdutam (Swan messenger), Shanti kopata (Messenger of piece -Dove), Khanjannayana (Eyes of Wagtail bird) etc. were frequently used in different epics and poems of Odia literature.

Even so many poems are there, which have a lot description on birds and their behaviour with vernacular names. For example, the famous epic 'Chilika' by Radhanath Roy and 'Ansupa' written by Damodar Mishra dealt with a number of birds enshrine in the poems. Mention of Asian Openbill, Kingfishers, Lapwing, Tern, Cormorant, Swamphens, Egrets, Dove & Parakeets enlighten about the avifaunal composition of the wetlands at that time period.

Birds play a vital role in our heritage. They are not only the source of happiness but also exemplify evolution of independent human thought. They are joyful companions of trees, hills and other flora and fauna. Bird symbolizes purity and divinity of nature. Sometimes, they also point out bodily yearnings or spiritual liberation. The sacredness associated with birds and their numerous examples and descriptions in our historical and religious texts only strengthen the fact that nature has been deeply embedded with wisdom and purity that is conveyed to us through our two-winged friends. Man and nature very much require such bridges of communication to achieve and expand harmony in the earth. Birds are beautiful and divine creations of God and they bring happiness and prosperity. The above values and examples should be handed down from generation to generation and compassion for the living should be put to everyday use.



**Bird Morphology:**  
External morphology of a bird  
(*Vanellus malabaricus*)



- |                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Beak           | 13. Thigh                     |
| 2. Head           | 14. Tibio-tarsal articulation |
| 3. Iris           | 15. Tarsus                    |
| 4. Pupil          | 16. Feet                      |
| 5. Mantle         | 17. Tibia                     |
| 6. Lesser coverts | 18. Belly                     |
| 7. Scapulars      | 19. Flanks                    |
| 8. Coverts        | 20. Breast                    |
| 9. Tertials       | 21. Throat                    |
| 10. Rump          | 22. Wattle                    |
| 11. Primaries     | 23. Eyestripe                 |
| 12. Vent          |                               |





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 22



## 1. LESSER WHISTLING DUCK

**Scientific Name:** *Dendrocygna javanica* (Horsfield, 1821)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 40-42cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Hansarali

**Field Characters:** It is a predominantly brown and chestnut coloured duck with slaty-grey bill, dark eye with conspicuous yellow eye ring and plumbeous-blue legs. The bird has brownish forehead and crown remaining part of head and neck is light grey, Wings are rounded, dark brown with chestnut wing coverts and golden orange feather margins on upper parts. The bird has black rump, brown tail, chestnut upper tail-coverts, and underparts. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is duller in colour.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird stays in pair or in small to medium sized groups of 10 to 15, sometimes in large flocks as well. Often found in and around weedy tanks, village ponds, small waterlogged areas and roosts on trees during daytime near water. It prefers reedy freshwater marshes, shallow pools, lakes with emergent vegetation and submerged trees in plains.

**Food:** Mainly vegetarian feed on aquatic plants, arable crops and also frogs fish, molluscs and insects as opportunistic

**Nesting:** The bird breeds in Monsoon, in between June to October. Laid eggs inside the tree holes lined with twigs, grasses and leafs, occasionally it made nests on ground among marshy reeds. Eggs are ivory white in colour and normal clutch size is 6 to 8.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 24*



## 2. BAR-HEADED GOOSE

**Scientific Name:** *Anser indicus* (Latham, 1790)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 71-76cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:**

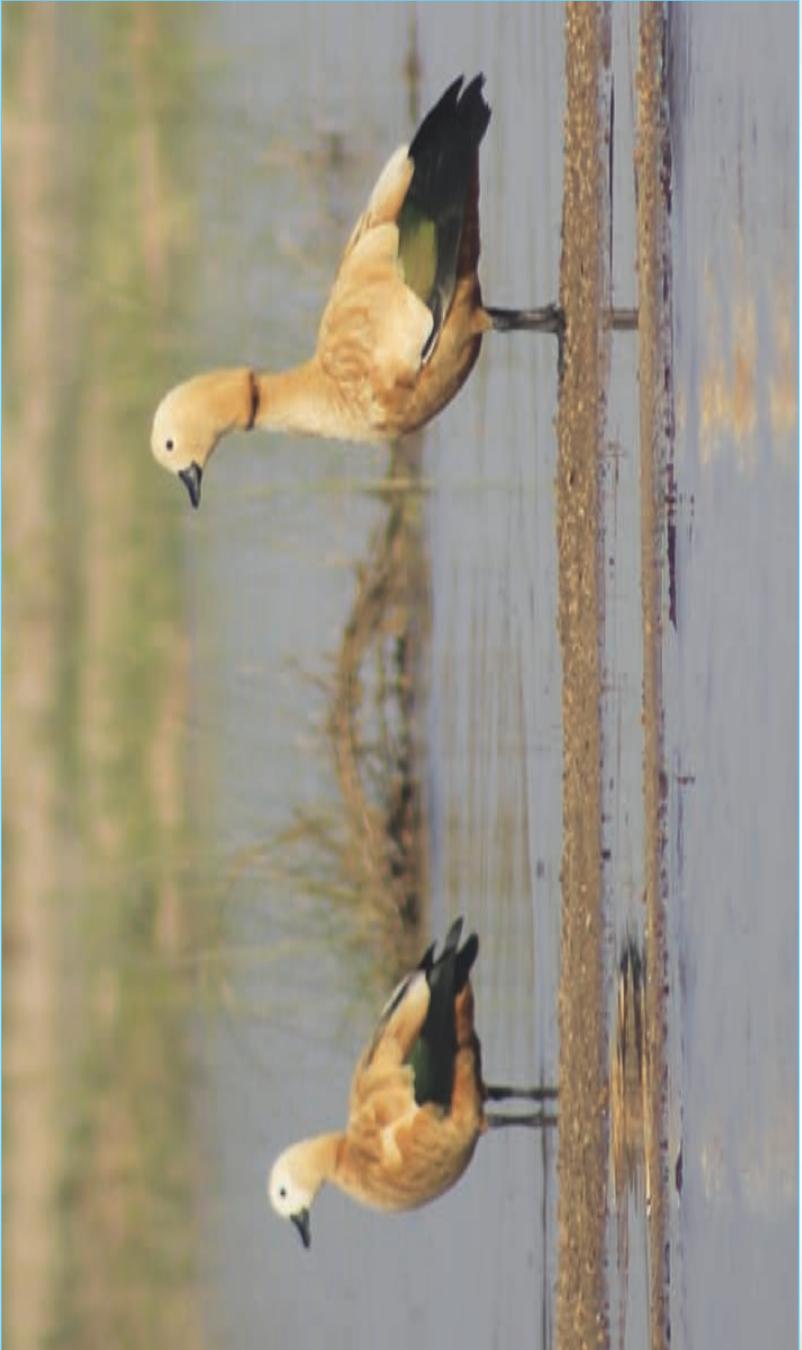
**Field Characters:** It is a large size waterbird of silvery grey and white colour. Head is white with two prominent broad black bars. Upper one is longer than the lower and across the occiput region from eye to eye and the other one is shorter below on nape. Neck is brown with a white stripe on each side. It has bright whitish face, throat, chin, vent and under tail-coverts, ashy breast, bill yellow with black tip, feathers have whitish border, remaining upper plumages pale ashy and bright yellow legs. Sexes are alike Juvenile is like adult but paler and without black bars on head and white stripes on neck.

**Habit and Habitat:** Generally it is a gregarious bird, voracious feeder in grasslands on riverbanks. Arrives at October and leaves by mid-March. The bird is mostly active during dawn and dusk also active in night. Birds rest on sandbanks and small islands among large waterbodies in daytime. Generally occurs on large jheels and rivers, winters on rivers, reservoirs and jheels in plains, also coastal islands.

**Food:** Exclusively vegetarian, comprising arable grasses, winter crops, tubers and paddy stubble.

**Migrating From:** India: Ladakh, Outside India: Kyrgyzstan, Central China, Tibet and Mongolia





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 26



### 3. RUDDY SHELDUCK

**Scientific Name:** *Tadorna ferruginea*(Pallas, 1764)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 61-67cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chakua

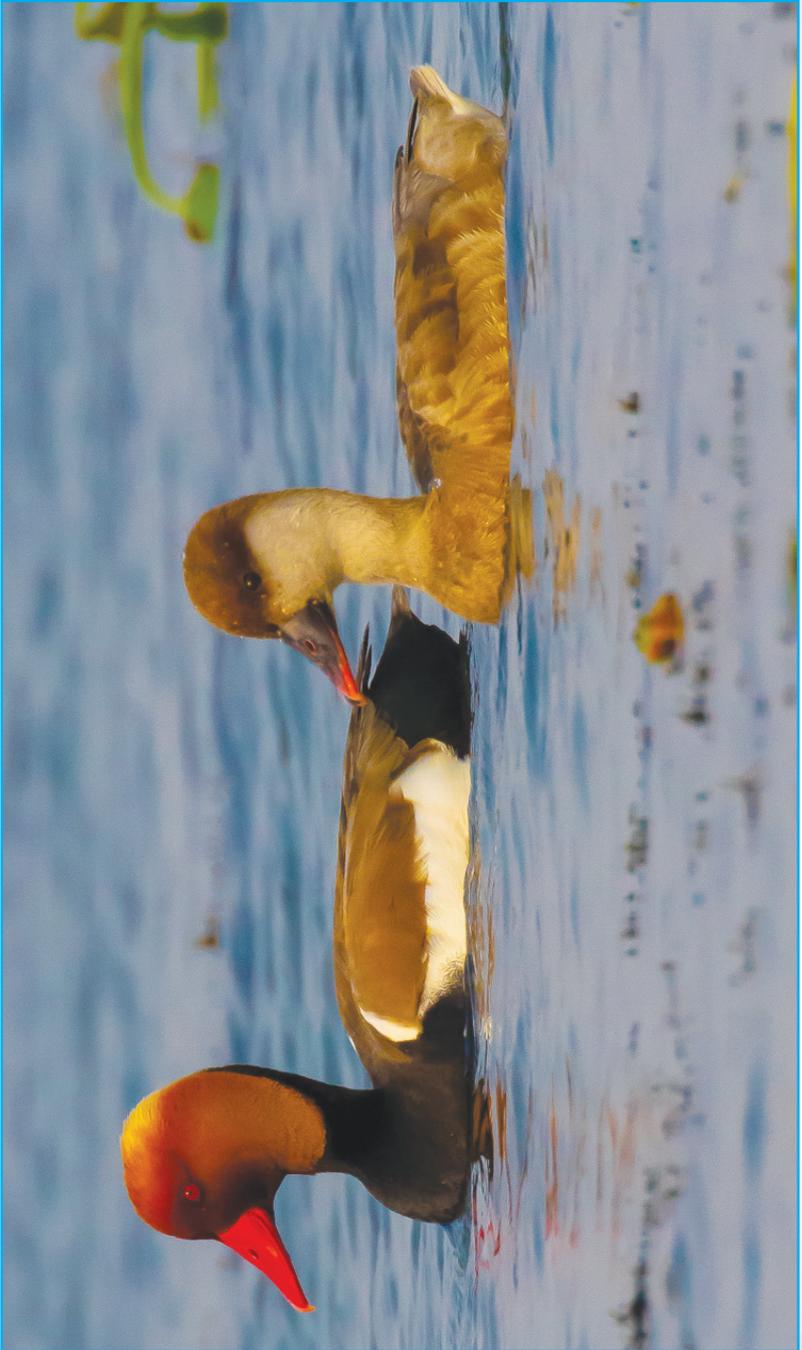
**Field Characters:** It is a large bright orange brown duck with creamy white head and neck. Black beak is short and thick. Leg, feet and tail are also black. Primary feathers are black whereas secondary feathers black with overlaid glistening green. It has white secondary and under wing coverts which is prominent during flight. During breeding season, male has a conspicuous black collar on neck during breeding season which lacks in female and nonbreeding male.

**Habit and Habitat:** Very commonly the bird is seen in pairs; also in large congregations. It prefers riverine habits, brackish and freshwater lakes and extensive mudflats. It is a very common winter visitor. It feeds by grazing on river bank and fields; roosts on sandy islands. Its arrival time is October and mostly departure by late April or May.

**Food:** It is an omnivorous bird, its diet comprising of grains, aquatic plants, algae and aquatic invertebrates.

**Migrating from:**India: Ladakh, Outside India: Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 28



## 4. RED-CRESTED POCHARD

**Scientific Name:** *Netta rufina*(Pallas, 1773)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 53-57cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Ranga Gendi

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized duck. Male has prominent golden-orange upper foreneck, head with crest; red eye with black pupil; bill is bright crimson red with light yellow terminal tip. The neck, rump and upper tail-coverts are brownish black. Flanks and wing bases are whitish. Tail is greyish brown. Legs and feet are light red. Female has greyish brown upper plumage; whitish neck and underparts. Crown is dark brownish; bill is light black with reddish terminal third end. Wings are liked male but; lighter brown, white replaced by grey. Male during eclipse period similar with female but abdomen and belly regions are browner. Crest is prominent and bushy. The brightness of eyes, bill and feet remain same.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a diving duck which usually prefers deep open waters occasionally visits shallow regions. It is a gregarious bird, often found in large flocks along with diving ducks and easily identified in the field from a distance due to prominent golden-orange head. Generally, it is very shy and cautious. It feeds by diving into deep water. It arrived by late October and November and generally departs by mid-March. It prefers large jheels, reservoirs, marshes and wetlands with plenty of submerged plants also found in rivers.

**Food:** Omnivorous birds, comprising of aquatic plants, algae, seeds, also aquatic animals.

**Migrating form:** Western Europe and Central Asia.





## 5. GARGANEY

**Scientific Name:** *Spatula querquedula* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 37-41 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chandanapatia Gendi

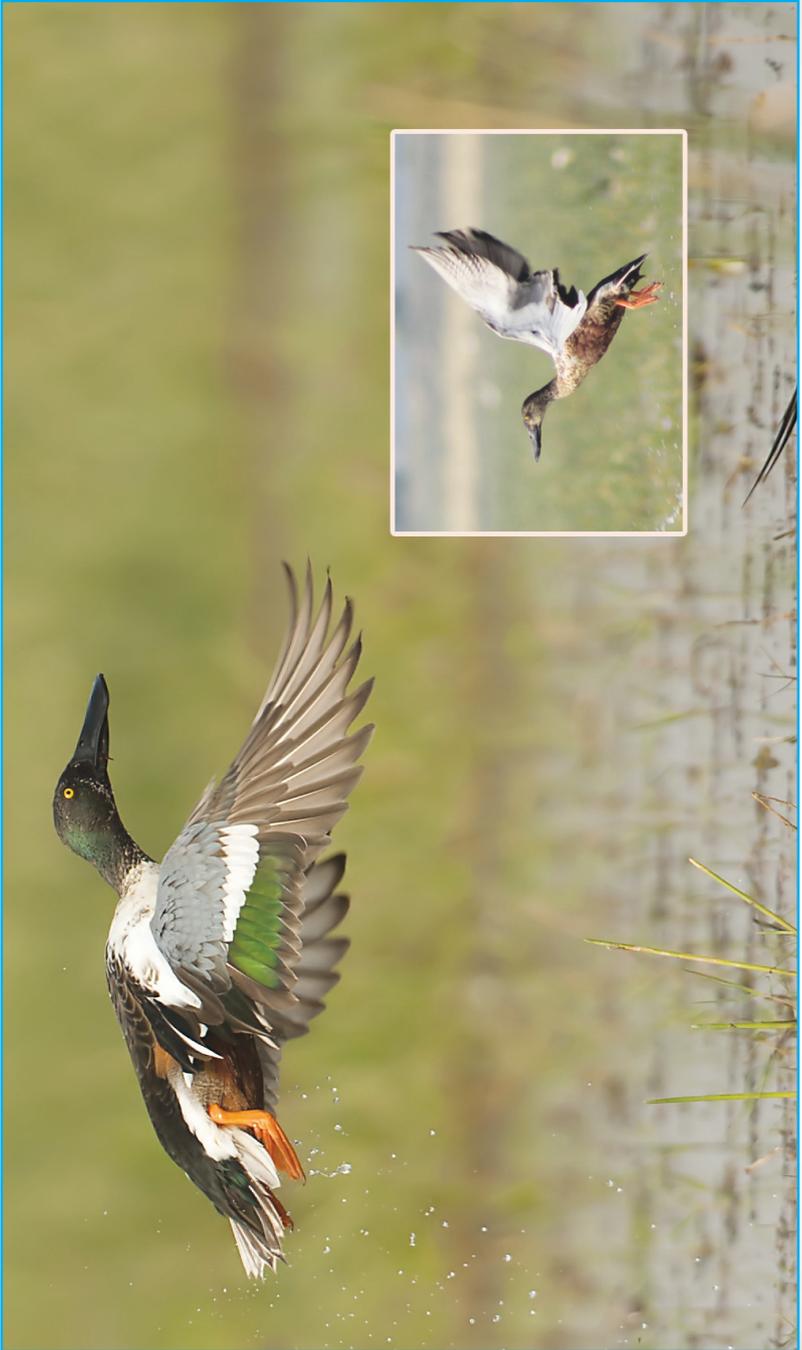
**Field Characters:** It is a small sized, predominantly brown coloured duck. Male has a spectacular broad white supercilium touching the neck; spotted pinkish brown head and neck having a large brownish-black bill. The bird has bluish-grey forewings; green speculum bordered with two white bands and white underwings which are prominent in flight. Upper plumage is blackish-brown with light brownish edges. Scapulars are long and glistening black with white median ribs; dark spotted brown stern; light brown breast, white underparts, brownish wave marked sides. Females are with mottled brown upperparts and whitish underparts spotted brown head with prominent narrow white supercillium. During eclipse period, Male is like female, but with adult male wing coloration.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, often flocks in large amount at inland wetlands such as lakes, ponds, rivers, marshes and tanks. It is a dabbling duck, shy and cautious in nature. Generally it stays among emergent vegetation and reeds.

**Food:** It prefers vegetative parts, comprising of seeds, roots and occasionally eats aquatic insect larvae, worms and molluscs.

**Migrating from:** Central Siberia and Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 32



## 6. NORTHERN SHOVELER

**Scientific Name:** *Spatula clypeata* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 46-49 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chatua Gendi

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized duck having a peculiar spatula shaped beak. Male has glistening green head and neck greyish-black beak; yellow eyes; orange legs and white breast. Abdomen and flanks are dark chestnut. Upper wing covert is light blue, milky white wing bar and metallic green speculum Female is predominantly spotted dark brown and buff. Upper wing covert is with greyish-blue; light green speculum is white edged above and below. During eclipse plumage, Male is like female but large, wing coloration is similar with adult male.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, usually find in small flocks. A surface feeder and also feeds by moving its bill in shallow waters in sweeping and sideways manner. It arrives by mid of October and departs by mid-April. It occurs in almost all types of shallow freshwater like jheels, lakes, rivers, reservoirs, irrigation and village tanks.

**Food:** It mainly prefers aquatic invertebrates, such as molluscs, crustaceans, insect larvae, worms also occasionally eats aquatic plants.

**Migrating From:** Central Siberia and Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 34



## 7. GADWALL

**Scientific Name:** *Mareca strepera* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 45-51cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Matia Gendi

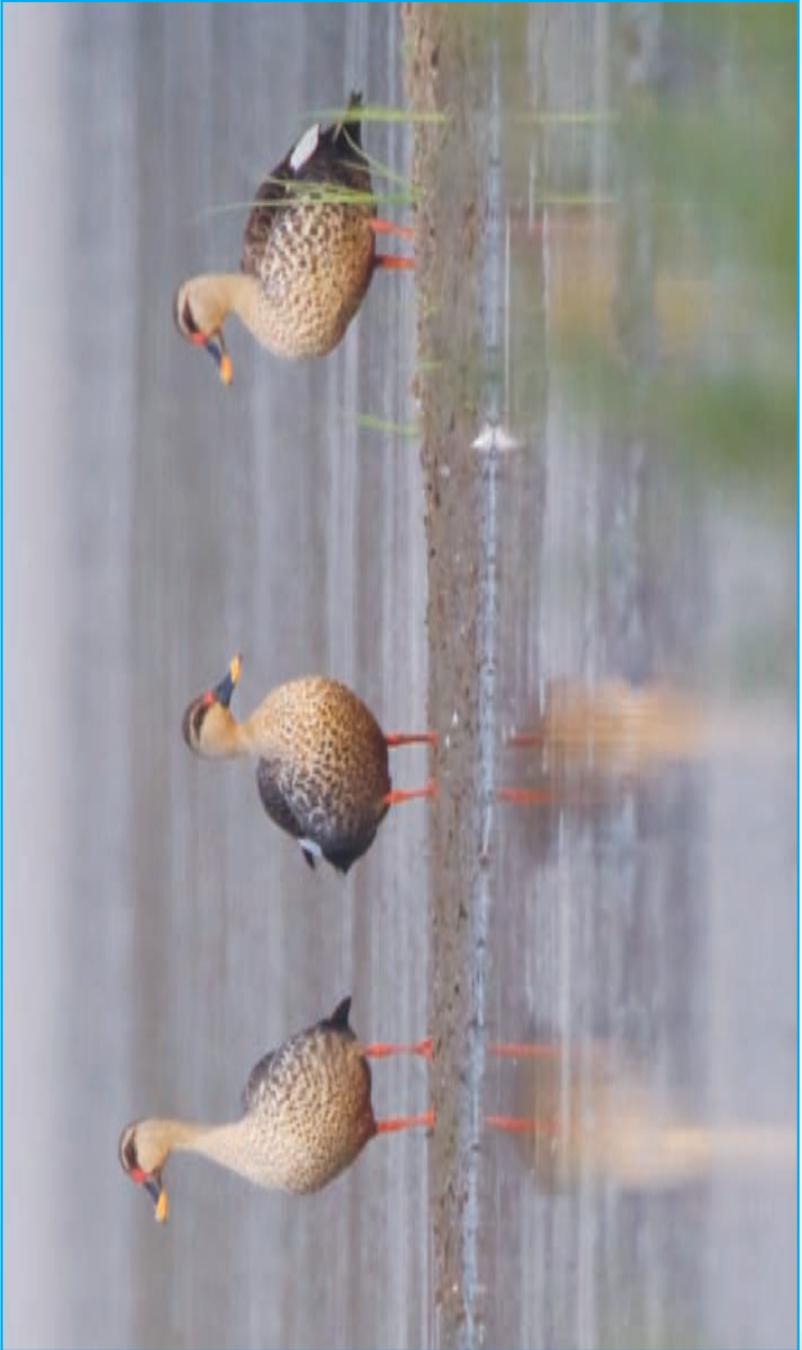
**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized, grey brown colour duck. Male has whitish belly; head grey spotted and breast have semicircle markings. Beak and eyes are black. A prominent chestnut patch is there on secondary covert along with the black and white speculum. Upper and lower tail coverts are black and distinct. Female is like male but lacks semicircle marking. It is often confused with female Mallard but duller and smaller with white inner secondaries, chestnut on wing and orange-yellow leg. Eclipse plumage of male is like female but greyer and upperpart lightly marked.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a common winter visitor to Indian subcontinent. Gregarious bird often found in small flock of same species or in mixed flock with other dabbling ducks. Prefers swallow water with aquatic vegetation. It feeds on surface of water, usually shy and cautious. It found inside freshwater reedy marshes and jheels with extensive aquatic and emergent vegetation, also in open water of dams and reservoir.

**Food:** Primarily vegetable parts, comprising of aquatic plants and grains of arable crops, occasionally molluscs and aquatic insects.

**Migrating From:** Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 36



## 8. INDIAN SPOT-BILLED DUCK

**Scientific Name:** *Anas poecilorhyncha* J.R. Forster, 1781

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 55-63 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migrant

**Local Name:** Banahamsa

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized, blackish-brown colour duck having scaly pattern plumage. It has light grey head and neck; spotted breast and having black beak with bright yellow sub-terminal part and black terminal end tip. Two loreal spot of orange-red colour at the base of bill is present on either side of forehead. The crown from forehead to nape is dark brown. It has prominent dark and broad eye-stripe and light brown edged feathers. Wing is dark brown having glossy green speculum with narrow black and white margins; tail darker and coral-red legs and feet. Though sexes are alike but female has less prominent loreal spots, slightly smaller and duller than male. Juvenile is like adult but light coloured, without red spots at base of bill and less spotted below.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a social bird and occurs in small flocks during nonbreeding season, usually occurs in pairs during breeding season. Birds were seen with chicks near wetlands after breeding season. It feeds by moving its bill in shallow waters or by walking in marshy vegetation. It prefers freshwater vegetation covered jheels, lakes, reservoirs, marshes and tanks with extensive emergent vegetation, occasionally found on riverine sandbars and permanent islands.

**Food:** Mainly vegetative parts, comprising of aquatic plants, seeds sometimes crops too such as rice, occasionally aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in Monsoon in between June to September. Nest is prepared on ground; platform of grasses and weeds in dense vegetation at margins of wetlands also prefers remote islands inside the large rivers. Usually, 6-12 greyish white eggs were laid.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 38



## 9. NORTHERN PINTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Anas acuta* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 51-56 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Lanji Gendi

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized duck and one of the commonest winter visitors. Male has head, face and neck dark-brown; neck long; bill and leg dark grey. Lower neck and breast is white, white stripe extended in either side of neck up to nape region. Hind neck and back finely silver grey coloured. Belly is white whereas rump is black. In wing, upper tail coverts is greyish black; under tail covert is dull white with broad buff patch and speculum is glossy bronze green. Tail is long and pin like pointed, which is clear on field identification pointer. Female are spotted light brownish with plain black beak lacks grey patch. Tails are pointed but without pin like feathers; wings also lack prominent speculum. During eclipse period, male looks like female, but have bill and upper wing pattern as breeding male.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is one of the regular and abundant migratory duck species to India. The bird is highly gregarious always found in medium to large flocks of hundreds; often found in pairs. Highly active during morning and evening periods; also feeds at night and roosts during day on high mound or sand bars. The bird is shy and cautious during roosting and active time. It is also secretive during eclipse period. It arrives by September and early October and mostly departs by March. It prefers lakes, marshes, reedy and vegetation-covered ponds, wet paddy fields and rivers.

**Food:** Primary food is vegetative matters like plant seeds, crops and aquatic plants. Also prefers molluscs as well as other invertebrates.

**Migrating from:** Central Siberia and Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 40



## 10. COMMON TEAL

**Scientific Name:** *Anas crecca* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 34-38 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chitrakhadi Hansa

**Field Characters:** It is a small sized duck, having a beautiful distinctive speculum composing of black, metallic green and buff which is more prominent in flight. It has a black bill and olive-grey legs. Male has dark chestnut colour head and neck. A dark glistening green band with pale border starts and surrounds the eye touching the back of the neck. Breast is spotted brown and white whereas flank region is marked with dark brown wormlike zigzag lines over white. Abdomen white and tail light brown; feathers are light brown bordered. Undertail covert is black and brown. Female has spotted brown and buff plumage with dusky brown belly. Wing has black and green speculum. During eclipse period, male has blackish-brown crown and nape.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is one of the most common and abundant migratory species. Usually found with other species of dabbling ducks in a small to medium sized flock. It arrived earlier mostly during the late August and early September and departed in March. It prefers mainly freshwater shallow inland wetland like tank, jheels, marshes, pools, reservoirs and rivers with marshy vegetation and reeds

**Food:** It prefers mainly vegetative parts of aquatic plants; their seed and crops also. Occasionally eats aquatic invertebrates.

**Migrating From:** West and Central Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 42



## 11. COTTON TEAL

**Scientific Name:** *Nettapus coromandelianus* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

**Family:** Anatidae

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Size:** 30-37cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Khadi Hansa/Bengarali

**Field Characters:** It is the smallest one, among all Indian wild duck species having rounded head, short beak and legs. Sexually dimorphic. The male is predominantly black and white. A prominent black collar round the lower neck, blackish green forehead and crown is present. The bird has bright white head and neck having a black beak; crimson-irised iris, blackish-brown upper part which is completely overlaid with glossy dark green colour, underparts white; tail brown and legs are black. White wing bar can be seen conspicuously during flight. Female bird has dominant dull brown plumage; a dark line passes through eyes started from beak, indistinct white wing-bar. Non breeding male is as like as female but darker upperpart, distinct white wing-bar is also there.

**Habit and Habitat:** Very common bird can easily found in inland wetlands from small village tanks to large lakes in small flocks to large one. Usually, the bird is seen in pairs during breeding season. Sometimes perch on overhanging branches. It can stay calmly inside aquatic vegetation and flights swiftly when get approached.

**Food:** Omnivorous bird, but chiefly prefers vegetable parts, comprising aquatic plants, arable crops, but also eats crustaceans and insect larvae.

**Nesting:** It breeds during Monsoon in between July to September. It uses the natural hollow in a standing tree as nest, near water. Sometimes the bird covered the inner part of nest with grass and feather. Normal clutch size varies in between 6 to 12 and bright white colour eggs.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 44



## 12. LITTLE GREBE

**Scientific Name:** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (Pallas,1764)

**Family:** Podicipedidae

**Order:** Phoenicopteriformes

**Size:** 23-29 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Panidubuki

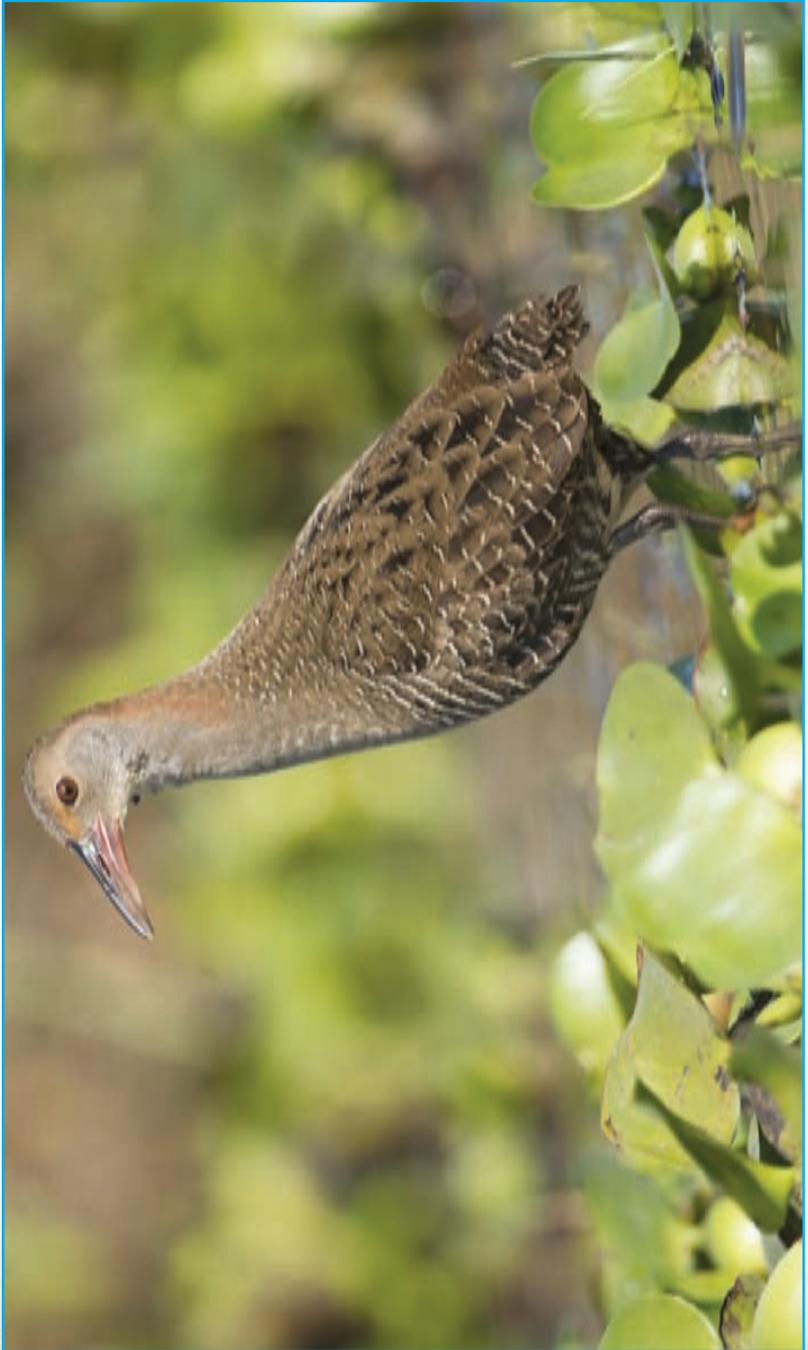
**Field Characters:** It is a small and tailless water bird with short, straight and pointed bill and silky white underparts. A white wing patch of secondaries distinct in flight. During breeding (summer) forehead, crown and nape are blackish-brown. Lore, face, and chin are dark chestnut. Upper plumage is light blackish brown with dusky brown flanks. A small white patch presents at the base of the beak and tip yellow. Reddish brown iris; legs are green. In non-breeding (winter), Light brown with dull whitish chin, pale rufous neck and whitish underparts. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is paler with dark brown forehead and crown. The sides of the head and lower neck are brown; the lower plumage is white with very little brown.

**Habit and Habitat:** Found singly or in pairs among aquatic vegetation of inland water bodies. It is an expert diver and good swimmer. Immediately dives in to water for safety when get disturbed. Shy in nature and hide among emergent vegetation. It skitters along water by half flying. It stays in loose flocks in open waters during nonbreeding season, but singly or in pairs in vegetation during breeding season. Often found in pond, lake and small rainfedwaterbodies with aquatic vegetation.

**Food:** Mollusca, fish, tadpoles, crustaceans and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** The bird breeds throughout the year and nest is like a pad of aquatic weeds on floating vegetation.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 46



### 13. SLATY-BREASTED RAIL

**Scientific name:** *Lewinia striata* (Linnaeus, 1766)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 24-29cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Kirimeti

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized waterbird, having long and straight bill. Male has crown to hind neck chestnut colour. Upper parts are dark brown with narrow white bars broken into spots on lower back and primaries. Chin and throat white breast grey, red iris and bill. Sides of head, foreneck and breast ashy-blue. Under tail-coverts dark brown with conspicuous white bars. Legs are olive-grey. Female has duller head and neck, whitish on belly whereas paler upper part. Juvenile has rufous-brown streaked with dark brown coloured crown and neck; the white bars and spots are absent.

**Habit and Habitat:** Usually found in solitary or in pairs, more common and frequent illusive waterbird. It flights attained typical rail type with slow and labored flapping. It can swim and dive occasionally. Found in reedy swamps and mangroves, margins of village tanks, inundated paddy fields.

**Food:** Omnivorous, marsh plant shoots, seeds, molluscs, crustaceans, worms and insects.

**Nesting:** Breeds from mid-June to September, all over its range, nests usually placed on the edge of marshes.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 48



## 14. BAILLON'S CRAKE

**Scientific name:** *Zapornia pusilla* (Pallas, 1776)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 17-19cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Shiphala Chiri

**Field Characters:** Smallest among all Indian rails, a marsh dwelling bird. Bill and legs are pale green. Upperparts streaked black and white colour whereas, breast and anterior abdomen grey. Supercilium presents sides of head and neck. Juvenile is like adult but paler above; brown eye streak broader; almost white below, sides of neck, breast and flanks suffused with ruddy brown. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** Generally stays singly or in pairs. Very illusive bird, hides in reeds, marshes and other shrub like aquatic vegetation. It is crepuscular in nature.

**Food:** Chiefly vegetarian. Feed on seeds of aquatic plants and occasionally on invertebrates like molluscs and insects.

**Migrating From:** India: Kashmir Outside India: Europe, East and Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 50



## 15. WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN

**Scientific Name:** *Amauronia phoenicurus* (Pennant, 1769)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 30-32 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Dahuka

**Field Characters:** Adult has common slaty-grey upperparts with prominent white face and breast. It is a stub-tailed, long legged marsh bird with greenish or yellowish bills and legs with swollen reddish base to upper mandible. Chicks are black and juvenile has greyish face, sides of necks and breasts. Sexes are alike but male is slightly larger than female.

**Habits and Habitat:** Usually seen singly or in pair, near the reeds and thickets on water logged land and agricultural field. Swampy ground over growth with reeds, bushes and bamboo on the margins of fresh water bodies constitutes the favourite place of the White-breasted Water-hen. The tail is held up and jerked as they walk with displaying red under parts. It is not illusive as rails but shy in nature. Waterhen is a silent bird except during the rains when it breeds.

**Food:** It probes its bill in mud or in shallow water to feed on small insects and molluscs. Also depend on small fishes and seeds and roots of aquatic vegetation.

**Nesting:** The nesting season started with the south-west monsoon, lasting from June to October. Before mating, courtship involves bowing, billing and nibbling. They made their nest in a dry location on the ground in marsh vegetation near waterbodies. The nest is shallow cup-shaped made up of twigs and creeper stems. The normal clutch size is 6 or 7 and eggs are rather long, smooth ovals, cream or pinkish-white in colour streaked and blotched with some shade of reddish brown. Incubation period is about 19 days. Both sexes take part in the process of incubation and shows parental cares. To escape from predation, chicks often dive underwater or hide themselves inside marshes.





## 16. WATERCOCK

**Scientific Name:** *Gallicrex cinerea* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 39-43cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Hutuma

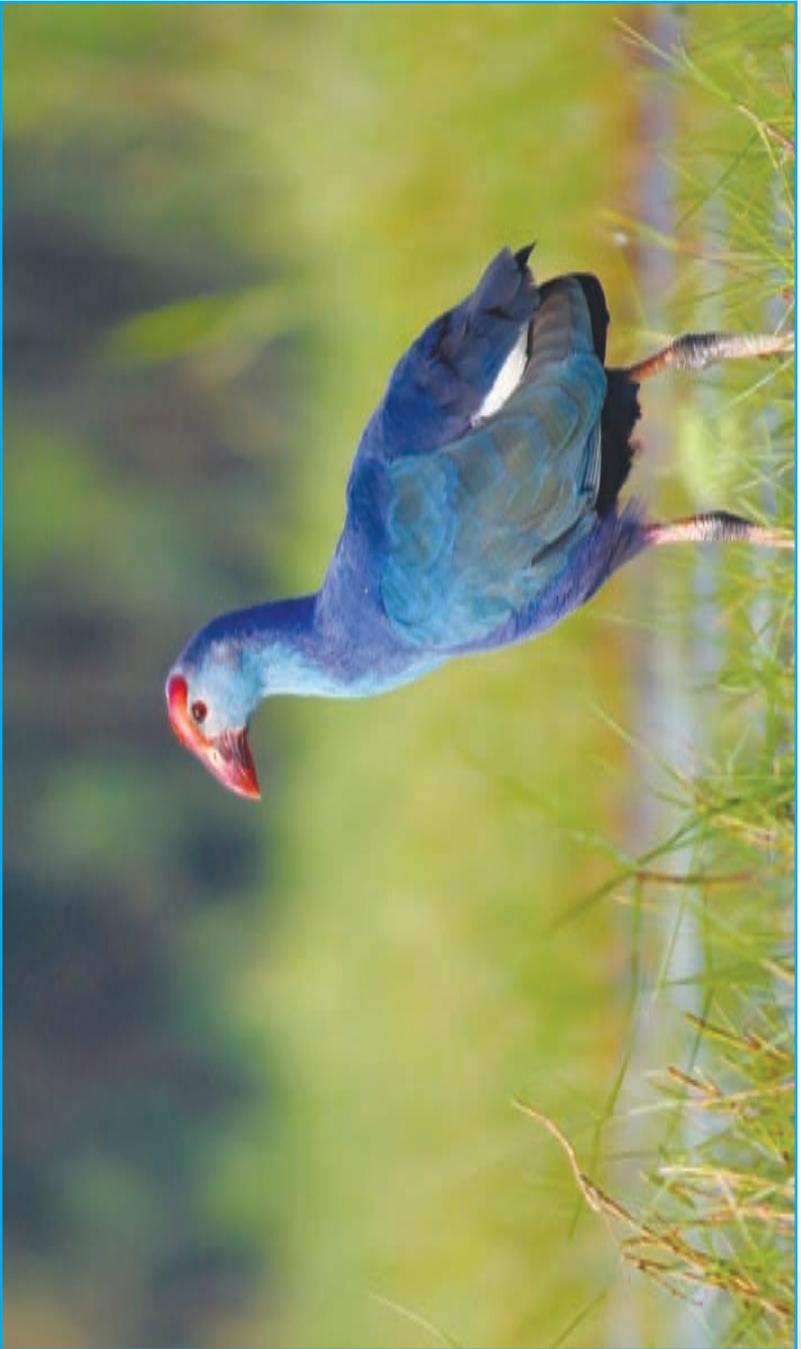
**Field Characters:** A typical rail like waterbird, sexes looks alike in nonbreeding plumage but female considerably smaller. Male has dark brown upper parts and pale buff with fine wavy darker bars at lower. Legs and feet dull green, bill yellow, red frontal shield projecting above crown and bright red eyes buff white under tail-coverts. Juvenile is almost like female but less barred below.

**Habit and Habitat:** Usually seen singly or pair. Crepuscular in nature actively feed in early morning or late evening. Also active in cloudy weather. Male is aggressive during breeding season. It is also secretive like other rails but sometimes can be seen in open while foraging. When disturbed, flew away some distance and hide inside vegetation. It prefers swamps, low-lying waterlogged paddy and other fields, tanks, ponds, canals and channels with emergent vegetation.

**Food:** It is a chiefly vegetarian bird, depends upon seeds and fresh shoots of wild rice and other grasses as food. Also prefers aquatic insects and molluscs.

**Nesting:** Usually breeds in Monsoon from June to September. In a cup shaped deep nest made up of grasses along marshes, 3 to 8 eggs are laid. Eggs are white or pinkish to brick red longitudinally blotched and spotted with reddish brown.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 54



## 17. PURPLE MOORHEN

**Scientific Name:** *Porphyrio porphyrio* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 39-43 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Kama chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a purple bluish colour rail, having with long red legs and toes. A distinct white patch is found under the tail and red frontal shield contiguous with a heavy red bill. Sexes are alike. Juvenile looks greyer, black bill and orange-brown legs and feet

**Habits and Habitat:** The bird frequently seen in reed-covered swamps, edges of jheels and village tanks cover with aquatic vegetation. It spends time in search of food by stalking through the reed beds.. It moves on partial submerged vegetation, constantly by head bobbing and tail jerking. The birds are not particularly shy or secretive. They run in to cover when disturbed, doesn't like to fly unless forced. The can walk fast on vegetation and attained flight with constant and rapid stroke on water surface. In flight, the neck is extended and the long red leg and the ungainly feet trail behind. The birds are noisy in breeding season.

**Food:** Their diet consists of mainly shoots, paddy crops and other vegetable matters. Also eats insects and molluscs.

**Nesting:** Breeds in Monsoon in between June to September. The nest is made of rush paddy or grass stems firmly interwoven, sometimes placed on a floating vegetation and small shrubs from 1 to 3 feet above water level. The normal clutch consists of 3-7 eggs varying from pale yellowish-stone to reddish buff in ground colour, blotched and spotted with reddish brown.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 56



## 18. COMMON MOORHEN

**Scientific Name:** *Gallinula chloropus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 30-38 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migrant

**Local Name:** Mandiakhai

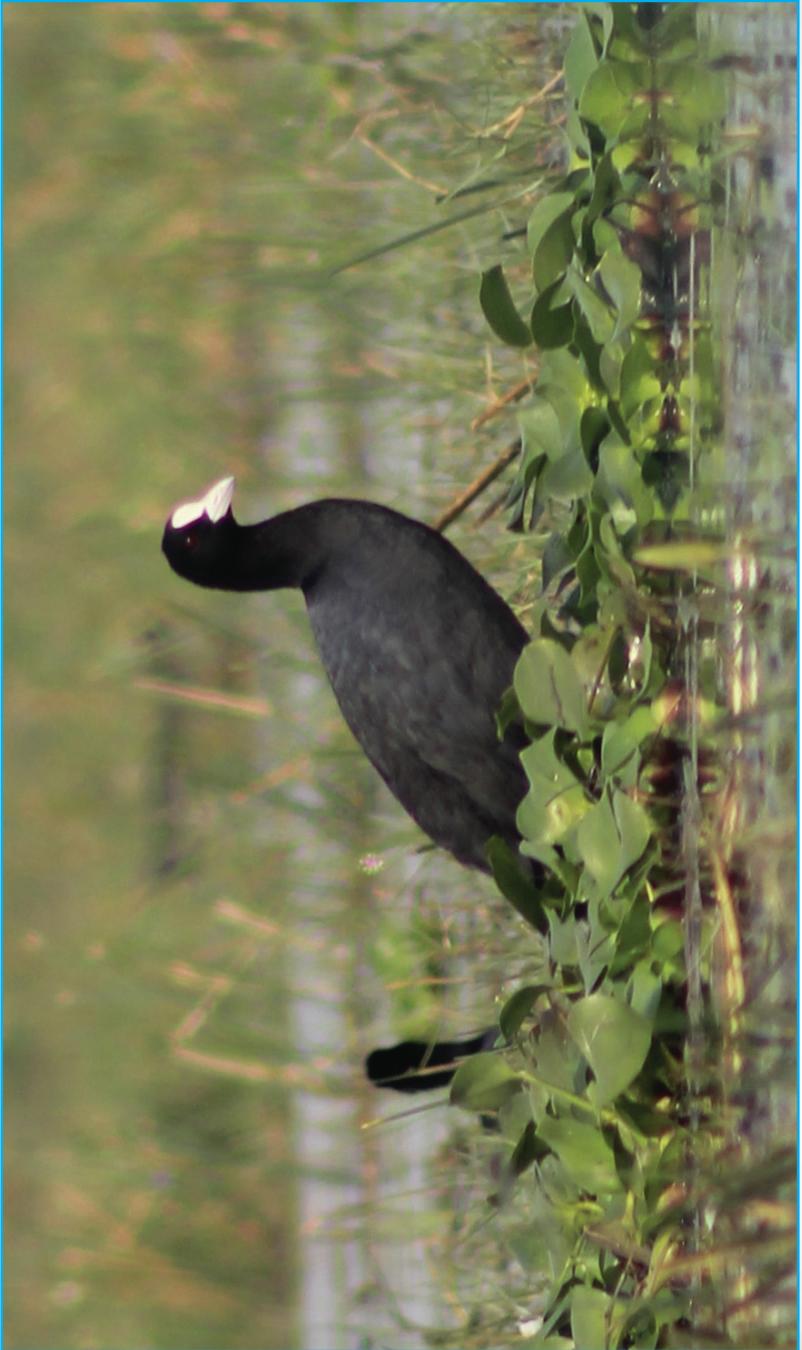
**Field Characters:** A medium sized dark aquatic rail having red frontal shield and base of bill; tip of bill yellow; dark grey coloured Head and neck and remaining upperparts dark brown. Brown colour wings have white border while closed and conspicuous white undertail coverts. Long greenish legs and orange ring at the base of tibia. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has more brownish colour with greenish brown bill and forehead.

**Habits and Habitat:** The moorhen prefers thick reedbeds and vegetation near ponds and tanks. It lives in pairs or gregariously very shy in nature. The birds walk with a peculiar bobbing of the head at every step, accompanied by the little erect tail jerking, displaying the white underneath prominently. If disturbed it runs swiftly to cover and disappears, inside reeds and weed vegetation. It looks like a small duck inside water. In spite of its unwebbed feet, it can swim well by depressing the fore part of the body and by lifting up hind part of the body showing up the white under tail coverts. They fly with continuous rapid wing strokes on water surface with extended legs and necks before attending true flying position. Especially birds are very noisy during the breeding season.

**Food:** Their diets are consists of grass roots, seeds, aquatic weeds, insects and amphibians.

**Nesting:** The Moorhen breeds in monsoon in between June to August. The nest is a bulky structure of sedges and weeds placed among aquatic plants also seen in low shrub near water. The clutch size is 5-12 and eggs are pale yellowish to warm buff stone color blotched with dark reddish brown. Incubation lasts about 21 days and shared by both parents.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 58



## 19. EURASIAN COOT

**Scientific Name:** *Fulica atra* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Rallidae

**Order:** Gruiformes

**Size:** 32-42 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name:** JuiKaima

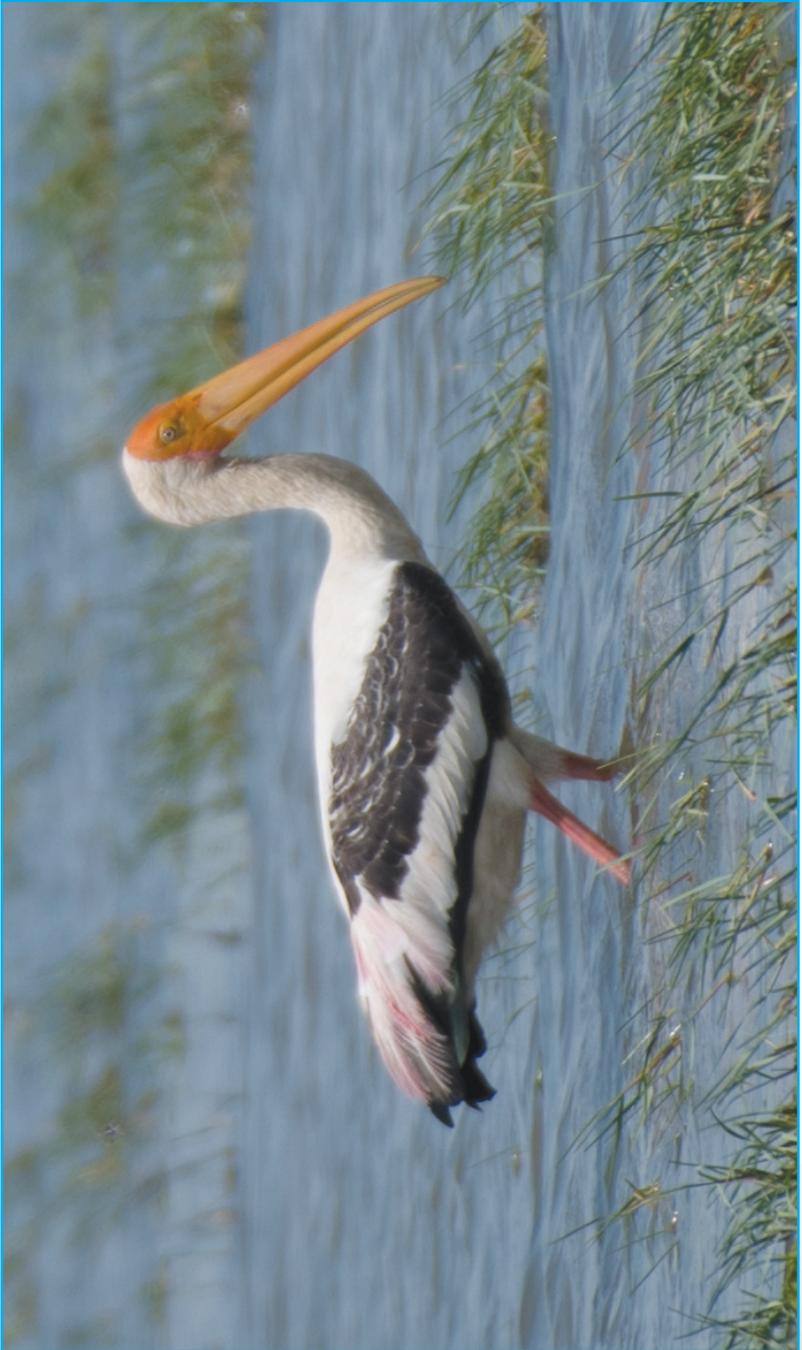
**Field Characters:** A medium sized, black, tailless rail. It looks like duck on water from the distance with prominent white pointed bill and white frontal shield. It has brownish black head, greyer black neck and greenish leg. Sexes are alike. Juveniles are greenish brown colour above and mottled white below.

**Habits and Habitat:** As a resident bird, this is found throughout the year in lakes, jheels, village tanks and swampy areas. But population vastly increased in winter by addition of immigrants from other parts of country and across borders. When alarmed the bird preferred to get out of the way by skittering along the water by half running and half flying manner. They can swim gracefully by bobbing head and neck gently along with each stroke of legs. They are expert divers and capable of remaining submerged for considerable time. Flight is attained by continuous rapid wing strokes, neck out stretched and legs trailing behind the blunt barrel shaped body.

**Food:** The diet consists of mainly aquatic insects, molluscs, shoots, aquatic weeds and paddy and other vegetation.

**Nesting:** Breeding season is Monsoon chiefly July-October. The nest is large compact mass of dead reeds or grasses, and placed slightly above water level. Normal clutch size is 6-10 and eggs are of buffy-stone colour and spotted with reddish brown colour.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 60



## 20. PAINTED STORK

**Scientific Name:** *Mycteria leucocephala* (Pennant, 1769)

**Family:** Ciconiidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 93-102 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Jangilabaga

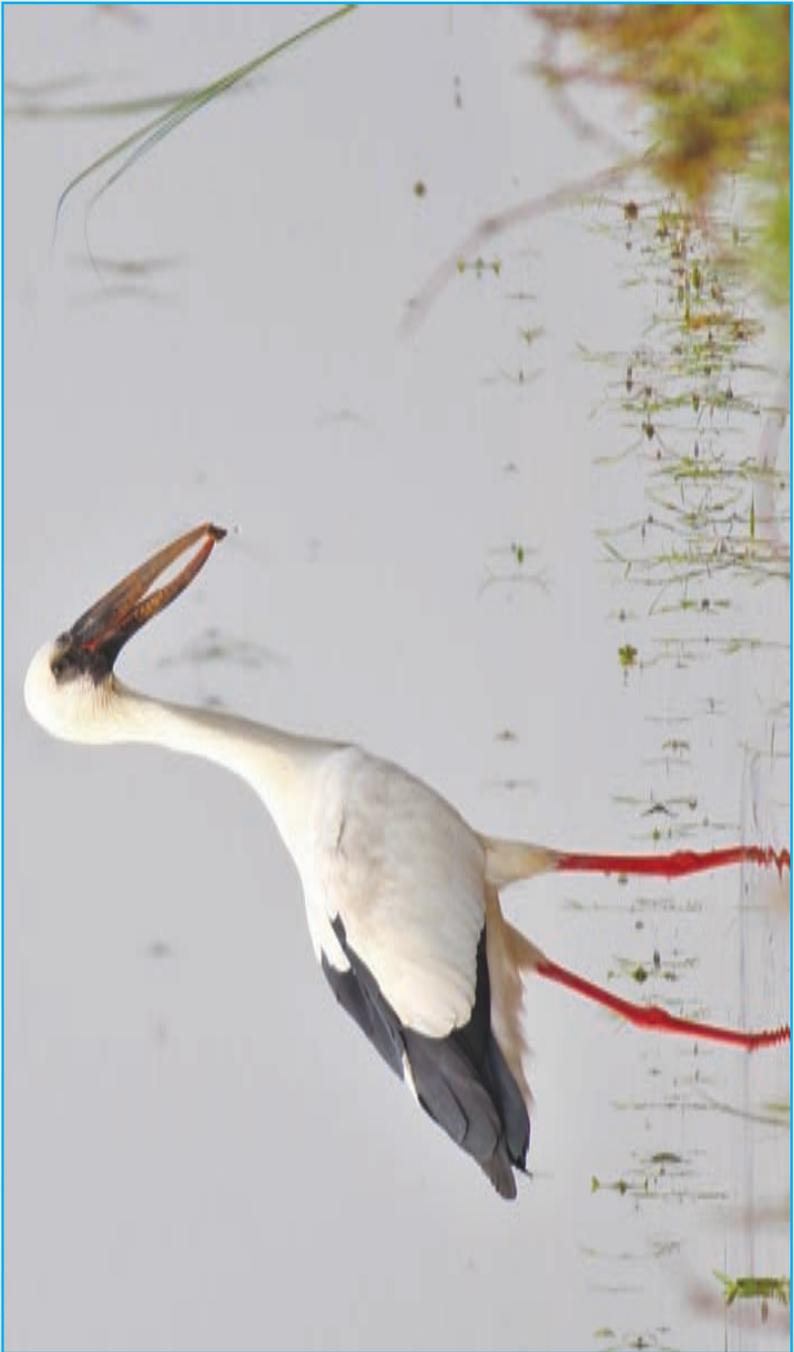
**Field Characters:** It is a large black and white water bird having big heavy orange yellow bill, long leg and long-neck. Bill is curved inward. Yellowish orange face is waxy and un-feathered. Upperpart white; wings are blackish-green and white. The bird has black wide breast band and tail-quills, Greater wing-coverts are distinct with rich rosy-pink colour. Legs and feet are pinkish red. Sexes are alike. Juveniles are dull dirty brown with heavily edged neck feather lacks barred breast band. Legs and bill are lighter than adult.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird generally found in small groups. It roosts colonially in trees also occasionally on sandbanks and mudflats. Feeds with beak, partly submerged inside shallow water. Rests mainly outside of water.

**Food:** Chiefly fish, frog, occasionally aquatic insects and reptiles.

**Nesting:** It breeds in large colonies during early monsoon from June to January in colonies. Nest made with the sticks on large trees lined with leaves, straws etc. near water. Usually clutch size varies from 2-5 eggs. Eggs are dull white sometimes it has brown spots and streaks. Both sexes share parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 62



## 21. ASIAN OPENBILL

**Scientific Name:** *Anastomus oscitans* (Boddaert, 1783)

**Family:** Ciconiidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 65-69 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Gendalia

**Field Characters:** It is a small white stork having blackwings and tail. It has dull greenish-black bill with arching mandibles. There is a gap in-between the mandibles at close range and legs are pinkish. The white plumage of the upperparts is replaced with dull smoky-grey feathers, during non-breeding season. Juveniles are dusky brown-grey with blackish-brown mantle. Gap in bill develops slowly.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is mainly solitary or in small flocks. Found in the congregation at the time of nesting. They are very common waterbirds of many wetlands such as marshes, shallow wetlands like lakes and reservoirs, paddy fields, riverbeds, etc.

**Food:** Feeds in shallow water on molluscs, frogs, fishes and other small animals.

**Nesting:** It breeds in large mixed heronries during late monsoon from August to March. Nests are mainly circular platforms of twigs with a swallow depression at center covered with leaves. Nests are made on trees, near water. Normal clutch size is 2 to 4 and eggs are white and textured.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 64



## 22. YELLOW BITTERN

**Scientific Name:** *Ixobrychus sinensis* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 37-38 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Haladia Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a small size bittern having a short neck and pointed long bill. The bird is sexually dimorphic. Male has prominent black crown and crest. Underpart is whitish with dark brown colour longitudinal line from chin to belly and upperpart chiefly buff brown. Side of the face, neck and head orange brown. Hindneck rufous brown. It has brown wing with black flight feathers; tail black; and yellowish bill. Legs and feet are yellow. Female mostly similar with male but they have streaked brown crown, neck and breast. Juvenile are likely female but having upperparts dark rufous-brown with broad prominent buff fringes; heavily streaked below and the longitudinal line on breast are more prominent.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is solitary, shy and secretive. It hunts alone, can stay motionlessly inside reed vegetation. Generally, it is crepuscular and nocturnal, also more active on cloudy weather. It prefers scrubby swamps with reeds, inundated paddy fields, village pond or tank with vegetation.

**Food:** Very voracious feeder on fish, frog and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in monsoon period from June to September. Nests were pad of soft reeds, leaves in side reed bed or bushes at the edges of pond. Clutch size varies in between 4 to 6, eggs are greenish blue. Both parents incubate eggs.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 66



## 23. CINNAMON BITTERN

**Scientific Name:** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 36-39 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Keshari Baga

**Field Characters:** It is an unmistakable bittern of dark cinnamon colour. Sexually dimorphic. Male has cinnamon upperparts, paler wing-coverts, whitish chin, throat and upper foreneck with a dark median stripe down the foreneck. The foreneck is covered with buff edged black feather along with long breast feathers. Remaining under plumage and wings pale chestnut; bill yellow; legs and feet yellowish green. Female is darker cinnamon-brown upperpart with black crown; spotted buff brownish wings; buff-rufous below with dark brown longitudinal lines from chin to vent and a line down middle of foreneck and breast. Juvenile are like female, but mottled above and heavily streaked below.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is solitary, shy and secretive. It hunts alone, can stay motionlessly inside reed vegetation. Generally, it is crepuscular and nocturnal, also more active on cloudy weather. It prefers scrubby swamps with reeds, inundated paddy fields, village pond or tank with vegetation.

**Food:** Voracious feeder on fish, frog and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in monsoon in between May to September. Nests are small pad made with twigs and leaf in reeds or in a dense thick marsh. Usually eggs are white and clutch size varies in between 4 to 6.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 68



## 24. BLACK BITTERN

**Scientific Name:** *Ixobrychus flavicollis* (Latham, 1790)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 37-39 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Kala Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized and predominantly black colour bittern. Sexually dimorphic. Male has greyish black upper plumage with shining bluish colour. Long, pointed dull reddish-black beak with yellowish tip and pale lower mandible. A rufous dotted line is present in the middle and running down. Chin and throat are white with yellowish patch is present on either side of foreneck. The bird has dark streaked underparts mainly breast and abdomen whereas legs and feet are dark brown. Female has brownish upperparts and paler below with streaks on breast. Juvenile has blackish crown, dark brown upperparts and underparts mottled chestnut and buff.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is generally crepuscular and nocturnal; mostly active during overcast days. Nongregarious bird, motionlessly freeze among reeds for hunting. Mostly found inside the inland jheels, marshes and swamps with thick overgrown beds.

**Food:** Feed on large fish, frog, molluscs and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in monsoon in between June to September. Nests are small pad made with twigs and leaf in reeds or in a dense thick marsh. Normal clutch size is four and eggs are bluish white. Both parents share parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 70



## 25. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON

**Scientific Names:** *Nycticorax nycticorax* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 62-64 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Rati Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a stocky small sized heron with short neck and legs. During breeding season, it has a grey wings, ashy black back and scapular. Crown, nape and occipital crests are black with two or three very long narrow white plumes. Forehead and a stripe above the eyes are white. Remaining underpart is greyish white including tail. Eyes are ruby red, legs are pink and bill is black. Non breeding plumage is streaked brown colour with pale greenish legs along with light yellowish bill. Juvenile is pale-smoky brown with bright yellow eyes and resembles adult Indian Pond-Heron except for white wings.

**Habits and Habitat:** It is a nocturnal or crepuscular bird except in breeding season. Generally gregarious bird, roosts in dense trees during daytime and active often at dusk. Mostly found near rivers, lake, jheels and paddy fields.

**Food:** Chiefly fish, frog, aquatic insects such as Odonata larvae.

**Nesting:** Breeds in pure colonies from May to September. Nests were made with dried twigs lined with leaves on dense and tall trees. Clutch size varies from 3 to 5 greenish blue coloured eggs. Incubation period lasts 24-26 days. Nesting sites often found near villages. Both the parents incubate eggs and take care of young one.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 72



## 26. INDIAN POND HERON

**Scientific Name:** *Ardeola grayii* (Sykes, 1832)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 42-45 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Pokhari Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a stocky, earthy-brown colour bird at rest. It looks snow-white in flight. It has a pointed yellow bill, which is black at tip and bluish at base; whitish chin, throat and foreneck; green legs. At the time of breeding season, long white or buff coloured occipital crest were formed along with ashy brown upper breast, deep maroon and long hair like plumes on black and white under parts. During non-breeding season, it has prominent streaked dark brown head and neck. Also it has brown mantle, white streaks on scapulars and white underparts. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** This is the most common species of egret which is found everywhere. Found near water, even near small ditches and rainfed fields. The bird generally found solitary occasionally in small groups when hunting, gregarious when roosting, nests in colonies. It sits motionlessly near water for hunting a prey. Found in Streams, jheels, marshes, ponds, rice fields, village tanks, ditches and wells.

**Food:** It chiefly depends on fishes, frogs, crabs and other aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in Monsoon in between May to September. Nests were made by using dried twigs on leafy trees along with other species of egrets and cormorants. Nesting sites can be found within anthropogenic habitat, not necessarily in remote areas or near water. Normal clutch size is varies in between 3 to 5, eggs are pale greenish blue. Both sexes incubate eggs.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 74



## 27. CATTLE EGRET

**Scientific Name:** *Bubulcus ibis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Size:** 48-53 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Gai Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a snow white bird. During Nonbreeding (winter) period, it often resembles with Little Egret, but always identified by yellow bill and black feet. During breeding, Golden buff plumes developed on head, neck and back. Also it has orange-red bill, lore and yellow eyes. Sexes are alike. Juvenile looks similar with adult but having blackish bill, leg and feet.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is gregarious at the time of feeding and roosting, often found in grazing field accompanying village Livestock.

**Food:** Feeds on insects disturbed by animals. It often feed on damp grassland, fallow, paddy fields, and periphery of canals, lakes, and reservoirs, Chiefly insects such as beetles and grasshoppers, besides earthworms.

**Nesting:** The bird breeds in Monsoon in between June-September. Often breeds in mixed colonies along with Cormorant and Pond herons on large trees, often away from water. Nests are made up of dried twigs. Normal clutch size is 3-5. Eggs are pale blue colour. Both the parents incubate the eggs.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 76



## 28. GREY HERON

**Scientific Name:** *Ardea cinerea* Linnaeus 1758

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 90-98 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Dhusar Baga

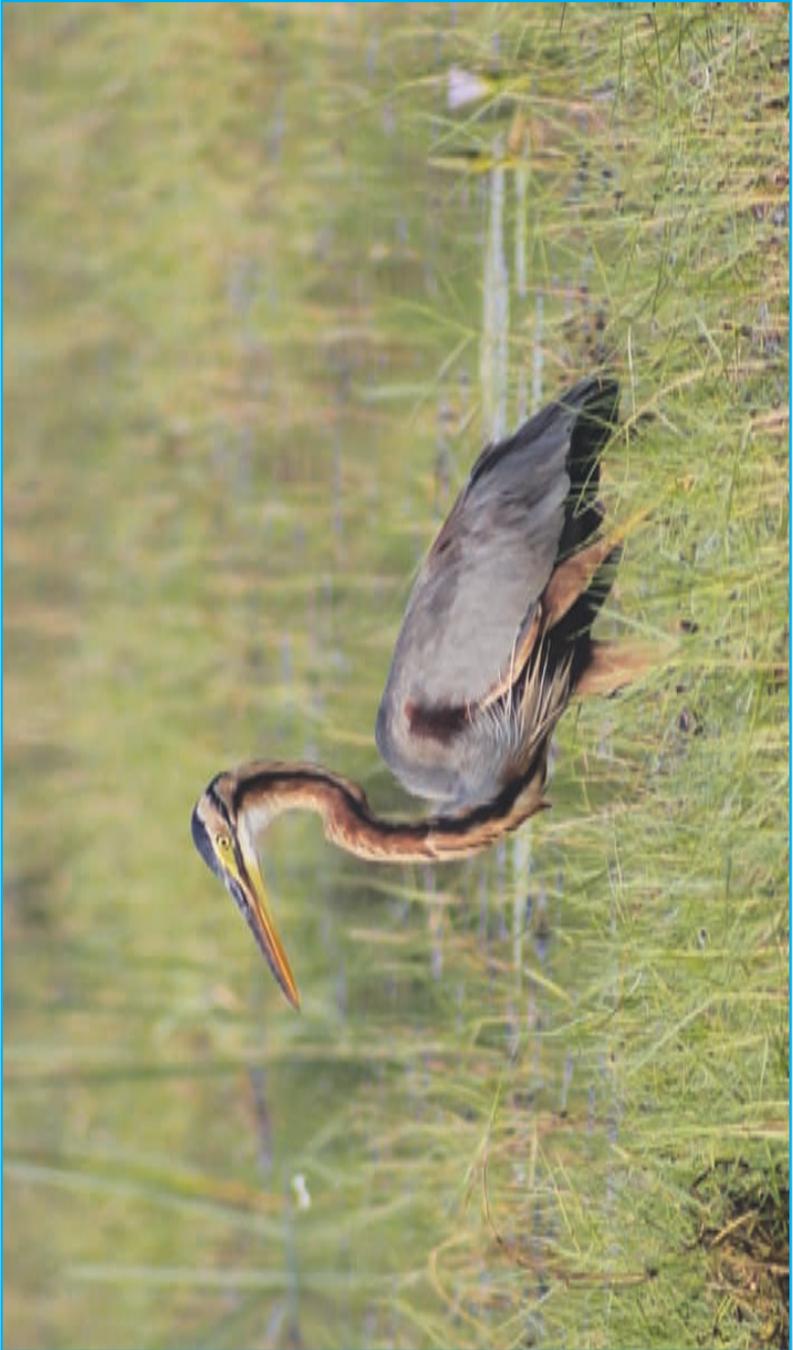
**Field Characters:** It is a large sized, long-legged and long necked ashy-grey bird. It has a narrow head, pointed yellow bill, black stripe above eyes further continues as long black occipital crest and white crown and forehead. It has a long 'S' shaped white neck distinct black dotted line present in the middle of foreneck. Elongated black-streaked white feathers are present on breast; underparts greyish-white; and upperparts ashy-grey. Darker central feathers are with black tips; primaries, outer secondaries, primary coverts black and tail grey. Female is similar with male but smaller with less developed occipital crest and pectoral plumes. Juvenile is brown and darker grey with fore neck more conspicuously black-streaked and without lengthened scapulars and breast plumes.

**Habit and Habitat:** Though the bird is active in both day and night but mostly crepuscular. Generally it is solitary; still it roosts communally in winter. It stands motionlessly for hours inside shallow water to catch prey. It is found in jheels, marshes, rivers, lakes, estuaries, mangroves, coral reefs and offshore islands.

**Food:** Carnivorous, its diet consists of fish, frog and aquatic invertebrates such as insects, crustaceans, small mammals and molluscs. Opportunistically, juveniles of other birds can be eaten.

**Nesting:** It breeds in Monsoon mostly in between February to June. It is a colonial breeder, and breeds along with other co-breeders like other species of egrets and cormorants, darters etc. Usually nests were made by dried sticks with the central depression lined with grass. Clutch size varies from three to six. Eggs are deep sea green colour.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 78



## 29. PURPLE HERON

**Scientific Name:** *Ardea purpurea* (Linnaeus, 1766)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 70-94 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Khaira Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a tall and thin waterbird with long slender snake-like neck, purplish grey upperpart where as lowerpart dark chestnut black. It has dark yellow beak, black occipital crest and crown. Three black lines are there, a line is down hindneck black, second line present in between gape to crest and the third line down whole length of side of neck. Rest of the head and neck is rufous. Foreneck is rufous with black streaks. Chin and throat are white. Long fascinating plumes on upper breast are buff white with black and chestnut streaks and rest of upperparts are slaty black and rich chestnut. Underparts are chiefly chestnut and black, legs reddish-brown. Both Sexes are similar but female with less developed occipital crest and pectoral plumes. Juvenile is cinnamon-brown.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary. It inhabits inside dense aquatic vegetation. It is secretive and active in morning and evening. It stands inactively inside swallow water with aquatic vegetation to catch prey. Occasionally steals fishes from fishing nets. It prefers marshes grass, lakes, jheels, rivers and paddy fields.

**Food:** Chiefly fish, frog, also water insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in between June to March. Usually it prefers its own colony. Nests were made with sticks like other egrets on large trees, reed beds etc. Clutch size varies from 3 to 5 eggs and eggs are greenish blue. Both sexes shares parental cares.





### 30. GREAT EGRET

**Scientific Name:** *Ardea alba* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 80-104 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** BadaJhalia Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized snow white bird with a distinct yellow beak, 'S' shaped long neck and long black legs. Non breeding bird has yellow bill with blackish tip. Long legs are black. Breeding birds has black beak and bluish lore. Long, transparent ornamental white plumes (aigrette) developed from breast and back during this time which extends beyond tail. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is pure white.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is diurnal in nature. Generally found solitary though it roosts and feeds along with other species of egrets. It spreads the ornamental filamentous plumes in a fan shape during courtship display. It stands motionlessly for hours inside shallow water to catch prey. It is commonly found in jheels, marshes, rivers, lakes, estuaries, mangroves and agricultural field.

**Food:** Carnivorous, Feeds on fish, frogs and aquatic insects

**Nesting:** It breeds in mixed heronries of storks, darters and cormorants, etc. Generally breeds from May to November, on large trees. Often found near anthropogenic habitat not necessarily near water. Nests were made with dried sticks. Normal clutch size is three to four. Eggs are pale green in colour. Both sexes share incubation and feeding chicks.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 82



## 31. INTERMEDIATE EGRET

**Scientific Name:** *Ardea intermedia* Wagler, 1829

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 46-56 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident /Migrant

**Local Name:** Jhalia Baga

**Field Characters:** It is a comparative medium sized snow-white egret having a thick neck, thick and short bill. Often confused with 'Great Egret' but it is separated by size and shape. During non-breeding season, bill is yellow with black tip, yellow lore and brownish legs. During breeding season, it develops ornamental filamentous plumes on breast and back and the bill turns black. Neck has gentle curve. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is diurnal mostly found in small flocks. It roosts and feeds communally. It migrates locally during winter. Often found solitary while foraging. It occurs in lakes, reservoirs, marshes, pools with vegetation, jheels, estuaries, mangroves and tidal creeks.

**Food:** Mainly depend on fishes, frogs and aquatic insects as food.

**Nesting:** It breeds in colonies in mixed heronries from May to November. Nests were made with dried twigs on large trees, along with other co-breeders like egrets, herons and darters. Nesting sites were often found near human habitation. Normally clutch size is 2 to 5, and eggs are bluish green.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 84



## 32. LITTLE EGRET

**Scientific Name:** *Egretta garzetta* (Linnaeus, 1766)

**Family:** Ardeidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 55-65 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Sana Jhalia Baga

**Field Characters:** It is pure white bird like the other egrets with pointed, slender black bill and legs and yellow feet. During breeding, two long narrow plumes were developed from nuchal crest, filamentous ornamental feathers (aigrettes) on breast and back. A thick bunch of dorsal plumes extends beyond the tail. In case of non-breeding birds, the ornamental plumes are absent. Though occasionally, some of the back plumes are retained. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird sometimes found solitary. It roosts communally on trees. The bird spreads its ornamental plumes in a fan shape during courtship display. Juvenile is most similar with adult but lack of ornamental plumes. It is very commonly found in marshes, jheels, lakes, rivers, paddy fields, mudflats, etc. but rarely seen in seashores.

**Food:** Food consists of Fish, frogs, crustaceans and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in late summer and monsoon in between May to September. It nests on large trees in colonies, often in mixed heronries. A swallow nest is made with dried twigs, lined with straws, leaves etc. Most often, nests are built in near human habitation such as village and roads. Normal clutch size is 4 and eggs are pale bluish green colour.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 86



### 33. BLACK-HEADED IBIS

**Scientific Name:** *Threskiornis melanocephalus* (Latham, 1790)

**Family:** Threskiornithidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 70-75 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Dhala Bajeni

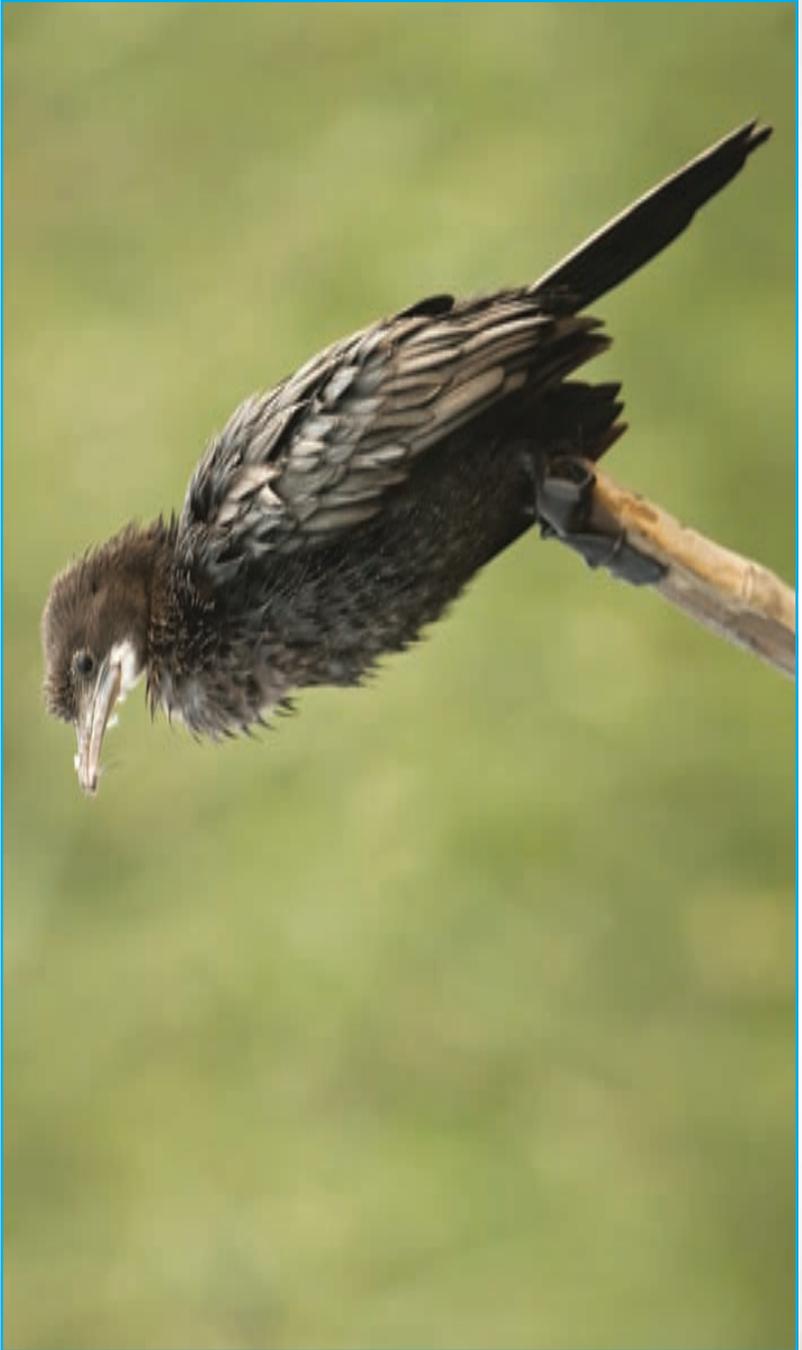
**Field Characters:** It is a large white bird having long inward curved black bill, prominent naked bluish-black head and neck, glossy black legs and feet and grey ornamental feathers. Blood red patches on under wings are conspicuous during flight. Sexes are alike. Breeding bird has long ornamental plumes round base of neck, elongated inner secondaries; some slaty-grey in wings and scapulars. Non-breeding bird lacks neck-plumes, elongated inner secondaries and slaty-grey ones in wings and scapular. Juvenile has feathered head and neck except face and patch around eye. Patch of bare skin underwing is black, not blood-red as in adult.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is gregarious, occurs in moderate to large flocks. Usually the flock is made with the same species or in company with storks, egrets and spoonbills. Actively forages in mud and shallow water. It probes in mud with partially opened bill; sometimes it can submerge entire head and neck in to mud. It inhabited in rivers, jheels, freshwater marshes, reservoirs, tanks, paddy fields, occasionally tidal mudflats and lagoons, etc.

**Food:** Carnivorous, chiefly fish, frogs, molluscs and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in mixed colonies from June to March. Nest is a stick platform on trees in or near water. Normal clutch size is 2 to 4; eggs are bluish or greenish white.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 88



### 34. LITTLE CORMORANT

**Scientific Name:** *Microcarbo niger* (Vieillot, 1817)

**Family:** Phalacrocoracidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 46-50 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Sana Panikua

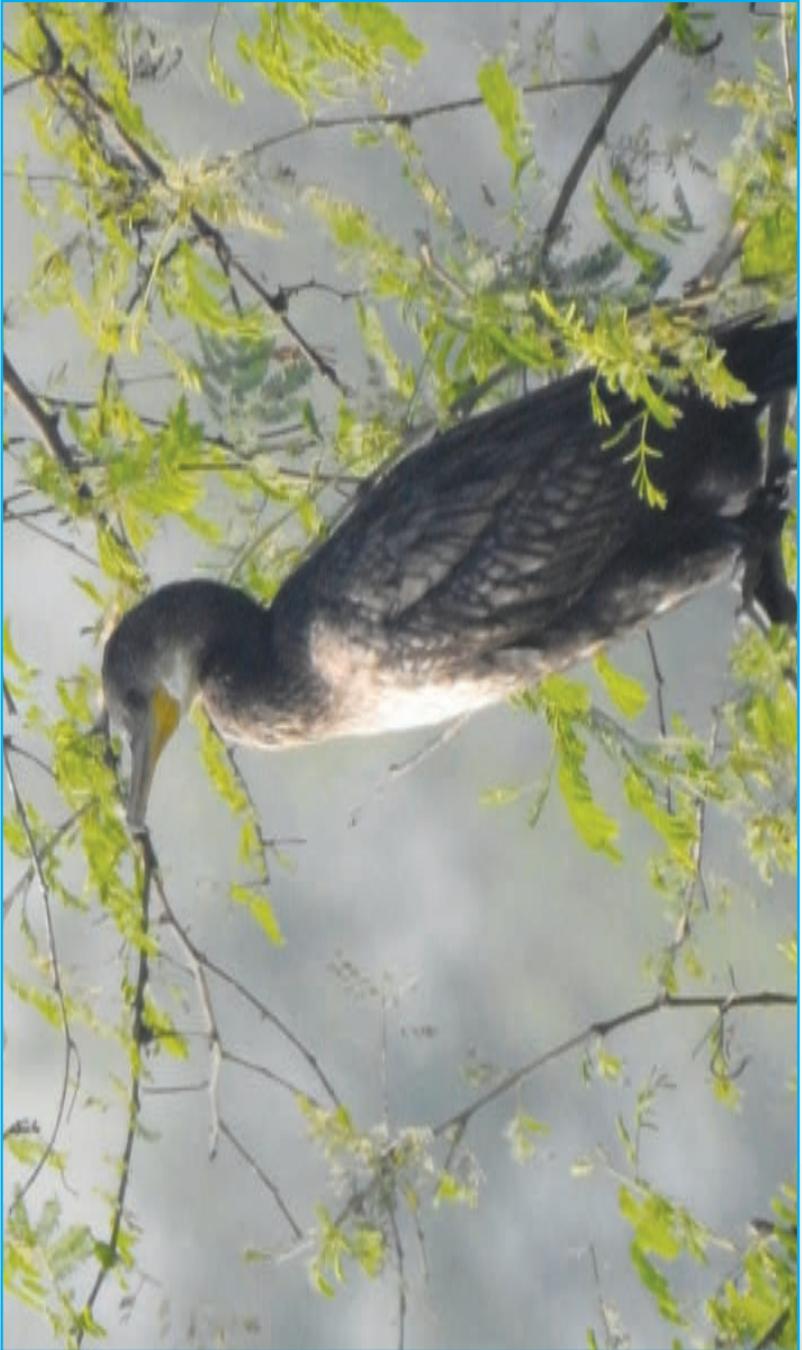
**Field Characters:** It is a small and black colour aquatic bird with thick and hooked bill. It has thick and short neck, stiff tail and without whitish gular skin. Breeding bird is black with glossy bluish-green; dark silvery grey upper part of back and wing-coverts. It has dark eyes, short white occipital crest, and a few white silky plumes on forehead, sides of head and neck and whitish gular skin. Non-breeding individual has no crest and other white feathers and plumes at base of lower bill appear white occasionally extended up to throat. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has brownish upperpart and paler underpart with white throat and central abdomen.

**Habits and Habitat:** The birds are found in singly also in large flocks in lakes and reservoirs and large rivers. It hunts on fish in groups. These are excellent diver and swimmer mostly found in lakes, rivers, irrigation reservoirs, canals, prefers village tanks, estuaries, etc.

**Food:** Largely fish, also tadpoles, frogs and crustaceans.

**Nesting:** It breeds in late summer and monsoon in mixed colonies from May to September. Nests are circular mass, made with dry twigs having a shallow central depression on medium to large trees along with egrets and herons. Normal clutch size varies in between 2-6 eggs. Eggs are glossy light bluish green in colour.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 90



## 35. INDIAN CORMORANT

**Scientific Name:** *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* Stephen 1826

**Family:** Phalacrocoracidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 60-63 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Panikua

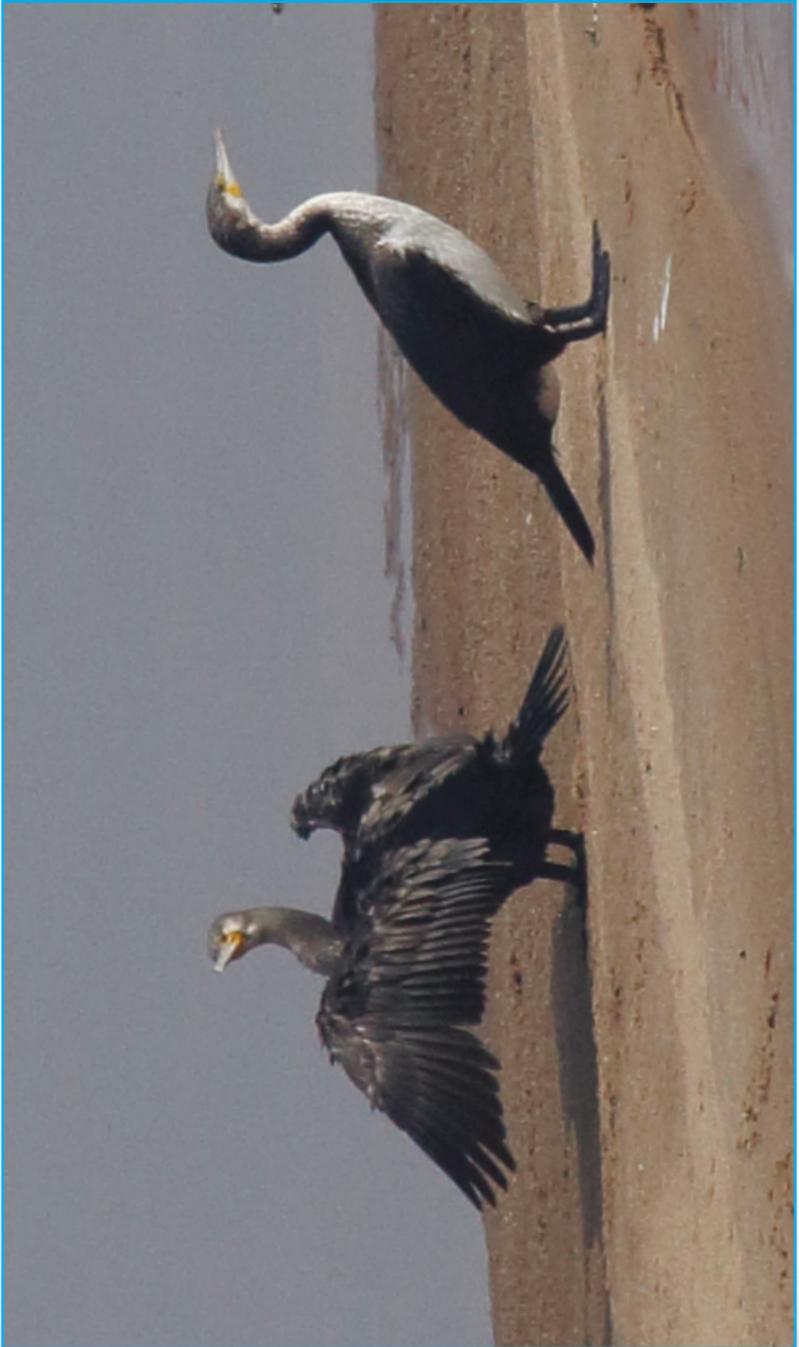
**Field Characters:** It is a predominantly black waterbird with blue-green eyes, slender dark brown bill longer than little cormorant, yellow gular skin, white spotted throat, black legs and feet; scaly effect on back and wings are visible on a closer look. Sexes are alike. During breeding season, upper plumage of the bird looks bright bronze-black whereas under plumage is glossy black. A distinct white tuft of feathers on each side of the neck behind eyes are present. Few specks also present on head. Non-breeding bird has whitish throat, yellowish gular skin and brownish underparts head and neck. White plumes are absent. Juvenile has Scaly bronze-brown upperparts with black primaries and tail and whitish underparts.

**Habits and Habitat:** Gregarious bird found in large flocks. Sometimes feeds with Little Cormorant often misidentify due to this. Locally common; undertake local movements depending on water conditions It always prefers to inhabit inside freshwater lakes, jheels, reservoirs, rivers, estuaries, and mangroves.

**Food:** Chiefly fish.

**Nesting:** The bird breeds during late monsoon gregariously in between July to February on large trees generally present inside island. Nests are circular mass made with dry twigs. Usually clutch size varies in between 3 to 6 and eggs are pale bluish green. Both sexes are incubated and show parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 92



## 36. GREAT CORMORANT

**Scientific Name:** *Phalacrocorax carbo* Linnaeus 1758

**Family:** Phalacrocoracidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 70-102 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Bada Panikua

**Field Characters:** It is a black waterbird with a slender bill which is hooked at tip and stiff long tail. Sexes are alike. During breeding season, the bird has glossy black plumage with metallic blue-green lustre; throat and facial skin is white, bright yellow gular skin bright silky white plumes on head and neck; a broad white patch on flanks. During non-breeding (winter) season, yellow gular pouch is pale yellow; white of head and neck and the white patch on flanks disappeared. Juvenile has brownish upperpart and whitish underpart.

**Habit and Habitat:** Generally gregarious bird, often found in small groups occasionally stays solitary. Hunt fishes in small groups in the deep water zone. It forms large flocks during breeding season. The bird prefers habitat like reservoirs, lakes large rivers and coastal wetlands.

**Food:** Carnivorous, voracious fish feeder.

**Migrating From:** China and other parts of the Indian subcontinent





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 94*



## 37. ORIENTAL DARTER

**Scientific Name:** *Anhinga melanogaster* Pennant, 1769

**Family:** Anhingidae

**Order:** Pelecaniformes

**Size:** 85-97 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Sapapakhi

**Field Characters:** It is a large bird like cormorant but with long slenderneck; narrow head; pointed bill and fan-shaped tail. A white streak is present from eye to sides of the neck; white chin and throat. Head and neck of the bird is velvety chocolate-brown. Upperpart is black back and wings are longitudinally streaked and mottled with silver-grey; entirely black below, including legs. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has lighter brownhead and neck; lower back to upper tail coverts dark brown. Mantle narrowly streaked with rufous and silver-grey colour, brown below; paler tail-tip.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird usually found solitary some times in a small flock. It roosts in a small flock on large trees. It swims in a large water body with submerged body with only snake-like head and neck extended outside the water, which the bird turns from side to side. Mostly the birds are found inside the lakes, jheels, reservoirs, rivers, ponds, marshes and mangroves, also coastal waters. Usually basks on trees near water bodies or sand bars like cormorant.

**Food:** Chiefly on fish, occasionally swallows too large ones. It throws the fish to the air and then engulfs the head first.

**Nesting:** It breeds in monsoon in between June to October. It is a colonial breeder. It breeds along with egrets and herons in heronries. Normal clutch size is three to four. Eggs are elongated pale greenish blue. Nests are made with twigs on large trees near water.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 96



### 38. EURASIAN THICK-KNEE

**Scientific Name:** *Burhinus oedicinemus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Burhinidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 39-41cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Chasamaakhia Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a large sandy brown bird with heavily streaked upperparts and underpart is whitish. Head is thick and streaked. Large roundish eyes are with broad supercilium which touches at side of neck with creamy moustachial stripe. Black tipped bill with yellowish base. Two wing bars are present on wings which are prominent during flight. Long and bare yellow legs are with distinct 'thick knees'. Sexes are alike.

**Habits and Habitat:** Mostly it is a solitary bird. Very secretive bird and cautious for strangers. Highly active during dawn, dusk and night but very less in day. It sits on ground by folding its long leg which gives a perfect camouflage, when get alarmed. It inhabits in scrublands, irrigation lands, riverine beds etc.

**Food:** Diet consists of insects, worms, lizards etc.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer season mainly in between March-June. Usually it laid 2-3 oval shaped eggs in simple scrape nest on bare ground or riverine beds. Eggs are pale brown or off white and heavily streaked and blotched with chocolate brown. Both sexes share parental cares.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 98



### 39. GREAT THICK-KNEE

**Scientific Name:** *Esacus recurvirostris* (Cuvier, 1829)

**Family:** Burhinidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 49-51cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Chasamaakhia Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a large wading bird having sandy greyish upperpart and whitish underpart. Large beak is black and yellow at base also upwardly curved. Eyes are big and roundish with distinct white eyering. White narrow supercillium and creamy moustachial stripe is present along with two black bands. Black wingbar bordered with whiteline can be seen in rest. During flight, round white wingpatch is prominent with contrast to black flight feathers. Long legs are yellow and bare, with distinct 'thick knees'. Sexes are alike.

**Habits and Habitat:** Mostly it is a solitary bird also found in small flocks. Very secretive bird and cautious for strangers. Highly active during dawn, dusk and night period but very less in day time. A fast runner and can swims occasionally. It runs by bending down its head and sits on ground by folding its long leg which gives a perfect camouflage, when get alarmed. It inhabits in open grassland, scrublands, irrigation lands, riverine beds etc.

**Food:** Diet consists of insects, worms, lizards etc.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer season mainly in between March-June. Usually it laid 2-3 oval shaped eggs in simple scrape nest on bare ground or riverine beds. Eggs are pale brown or off white and heavily streaked and blotched with chocolate brown. Both sexes share parental cares.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 100*



## 40. BLACK-WINGED STILT

**Scientific Name:** *Himantopus himantopus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Recurvirostridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 35-40cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Ranapa Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized wader characterized by grey or black and white plumage and long red leg. Along with this an adult bird has black slender bill and crimson-red legs. Male bird has head white with very few black spots; upperpart of wings glossy black and underparts is black; tail light greyishbrown; remaining other parts of body is glossy white. A typical whitish 'V' shaped on back can be seen in flight. Female has head and hindneck dusky white along with brownish grey; upperpart of the wing is brown and underpart is black. Juvenile has brownish upperpart with buff fringed feathers.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, occurs in small to medium sized flock throughout the year. It breeds in colonies along with terns and other colonial ground nesting birds. It walks slowly in the shallow water and mud while foraging. It forages inside shallow water by completely submerging its neck and head. It prefers freshwater and brackish water marshes, village tank, reservoirs and shallow margin of lakes, rivers, lagoon and saltpan.

**Food:** It is mainly a carnivorous bird; diet consists of molluscs, aquatic insects and other invertebrates etc.

**Nesting:** It is a ground nesting colonial bird, breeds in between March and August. It made nests on a mound surrounded by shallow water. Nests are simple scrape made on ground lined with grasses or other aquatic weeds. Normal clutch size varies in between 3 to 4 eggs. Eggs are glossy, brownish, heavily blotched and streaked.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 102*



## 41. PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER

**Scientific Name:** *Pluvialis fulva* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 23-26cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is one of the most common medium sized wader having greyish leg, short neck and golden brown plumage. Sexes are similar. Upperpart is spotted brown, dull white and golden yellow whereas underpart is whitish during nonbreeding season. Breast part is densely spotted with brown, grey and yellow. It has buffed head, streaked neck, black beak, light blackish yellow face and greyish white underwings. During breeding season (summer), this bird is quite unmistakable to identify. Bright golden-yellow, black mottled upperparts; face, lore throat and remaining underparts are black. A conspicuous white forehead, supercilium is running down through the side of the neck and breast.

**Habit and Habitat:** Gregarious bird, often found in solitary to large flocks of same species. Also forage with other wading birds. Very shy and cautious; often runs faster or fly away when get disturbed. It is a typical wader bird and forages on mudflats or flooded fields by dipping the beak. Arrives in India during late August and departs by May. It prefers wet grasslands, coasts, tidal mudflats, muddy banks of rivers and flooded agricultural field.

**Food:** It is carnivorous birds mainly feed on insects, small molluscs and crustaceans.

**Migrating from:** North Central and East Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 104



## 42. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

**Scientific Name:** *Charadrius dubius* Scopoli, 1786

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 14-17cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a typical small plover having dusky brown upperpart with very indistinct narrow whitish wing bar, small and black beak, yellow leg and white forehead, chin and throat are clearly diagnostic features of the bird during nonbreeding season. Also whitish neck ring and a brown line are present on breast which is separating the whitish throat to abdomen. During breeding season, a black band is present on the head and passing through eyes up to neck and another one is running as a pectoral band. A whitish patch is present on forehead and black fore-crown is separated from dusky brown cap by a thin white line running back over eyes and ear-covert. Striking yellow eye-ring is present in breeding plumage. Juvenile has a dull brownish head and breast; whitish fringes are present on black pectoral band.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly seen in pairs or in very small flocks. It moves randomly over wide area for feeding, in a typical plover manner. It runs swiftly over mud flats then randomly stops and dips its bill for foraging and then run away. It generally mixed with other waders. It is illusive in the habitat until not moving. It prefers sandy, pebbled margins of lakes, rivers, pools, mudflats, grasslands, intertidal zones, tidal creeks, etc.

**Food:** It is a carnivorous bird; primarily depend on insects, worms and other tiny invertebrates.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer season in between March to late May. It made simple scrape nest on bare ground or on sandy soils near water. Usually it laid 2-3 greenish grey colour eggs with brown spots and randomly wavy lines. Eggs are pointed in one end and other end is broad. Incubation period is about 18 days and extremely cautious during incubation.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 106



### 43. KENTISH PLOVER

**Scientific Name:** *Charadrius alexandrinus* Scopoli, 1786

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 15-17cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a small sized wading bird like Little Ringed Plover. Sexes are similar but female is paler than male. During non-breeding (winter) season the bird has dusky brown upper part, whitish underpart, blackish legs, whitish forehead, broad white supercilium, dusky grey crown, white hindneck collar, brownish eye stripe and an incomplete brownish breast band. During breeding (summer) season, male has an identical black forecrown and rufous crown is there. Also it has a black eye stripe and incomplete breast band. Female is more or less as in non-breeding plumage. Juvenile is alike with female but dusky brown buff is present on upperparts.

**Habit and Habitat:** Gregarious bird, often found in the mixed flocks of other small waders. It stays either in pairs or small groups. Birds are scattered over large areas for foraging. It usually prefers seashore, riverbeds with sandbars, and sandy margins of lakes, ponds, and salt pans.

**Food:** Carnivorous often prefers small crabs, sand hoppers and other insects.

**Migrating From:** India: Northern India, Southern India, Gujarat  
Outside India: Central Asia





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 108



## 44. RIVER LAPWING

**Scientific Name:** *Vanellus duvaucellii* (Lesson, 1826)

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 29-32cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Nadi Tentei

**Field Characters:** Typical plover like bird with black bill, head and occipital crest; upperparts dusky grey-brown. Upper tail coverts and tail is white along with terminal black band. Chin, cheek and throat of the bird is white, hind neck of the bird is grey along with whitish border and a black patch is present on abdomen. Remaining underparts is white. A conspicuous black wing tip and a broad white wing bar are there on upperwing, which are clearly seen during flight. It has whitish underwings and blackish legs with feet.

**Habits and Habitat:** Generally solitary or in pairs, rarely found in very small flock while foraging. Scattered and moved around the large field for foraging. It feeds by running short distance quickly then stop and probes its bill into mud or field for few time and then proceeds in same manner like plovers. It is a vigilant and noisy bird. Often gives alarm calls when approached. It chases the intruder with high pitch call. Usually found in riverine sandbars and banks, also found in fallows, dry fields, canals etc.

**Food:** Mainly Carnivorous bird prefers molluscs, crustacean, insects, fish, frogs and tad poles.

**Nesting:** It breeds during summer season, in between March to June. It makes a simple scrape nests on sand bars of rivers near water. Nests are quite illusive and very tough to find it. Usually, the bird laid 3-4 eggs. Eggs are pointed on one side and another side is broad. Eggs are glossy greyish brown with blotched and spotted brown marks. Occasionally nests were well decorated with small molluscs. Both parents incubate eggs and shows parental cares.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 110



## 45. YELLOW-WATTLED LAPWING

**Scientific Name:** *Vanellus malabaricus* (Boddaert, 1783)

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 29-32cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Haladia Tentei

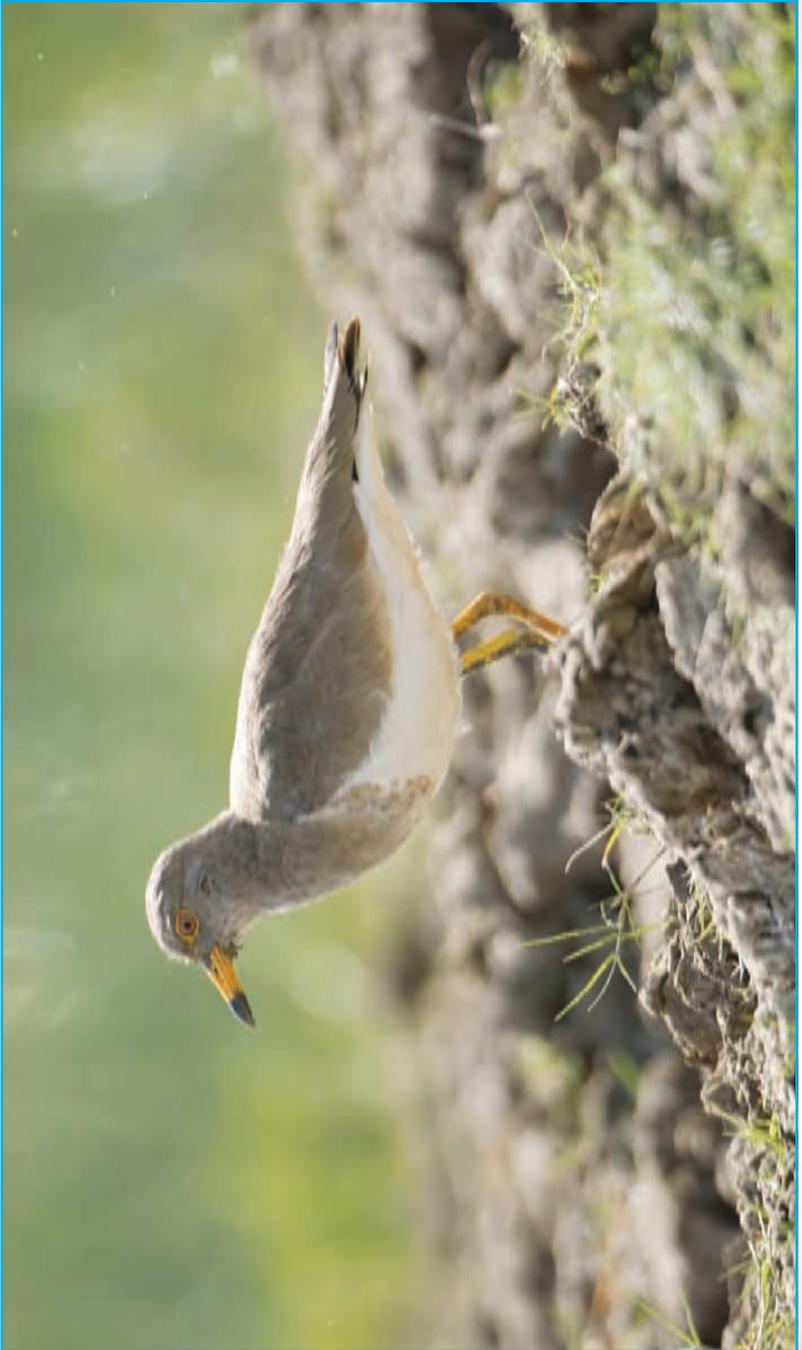
**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized, wide spread wader having elongated body, long leg and a bright wattle. The bird has black bill with bright yellow base, gape and wattle. A black crown is there edged with a thin white line. Upperparts are dusky brown with black leading edges of secondaries. White wing bar is conspicuous along with black flight feathers during flight. Tail is white with a broad black sub-terminal band. Neck and breast is brown. Remaining underparts is white bordered by a thin black line. Legs and feet are bright yellow. Sexes are similar. Juvenile has light sandy brown upperparts along with prominent buff fringes, whitish underparts, brown cap and small wattle of dusky yellow coloured.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mainly this bird found in pairs or rarely in small groups during nonbreeding season. Scattered and moved around the large field for foraging. It feeds by running short distance quickly then stop and probes its bill into mud or field for few time and then proceeds in same manner like plovers. Often gives alarm calls when approached. Mainly occurs in fallows, dry fields, near jheels, keeps away from muddy shores.

**Food:** Chiefly insectivorous such as grasshoppers, beetles, etc.

**Nesting:** It breeds during summer season, in between March to August. It makes a simple scrape nests on dry and bare ground or sand bars of rivers near water. Usually, the bird laid 3-4 eggs. Eggs are pointed on one side and another side is broad. Eggs are glossy greyish brown with blotched and spotted brown marks. Incubation period is 20- 24 days.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 112



## 46. GREY-HEADED LAPWING

**Scientific Name:** *Vanellus cinereus* (Blyth, 1842)

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 34-37cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Dhusaramundi Tentei

**Field Characters:** It is a larger plover with red iris, yellow eyelids, black tipped yellow bill and long yellow legs. Head and neck grey rump, upper tail coverts and tail is white it last with a broad black band. Primaries are black whereas secondaries are pure white. A distinct black pectoral band is present. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is a light brown without dark pectoral band.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious birds often found in a small flock or in pairs. It is commonly associated with other Lapwings. Arrives by September-October and departs by March end or April. It occurs in marshes, jheels edges, riverbanks, grazing fields and mudflats.

**Food:** It is a Carnivorous bird usually found insect worms and molluscs.

**Migrating From:**North East China, Russia and Japan.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 114



## 47. RED-WATTLED LAPWING

**Scientific Name:** *Vanellus indicus* (Boddaert, 1783)

**Family:** Charadriidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 32-35cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Tentei

**Field Characters:** It is a most familiar plover bird with black tipped dark red bill, distinct facial crimson red-wattle and eyelids and bright yellow legs. It has black head, neck and breast; upperparts bronze brown; underparts white. A broad white band, starting from behind the eye, is present in both side of the neck and touches the whitish underpart. Upper tail coverts and tail is white with a broad black band. Primary and secondary feathers of the wing are black and a white wing bar is prominent during flight. Sexes are similar. Juvenile has dull black cap, chin, throat and fore-neck along with the side line present either sides of neck are dull white.

**Habit and Habitat:** Generally crepuscular and nocturnal still it is active during all time of the day. Often it is seen in pair or threes or in very small flocks. It feeds by running short distance quickly then stop and probes its bill into mud or field for few time and then proceeds in same manner like plovers. Often gives alarm calls when approached. It chases the intruder with high pitch call. It is found in jheels, ditches, tanks, puddles, open agricultural field, countryside and open grounds near water.

**Food:** A carnivorous bird prefers insects, molluscs and other invertebrates.

**Nesting:** It breeds during summer season, in between March to August. It makes a simple scrape nests on dry and bare ground or sand bars of rivers near water. Nests are quite illusive and very tough to find it. Usually, the bird laid 3-4 eggs. Eggs are pointed on one side and another side is broad. Eggs are glossy greyish brown with blotched and spotted brown marks. Incubation period is 20- 24 days.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 116



## 48. GREATER PAINTED SNIPE

**Scientific name:** *Rostratula benghalensis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Rostratulidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 23-25 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

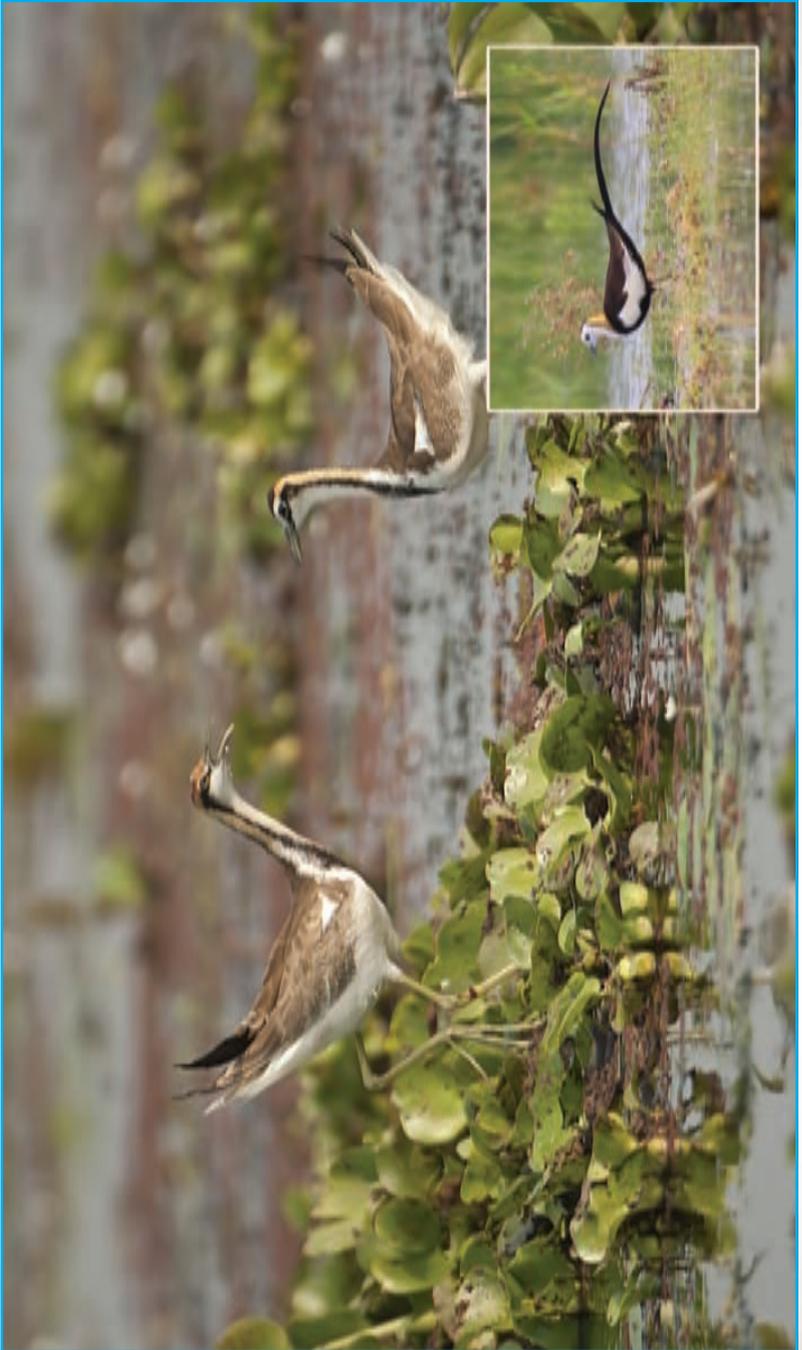
**Field Characters:** A medium sized water bird having long leg, with long straight and slender bill slightly decurved at tip. Female is larger than male and difficult to identify in nonbreeding period. In breeding plumage, female has white patch around the eyes and extended behind it. Head and neck chestnut colour. A white band present over shoulders to side of the breast and lower breast blackish. Upperparts of the bird, metallic olive green with buff and blackish streaks and markings lower side white. Pale colour line present along the centre of the crown extended up to bill. The male is less attractive than female and lack of chestnut and black on neck and breast. Usually found single or in pairs in vegetation covered swamps.

**Habits and Habitats:** These are found in reed covered swamps, vegetation bordered jheels, tanks and water logged paddy field. It is a resident species but also moves locally according to favourable conditions. It is mostly crepuscular and much more active in the early morning and evening, possibly even at night than the day time. It is a strong and swift runner too can rush among reeds when get disturbed. It is also a good swimmer.

**Food:** Omnivorous, usually feed on insects, crustacean and molluscs, as well as paddy grains and vegetable matters.

**Nesting:** The painted snipe breeds throughout the year. The nest is simple scrape nest made up of grasses or reeds. It is placed on ground in grass in the edge of a marsh or on borders separating waterlogged fields. The eggs 3 or 4 are some shade of yellowish stone colour, blotched and streaked with brown.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 118



## 49. PHEasant-TAILED JACANA

**Scientific Name:** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* (Scopoli, 1786)

**Family:** Jacanidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 39-58 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Lambalanji Kalichadhei

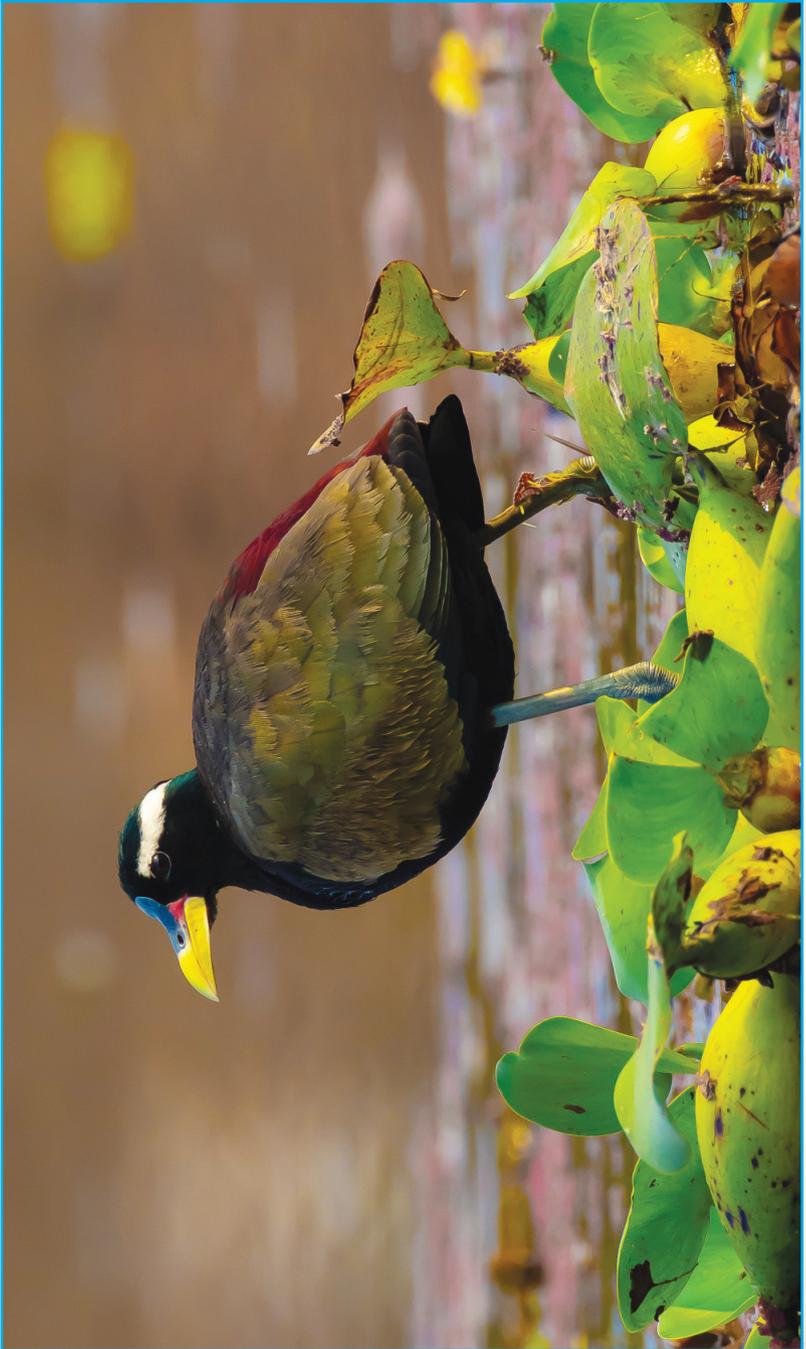
**Field Characters:** In breeding time, the bird has prominent white face, throat and foreneck; wing covert also white. Hindneck pale yellow colour bordered with black line. Bill is short and legs are pale bluish colour. Upperpart dark brown whereas ventral part blackish brown. Tail coverts and tail are black. Tail is pointed and elongated like pheasants during breeding time. Sexes are alike. In nonbreeding plumage, the bird is chiefly pale brown and white, with a black necklace on upper breast and long sickle shaped tail is absent. Juvenile is dull brown colour with a black line mark on neck.

**Habits and Habitat:** The bird is fairly common on aquatic vegetation covered lake, jheel, tank or any swamp areas. It is quite open and less secretive like Bronze-winged Jacana. The long spider like toes helps to balance the body weight, so that it can run over the most lightly floating leaf without producing a ripple.

**Food:** Its diet consists of vegetable matters as well as insects and molluscs.

**Nesting:** The breeding season is during monsoon principally June to September. The nest is made up of reeds and other grasses etc. like Bronze-winged Jacana, placed on floating vegetation. Occasionally the eggs are even laid on bare lotus leaves. The clutch size consists of 4-10 oval shaped unmarked eggs, glossy greenish- bronze or rufous-brown in colour.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 120



## 50. BRONZE-WINGED JACANA

**Scientific name:** *Metopidius indicus* (Latham, 1790)

**Family:** Jacanidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 28-31 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Kali Chadhei

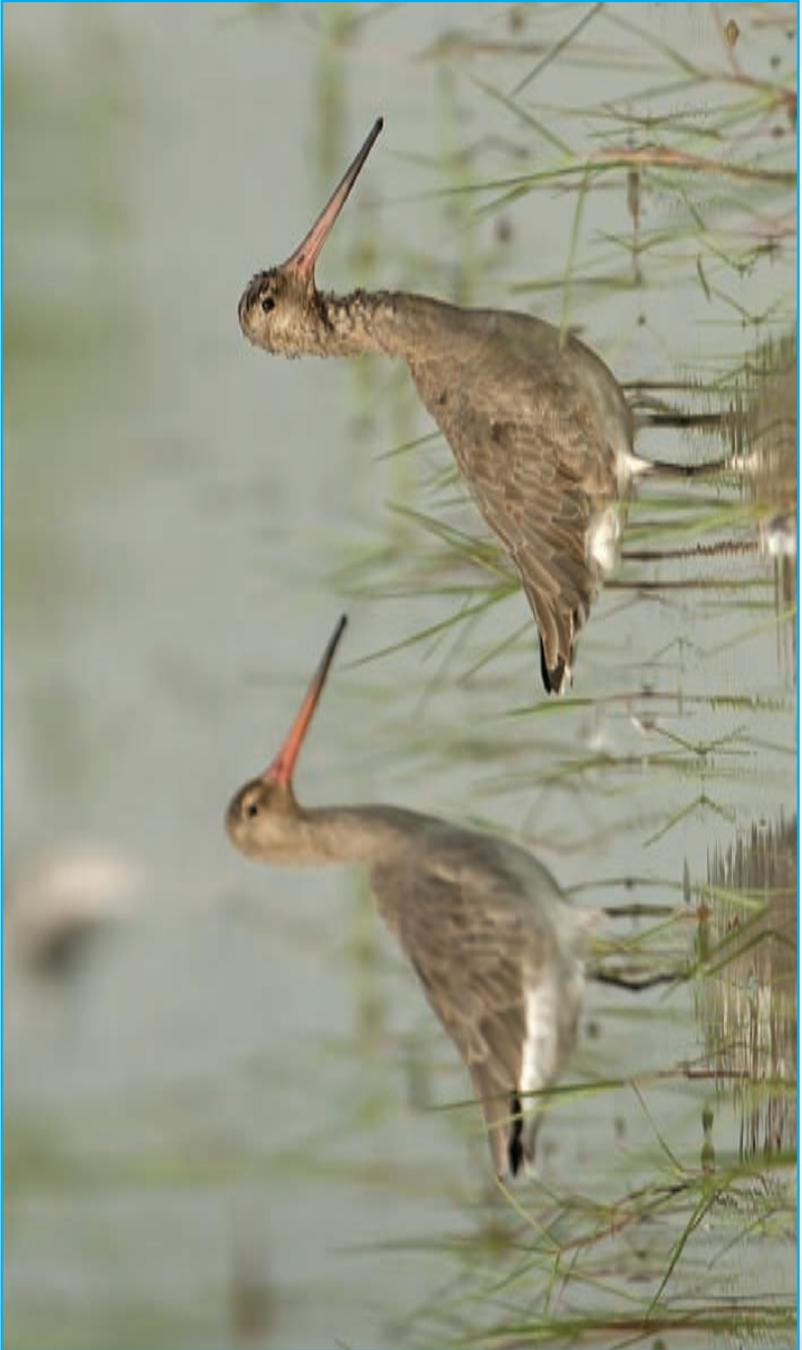
**Field Characters:** It is a long legged waterbird with glossy black head, neck and breast, metallic greenish- bronze back and wings and cinnamon red rump. A distinctive broad white stripe present behind eye to nape. Bill is short and yellow coloured with bluish shield. It has elongated spider like toes which helps to move on floating vegetation. Sexes are alike but female is slightly larger. Juvenile has a rufous-brown coloured crown, brownish upperpart and whitish underpart. Rufous buff present around the breast.

**Habits and Habitat:** It inhabits in lakes, jheels and tanks covered with floating and emergent aquatic vegetation. The birds are crepuscular and most active in early morning and late evenings. They are also active in other times of the day. It moves in to nearest accessible reeds when alarmed. It can dive well but a poor flyer. The flight is attained by rapid wing strokes are often slow along with the extended neck and the leg hanged under the tail. It is noisy during breeding season.

**Food:** Most preferable diets consist of vegetation seeds, roots. Sometimes insects and molluscs are also eaten.

**Nesting:** Breeding season is monsoon in between June to September. The nest is prepared by the deposition of weeds placed on floating vegetation in a circular mass. The normal clutch consists of 4-5 eggs. Eggs are glossy bronze brown in colour with an irregular network of black or dark brown lines.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 122



## 51. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

**Scientific Name:** *Limosa limosa* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 36-44cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Dangua

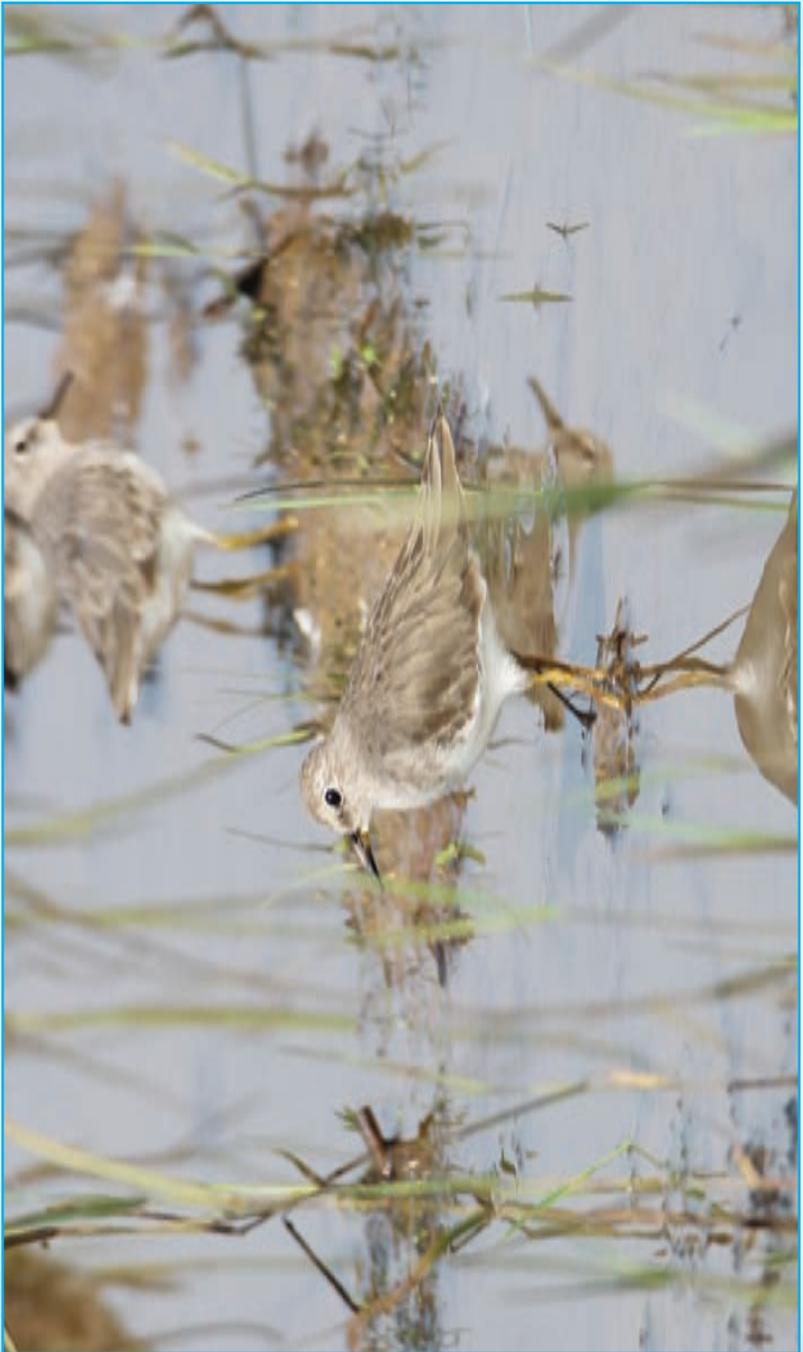
**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized wading bird having greyish brown upperparts, white tail with prominent black terminal bar; underparts white; legs and feet greyish-green. Small head, long neck, long bill and leg and slimmer body are characteristic features. Pinkish bill is long, straight and slender having one third black end. Broad white wing-bars, white rump and black tail-tip are distinctive during flight. Sexes are similar but female is slightly larger and longer bill. In summer, breeding plumages appears as chestnut head and breast, bars on flanks along with white chin, throat, abdomen and lower back.

**Habit and Habitat:** A gregarious bird often occurs in large flocks. It is very swift in flight. Commonly found in stagnant waters and at the mudflats. Flocks often foraged in shallow water up to the belly and feeding with head and neck submerged. Mostly found at inland jheels, shallows and mud banks of rivers, lakes and reservoirs, sometimes also in brackish lagoons, tidal waters and coastal salt pans.

**Food:** Chiefly carnivorous prefers molluscs, crustaceans and other invertebrates also feed on seeds of aquatic plants.

**Migrating from:** Central Asia and Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 124



## 52. TEMMINCK'S STINT

**Scientific Name:** *Calidris temmincki* (Leisler, 1812)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 13-15cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chuin Sima

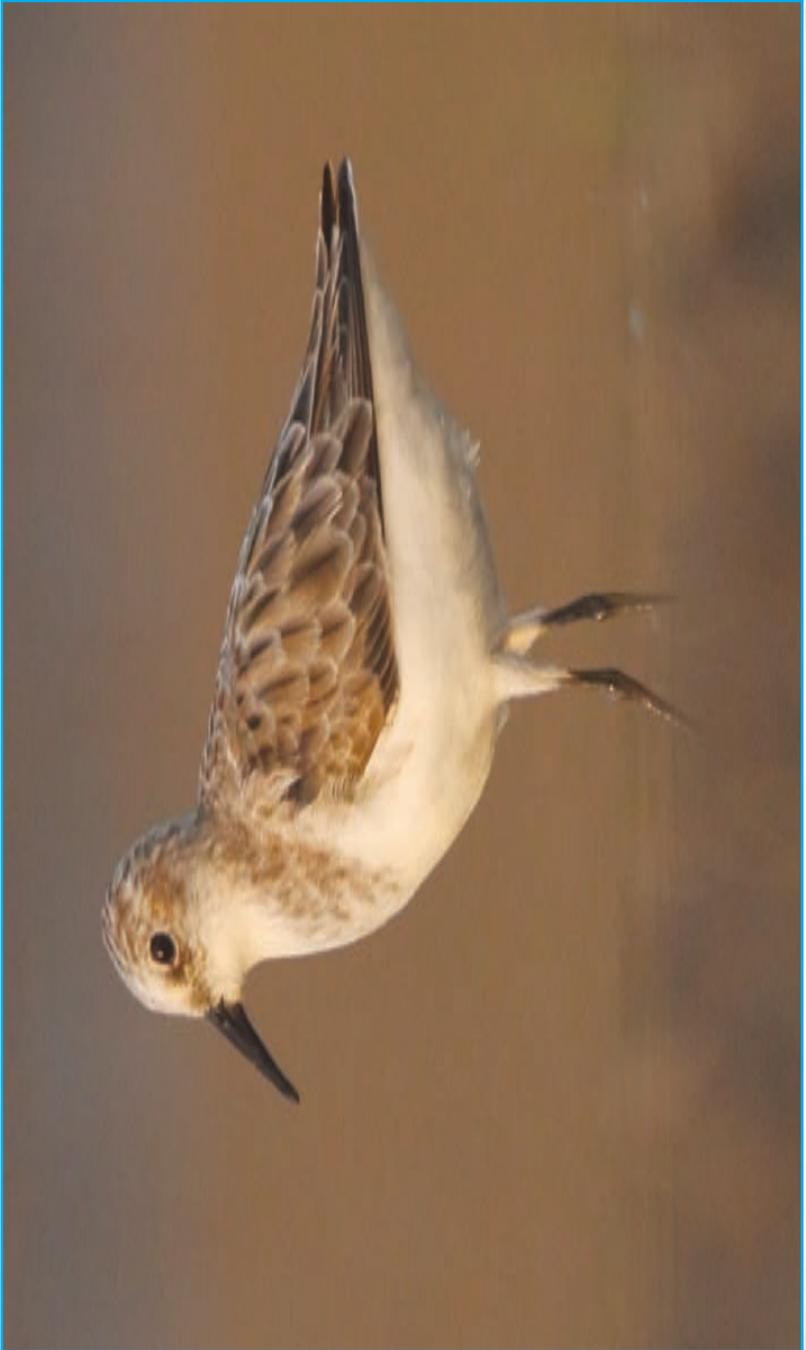
**Field Characters:** It is a tiny wading bird very similar to Little Stint but separated by uniform greyish brown above, brown forehead; white outer tail-feathers and greenish legs. During nonbreeding (winter) plumage, the bird has brownish grey upperpart, greyish brown head and breast, distinct breastband and less visible supercilium; underpart is white. Bill is short, black and downwardly curved. Iris is black. Sexes are similar. In breeding (summer) season the bird is similar with non-breeding adult but has dark brown head, chest and above.

**Habit and Habitat:** Usually found solitary, though sometimes occurs in small flocks. It forages at the margins of water bodies. It arrives by September and returns by May. It prefers fresh water habitat with vegetation riverbank, pool, lake, brackish marshes, mudflat and tidal lagoon

**Food:** It is a chiefly carnivorous birds, diets consists of small molluscs, crustaceans, insects and other invertebrates.

**Migrating From:** North Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 126



### 53. LITTLE STINT

**Scientific Name:** *Calidris minuta* (Leisler, 1812)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 13-15cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Sima

**Field Characters:** It is a small wading bird. During non-breeding (winter) period, bill and leg black, forehead and indistinct supercilium are white; upperparts pale grey-brown with dark centered feathers, brownish outer tail feathers which is prominent during flight. Tail is shorter than the wings and has whitish wingbar which is prominent in flight. Underparts are white with light streaks on breast. Sexes are similar. During breeding (summer) season the bird has whitish forehead, neck and supercilium. The bird has rufous grey streaks on cap and hindneck. Feathers on back are black having broad rufous edges. Foreneck and upper breast have lightly visible dark brown spots. Juvenile is almost similar with adult bird in summer plumage having light grey hind neck, whitish rufous mantle and white supercilium. Underpart is white.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, mostly found in large flocks of hundreds. It flies in mixed flocks with other waders in coastal areas. Also found solitary, it constantly run randomly here and there on mud for food by probing its short bill. Entire flock flies simultaneously and very swiftly when gets disturbed. It arrives in small numbers by August and departs by April-May.

**Food:** A carnivorous bird, diet consists of small molluscs, crustacean, insect and other invertebrates

**Migrating From:** North West and North Central Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 128



## 54. COMMON SNIPE.

**Scientific Name:** *Gallinago gallinago* (Linnaeus. 1758)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 25-27 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Huruda

**Field Characters:** It is a wading bird; adult has dark brown upperparts with pale stripes, neck and breast part heavily streaked with black, rufous and buff spots. Underpart is white. A buff median stripe is present on head and supercilium. Basal half of the elongated, straight bill is olive-yellow and terminal half is blackish. Leg is short and dull olive-green colour. Juvenile is similar to adults, but with whitish fringes on mantle feathers and wing-coverts. Sexes are alike.

**Habits and Habitat:** The bird is highly elusive and solitary in nature. Also occasionally found in flocks. Usually, it is crepuscular and nocturnal, also feeds in other time of the day. It prefers to crouch on the field than flying and flushed immediately after close approach. It arrives by end of August and departs by April. It occurs at swampy edges of jheels, marshes, around reservoirs, paddy fields, muddy edges of rivers and pools. It probes its slender like bill in to soft mud to obtain small invertebrates as food.

**Food:** Carnivorous, diets consist of small molluscs, aquatic larvae and worms etc.

**Migrating From:** Northern Europe and Northern Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 130



## 55. COMMON SANDPIPER

**Scientific Name:** *Actitis hypoleucos* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 19-21cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized wader having long legs. Non-breeding (winter) plumage of the bird is olive-brown upperpart and whitish underpart. Head and sides of neck are dark ashy brown; breast is light brown and streaked. Supercilium is pale and not prominent; beak is black and short. Legs are and short olive green colour. The rump and tail are brown with outer whitish tail feather. A prominent small white patch is present on shoulder. White wing bar and brown rump is conspicuous in flight. Sexes are alike. Breeding (summer) plumage is darker above and irregularly barred, foreneck and breast are heavily brown-streaked. Juvenile has brown upperpart with buff fringes.

**Habits and Habitat:** Generally it is a solitary bird. It runs along the edge of waterbodies and picks up small invertebrates from muddy ground. It continuously wags its tail and bobs the head, while feeding. It is found in inland waterbodies, village tanks, banks of stream, ditches, rivers, canals, lakes; tidal creeks, rocky seashores etc.

**Food:** A carnivorous bird, feed on small molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic insects etc.

**Migrating from:** Central Asia and Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 132



## 56. GREEN SANDPIPER

**Scientific Name:** *Tringa ochropus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 21-24cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized wader having stockier body. Non-breeding (winter) adult bird has ashy brown head and neck and other upperparts is dark brown with glistening green bronze. Tail is white with lightly visible blackish bars. Legs are green and short. Bill is Black with reddish base. Faint eye stripe, brown eye with whitish eyelid. Underpart is white whereas neck, breast and flanks are with fine brown streaked. Upperparts of wings are dark as well as lower part. Sexes are similar. Breeding (summer) bird has darker upper parts than nonbreeding adult which is spotted lightly with white. More whitish streaked crown and neck, heavily streaked breast. Juveniles have browner upperpart with buff edged feathers. Looks very similar with Wood Sandpiper but separated by more whitish rump and tail, darker surface of upper and underwings.

**Habit and Habitat:** Generally it is a solitary bird, occasionally gathers into small flocks. It runs on mud flat in search of food and feeds at water edge also wades in shallow water and probes by bill. It generally favours small wetlands like village tanks, puddles, streams, marshes, cannals, and agricultural fields.

**Food:** Mainly carnivorous diet comprising of molluscs, crustacean, and aquatic insects

**Migrating From:** Central Asia to East Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 134*



## 57. COMMON GREENSHANK

**Scientific Name:** *Tringa nebularia* (Gunnerus, 1767)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 30-34cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Kaduakhumpi

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized slim and elegant wader having distinct whitish-grey body, long neck and greyish green leg. Upperpart is dark greyish-brown and underpart white during non-breeding (winter) season. The bird has white forehead, face, foreneck rump and tail. Tail has almost invisible with terminal barring. Grey streaked head, hind neck and sides of Head. Long, slender and lightly up curved bill is greenish-brown having a black tip. Leg and feet are olive-green. Sexes are alike. During summer or breeding bird have heavily streaked and spotted upperparts, head neck and upper breast. Juveniles are more brownish upperparts than nonbreeding adult. Feathers are edged with paler buff. Neck and upper breast are heavily streaked.

**Habit and Habitat:** It forages in a scattered manner with same flock or in mixed flock of sandpipers, occurs in small to medium sized flocks. It runs around on mud often probing for food and wades in shallow waters. It arrives by second half of August and departs by end of April. Mostly found at swampy edges of freshwater ponds and lakes paddy fields and marshes also intertidal mudflats, brackish water lagoons and salt pans.

**Food:** Mainly Carnivorous diet comprising of tadpoles, molluscs, crustaceans, insects

**Migrating from:** Central Asia, Central and East Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 136



## 58. COMMON REDSHANK

**Scientific Name:** *Tringa totanus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 27-29cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chota Batanachaha

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized wader having a long elegant body, slender like bill, small head, long neck and leg. During non-breeding (winter) season, the bird has spotted grey-brown upper parts and whitish underparts. Legs are long, orange-red, projected behind beyond tail in flight. Base of the bill is light red and tip black. Abdomen, rump and tail are white but the terminal part of the tail is barred with brown, looks prominent during flight. Breast finely streaked with brown. Dark greyish wing and semicircular white wing bar is distinguished in flight. Sexes are alike. Upperparts is heavily streaked and spotted with black and reddish yellow during summer as breeding plumage. Breast is heavily and finely streaked and spotted with brown. Sexes are similar. Juvenile has brownish above and bordered with paler buffs. Underparts heavily streaked with brown and light orange legs

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary or in small groups along with other waders. It is a very cautious and noisy wader. It feeds by picking from surface while walking on muds and shallow water. It is found at marshes, muddy edges of rivers, lakes, muddy pool, mud banks of mangroves, salt pans, tidal creeks and estuaries. Often arrived in September and leaves by mid-April.

**Food:** Carnivorous bird, diet comprising of molluscs, aquatic insects and worms.

**Migrating From:** India: Ladakh and Kashmir Outside India: Mongolia, Russia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 138



## 59. WOOD SANDPIPER

**Scientific Name:** *Tringa glareola* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 18-21cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a slim and medium sized wader. During nonbreeding (winter) season, the bird has grey-brown upperpart spotted with white. Underpart is white with light brown breast. It has distinct white supercilium extended behind eye. Beak is short and straight mainly black colour with olive green base. Legs are short and greenish yellow. Tail is white with blackish barred terminal. Sexes are similar. Breeding (summer) bird has darker upperparts with conspicuous white spots. Juvenile has darker brown upperparts with buff edged feathers. More spotted and streaked breast also with buffs.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, often found in singly or small sized flocks. It shows larger flocks during time of migration. It also shows territorial behaviour, continuously wagging its tail and often wades in mud and in shallow waters for feeding. It prefers inland water bodies, marshes, village tank, agricultural fields, lowland and tidal creek

**Food:** A carnivorous bird, diet comprising of tiny fishes, molluscs, crustaceans and other benthic fauna etc.

**Migrating From:** Central and East Siberia.





## 60. MARSH SANDPIPER

**Scientific Name:** *Tringa stagnatilis* (Bechstein, 1803)

**Family:** Scolopacidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 22-25cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chunchimunnia Chaha

**Field Characters:** During Non-breeding (winter) season, the bird has greyish-brown upperparts and milky white underparts. Head is short with whitish forehead and supercilium. Sides of head, lower back and rump are white. Black bill and greenish legs are quite important features. Sexes are alike. During breeding (summer) plumage, the bird has brownish grey upperpart which is barred and blotched and whitish underpart. Foreneck and upper breast are brown spotted; barred flanks are seen during this period. Juveniles have heavily streaked upperpart with black, feathers are bordered with paler buffs, crown, sides of neck and hindneck are streaked.

**Habit and Habitat:** A solitary bird occasionally found in small flocks or in mixed flock during the time of foraging at the edges of water bodies, agricultural fields and mudflats. Arrives by mid-August and departs by end of April. It occurs at swampy edges of freshwater ponds and jheels, Paddy fields and marshes also intertidal mudflats, brackish water lagoons, salt pans.

**Food:** Chiefly carnivorous, diet comprising of molluscs crustaceans, insects and worms.

**Migrating from:** Central Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 142



## 61. LITTLE PRATINCOLE

**Scientific Name:** *Glareola lactea* Temminck, 1820

**Family:** Glareolidae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 16-19cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Batahana

**Field Characters:** It is a small, sandy grey colour bird having brown forehead. A black line is running from eye to beak. Wings are long, narrow and pointed. Upperpart of wing is greyish, underpart is black. Primary feathers are black whereas secondaries have whitish base and black tip; these features are prominent in flight. Tail is white, square shaped with a broad black band. Underparts is smoky brown lightly shaded with rufous, except lower breast and abdomen are white. Legs and feet are short and dark brown. Non breeding adult bird lacks black line in between eye to beak and rufous upper breast, in case of rufous, it is streaked. Juvenile has scaly upper plumage having indistinct buffs. Throat and foreneck are spotted with black.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a gregarious bird, found in large flocks around rivers and lakes. Crepuscular in nature; generally feeds at evening hours. Mostly found in large rivers with sand bank, streams and lakes etc.

**Food:** Insectivorous bird, feeds on beetles, bugs and termites.

**Nesting:** It is a colonial breeder and breeds in summer in between February to April. Simple scrape nests are made on sand bars or on ground. It laid 2/3 eggs, which are brownish or greyish; blotched or streaked; extremely camouflaged with substrate. It behaves like broken winged bird to distract the intruder from its nest. Both sexes incubate the eggs and take care of chicks. Incubation period lasts 18-20 days.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 144



## 62. INDIAN SKIMMER

**Scientific Name:** *Rynchops albicollis* Swainson, 1838

**Family:** Laridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 40-43 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Vulnerable/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Panichiri

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized Tern like waterbird having black and white plumage. Long orange red bill with yellow tip and orange base, bent downwards but lower mandible is longer than the upper and sharp. Forehead, neck-collar and wing-bar are white. Crown, eye and down to the nape are black. Upperparts blackish brown and underparts are glossy white. Legs and feet are bright red. A very long pointed wing with dull white underpart. Wings project far beyond the slightly forked tail at rest. Sexes are alike, but female slightly smaller. Juvenile has a streaked brown forehead; upperparts lighter brown, scalloped with fulvous white; tail feather brown-tipped.

**Habit and Habitat:** It forages by flying lower over water with the bill open and lower mandible skimming the water surface. It grabs the fish so quickly with head movement when it touches the tip of the lower mandible. It hunts actively during dusk and dawn time, also other time of the day, also active in moonlight nights. It occurs in undisturbed large rivers with sandbanks, reservoirs, and lakes.

**Food:** Carnivorous, mainly small fish and insect larvae.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer in between March-June in the remote and isolated sandbars of large rivers. Simple scrape nests were made on loose sand. Clutch size varies from 1-5. Eggs are grayish brown in colour, spotted and streaked with brown colour. Incubation period longs up to 21-24 days. Both the parents incubate eggs and shows parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 146



## 63. LITTLE TERN

**Scientific Name:** *Sternula albifrons* (Pallas 1764)

**Family:** Laridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 22-24 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Chota Gangoi

**Field Characters:** It is a small grey and white Tern. In non-breeding period (winter), forehead, crown and nape has whitish black colour. Bill looks prominent blackish and legs and feet are black. Breeding (summer) plumage includes white forehead, crown and nape glossy black and bill and legs orange yellow. Juvenile has dark wavy bar on upperparts white forehead and crown speckled Brownish-black; blackish nape finely dotted with white.

**Habits and Habitat:** It feed alone or in small flocks flying back and forth over river, lakes, tidal creeks and other inland water surface scanning for food. It dives so quickly over prey.

**Food:** Generally carnivorous, primary diet consists of small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds from late April to mid-June in large rivers and lagoons; nest is a simple shallow depression on grounds or sand bars. Clutch size varies from 2-3, eggs are greyish green spotted with dark brown color.





## 64. WHISKERED TERN

**Scientific Name:** *Chilidonias hybrida* (Pallas, 1811)

**Family:** Laridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 21-25 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/ Migratory

**Local Name:** Chota Gangoi

**Field Characters:** It is a silvery white colour Tern with a pointed reddish-black bill, lightly forked tail (almost squarish) and red legs. Wings are projected beyond tail in rest. In Nonbreeding period, it has dull greyish white upperpart and whitish underpart, white forehead along with black streaks, blackish head and nape. In breeding time (summer), the cap and nape down to below eyes turned to black. Remaining upperpart is greyish white whereas belly is black. Sexes are alike.

**Habits and Habitat:** Mostly found in small to medium flocks. It prefers mostly large rivers, inland lakes, marshlands and reservoirs. It flies and hovers continuously over waterbodies, hunts fishes from certain height by diving in to the water. It rests at night on rocks, nets, bamboos etc.

**Food:** Carnivorous, tadpole of frogs, small fish, crustaceans and aquatic insects

**Migrating From:** Other parts of the Indian Subcontinent.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 150



## 65. RIVER TERN

**Scientific Name:** *Sterna aurantia* J. E. Gray 1831

**Family:** Laridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 38-43 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Near Threatened/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Nadi Gangoi

**Field Characters:** It is a silvery white colour waterbird with a pointed yellow bill, deeply forked tail and short red legs. During non-breeding time (winter), cap looks dull greyish white with black streaks and bill duller with dusky black tip. In breeding time (summer), the cap and nape down to below eyes converted to glossy black. Upperpart is greyish white, underparts white. Juvenile has a brown forehead and broad supercilium, buffy white grey upperparts. Sexes are alike.

**Habits and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary, occasionally found in small flocks. As name suggests, it prefers mostly inland large river, lakes and reservoirs. It hunts fishes from certain height by diving in to the water in closed wings. Occasionally they follow foraging Cormorant flocks to get easy catch. It roosts at night on sandbanks or mudbanks. Very aggressive during parenting period both the sexes incubating eggs.

**Food:** Carnivorous, tadpole of frogs, fish, crustaceans and aquatic insects

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer in between February to June. As it is a colonial breeder, often breeds with Pratincoles and other species of Terns. Nest is a shallow depression on bare sand or mud islets in rivers or lakes. Normally, 2/3 greenish grey to buffy stone blotched and streaked with brown color eggs laid. Incubation period is 20-23 days.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 152



## 66. BLACK-BELLIED TERN

**Scientific Name:** *Sterna acuticauda* J E Gray, 1831

**Family:** Laridae

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Size:** 32-35 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Endangered/ Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Kalapetia Gangoi

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized, slender Tern. During non-breeding (winter) period, head looks white streaked with black, and a dusky black patch present behind eye. Bill has dull yellow colour with dusky black tip. Upper plumage greyish whereas under plumage is white with slightly grey colour on foreneck and breast. Tail is deeply forked and shorter during winter. Legs are orange red. In breeding (summer) period, forehead, crown, down below to eyes and nape is glossy black colour whereas cheeks, chin and throat pure white. Upperpart is ashy-greycolour; underpart is black. Tail is longer and pointed. Juvenile has buff-greyish upperpart, feathers with pale buff white edges. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** Often found in flight in search of fishes in large rivers, lake and jheels. It rests on sandbanks and submerged sandbanks. It feeds by swiftly diving and hunting vertically from air. Mostly it is an inland freshwater Tern.

**Food:** It is Carnivorous, also depends on fish, crustacean and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer inside large rivers on sandbars or small islands. It makes simple scrape nest on sand bars. Clutch size is 2/3 eggs. Eggs are pale or dark with brown spots. Both parents incubate eggs and take care of chicks.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 154



## 67. OSPREY

**Scientific Name:** *Pandion haliaetus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Pandionidae

**Order:** Accipitriformes

**Size:** 55-58 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-I Part-III

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chanchana

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized raptor with predominantly white and brown plumage and having long wing with distinct angle at carpal joint. Adult bird has white head, black beak and yellow iris. A dark brown band passing through the eyes touches the dark brown back. It has white underparts and underwing-coverts with a black patch at carpal joint. Streaked dark brown band present at lower neck. Sexes are alike but female has darker brownish plumage and well prominent neck band than male. Juvenile is almost similar to adult but with buff edged upper part and less prominent neck band.

**Habit and Habitat:** Usually found solitary. It glides, perches frequently on dead trees, bamboos or pillars inside or in vicinity of wetland. It occurs in major rivers, reservoirs, lakes, jheels, coastal lagoons and estuaries.

**Food:** Mainly feeds on fish.

**Migrating from:** India: Ladakh and Kashnir Outside India: Europe, Asia, North Africa.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 156



## 68. WESTERN MARSH HARRIER

**Scientific Name:** *Circus aeruginosus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Accipitridae

**Order:** Accipitriformes

**Size:** 54-59 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chanchana

**Field Characters:** It is a stout bodied harrier with sexually dimorphic plumage. Male has dark reddish brown upperpart with pale yellow streaks. Light rufous breast and head which are heavily streaked. It has dark rufous greater upper wing covert having grey secondary and black outer primary feathers. It has grey tail, yellow legs, feet, iris and cere. Female has chiefly dark brown with paler head, throat and shoulder lacks greyish tail. Juvenile is almost similar with female with entirely dark with pale head and throat.

**Habit and Habitat:** Found solitary, usually perches and soars over marshland and shallow water area. It prefers reedbeds, marshes, lakes, flooded paddy fields and coastal lagoons.

**Food:** It depends on Frogs, fish, weak birds, lizards, field mice and Rats, large insects as diet.

**Migrating from:** South Sweden and Denmark, Turkestan and Mongolia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 158



## 69. WHITE-BELLIED SEA EAGLE

**Scientific Name:** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* (J.F. Gmelin, 1788)

**Family:** Accipitridae

**Order:** Accipitriformes

**Size:** 66-71 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-I

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Chila

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized raptor bird. Adult bird has ashy-brown upperparts; milky white head, neck, and underparts. Tail is short, ashy brown with white edges. Flight feathers are black. Greyish hooked bill having black tip and grey cere. Sexes are alike but female is larger than male. Juvenile has brownish upper plumage with pale head, distinct dark breast band, and whitish tail with brownish sub terminal band.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mainly found in pairs or in solitary. Frequently soars and circles at a good height. Perch on Bamboos, pillars, dead trees etc. inside wetland or nearer to it. It also spends time on rocks or dead trees, usually near water. It inhabits in sea coasts, lagoons and estuaries; occasionally visits rivers, fresh water lakes and creeks.

**Food:** Carnivorous bird prefers small ducks, water snakes, fishes etc.

**Nesting:** It breeds in between October to June, varies in localities. It made huge twig nest lined of grasses and green leaves on tall trees, electric towers etc. near shoreline. Usually it laid two white eggs. Incubation and parental care shared by both parents.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 160



## 70. CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER

**Scientific Name:** *Merops leschenaulti* Vieillot, 1817

**Family:** Meropidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 18-20 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Nalimundia Balishua

**Field Characters:** It is a medium sized bird with colour contrasts. Adult bird has dark chestnut crown, hindneck and upper back which are distinguished features than other Bee-eaters. It has greenish upper plumage, bluish rump and tail, yellow chin and throat. A black stripe is passing through the eyes and dark rufous-black stripe present on throat. Tail is broader and slightly forked. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is much paler than adult, chestnut crown is absent or dull.

**Habit and Habitat:** It has a peculiar flight and aerial launch. Often perch on treetops, electric or telephone wire and feeds on high above canopy. Forage solitarily, at sunset, gathers makes noise and communally roosts on high trees. It lives in deciduous or evergreen forest near water.

**Food:** Mainly insectivorous, diets consist of bees, dragonflies, ants, termites, etc. occasionally butterflies.

**Nesting:** Breeds mainly in summer season, in between March to June. It makes tunnel shaped nest on sandy soil and earth cuttings mainly near vicinity of water, Clutch size varies in between 5 to 7 and eggs are pure white and roundish oval shaped.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 162*



## 71. BLUE-TAILED BEEEATER

**Scientific Name:** *Merops philippinus* Linnaeus, 1767

**Family:** Meropidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 23-26cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Local Migratory

**Local Name:** Nilalanjia Balishua

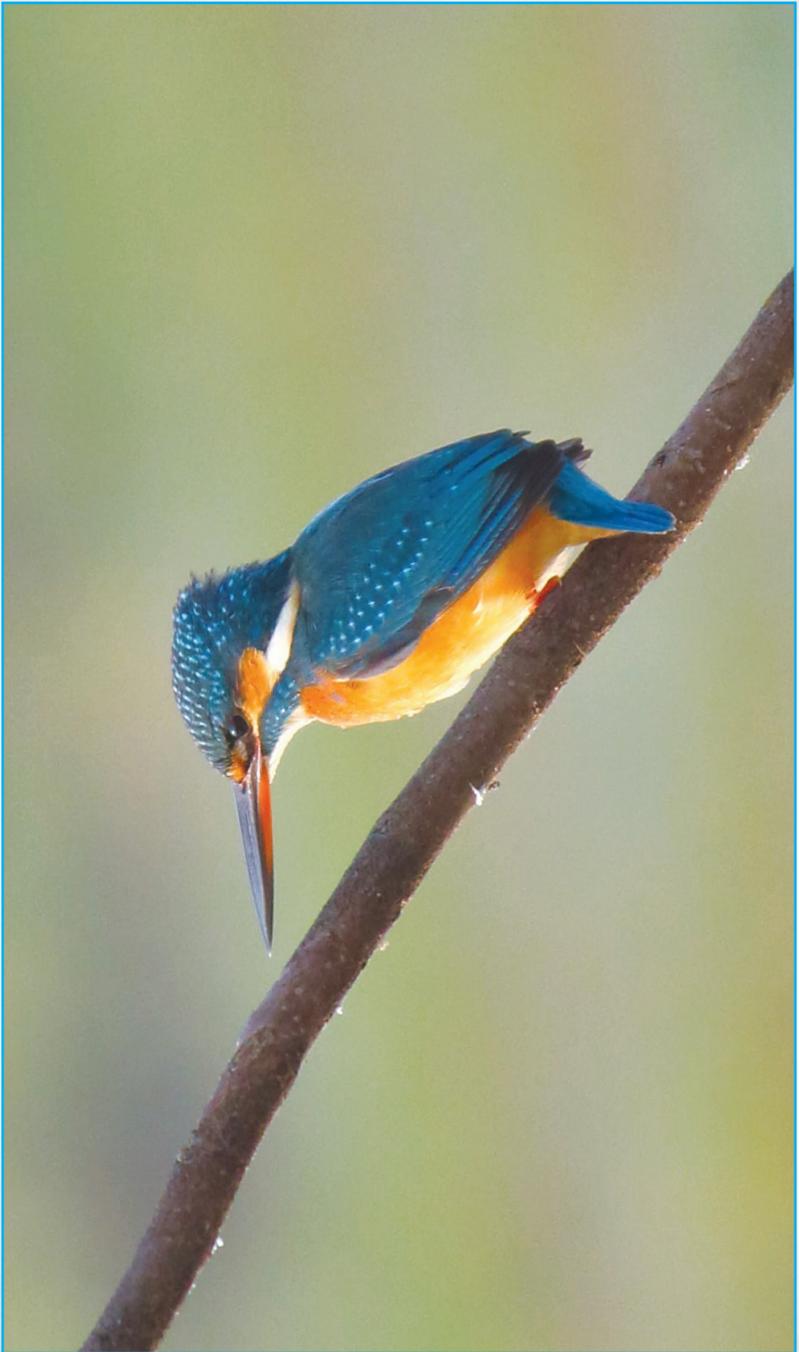
**Field Characters:** Adult bird has elongated bluish central tail feathers; blue rump and tail, greenish head and back; downward curved black beak; chestnut throat and upper breast; black eye stripe passed through eyes with slight bluish touch. Sexes are alike. Juveniles have deep bluish rump, tail upper and tail covert, and lightly visible rufous throat.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird is solitary while foraging but found in large flocks at the time of perching and roosting. It perches on exposed telephone and electric wires. It hunts insects during continuous flights. It roosts on trees. It found often near waterbodies such as irrigation tank, lake, river, reservoir, canal and sandy seashore

**Food:** Mainly insectivorous; feed on dragonflies, bees and other insects.

**Nesting:** Mainly in summer season, in between March to June. It makes tunnel shaped nest on sandy soil and earth cuttings mainly near vicinity of water, Clutch size varies in between 5 to 7, and eggs are pure white and roundish oval shaped.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 164



## 72. COMMON KINGFISHER

**Scientific Name:** *Alcedo atthis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Alcedinidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 38-40 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Chota Macharanka

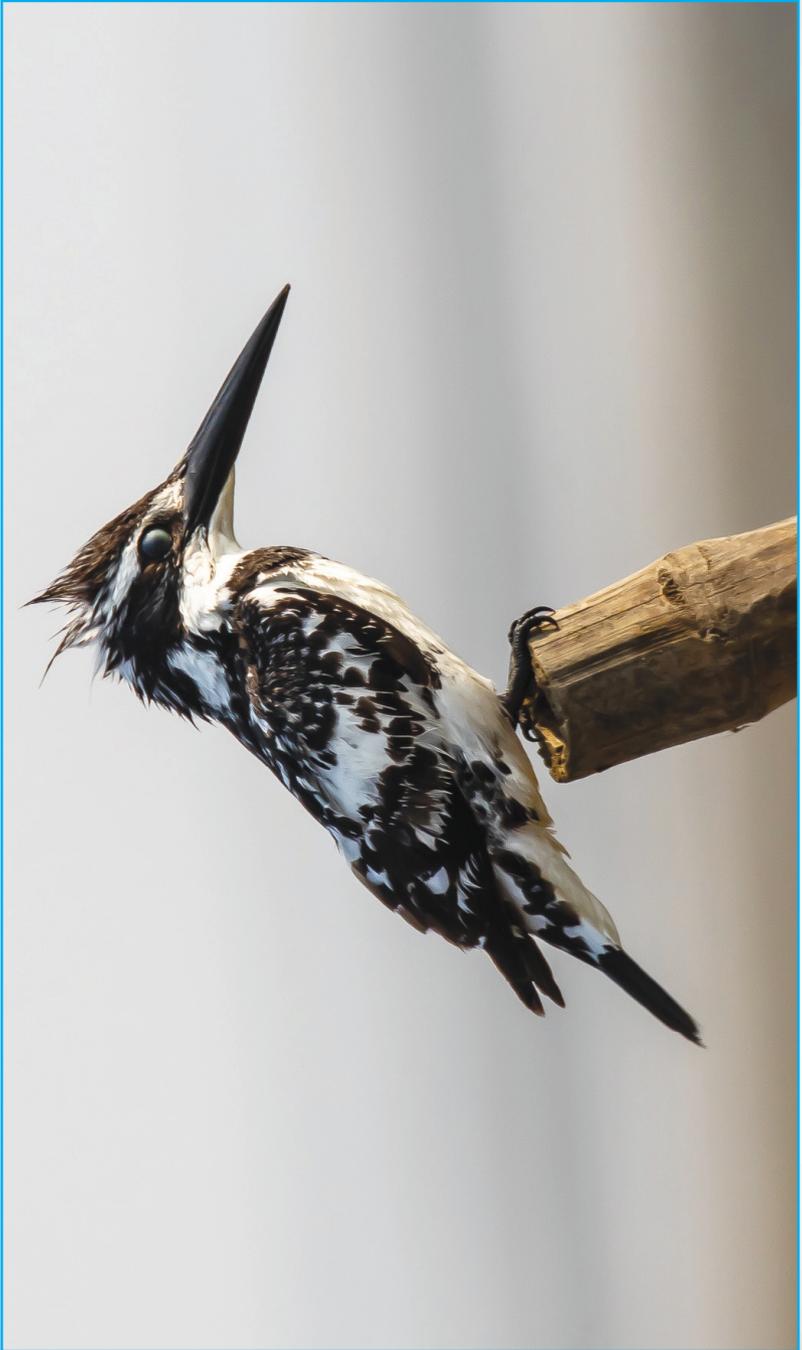
**Field Characters:** It is one of the smallest Kingfishers. It has bluish back, greenish blue upper wing covert and chestnut orange under parts. Finely banded blue and black crown. Chestnut lore and auricular part. Chin, throat and neck sides are white. Tail is short and thick. Long straight thick pointed bill and eyes are black. Legs and feet are bright red. Sexes are alike.

**Habit and Habitat:** Very fast flier with rapid wing stroke, vocalized while flying. It perches on small height around 1-2m and rapidly entered in to water to catch prey. Very commonly found in streams, canals, ditches, ponds, rivers and lakes

**Food:** Mainly small fishes, tadpoles, and aquatic insects.

**Nesting:** It breeds in summer in between March to June. Usually 3-6 roundish oval pure white eggs are laid in an earthen tunnel nest along river banks, canals and ditches.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 166



### 73. PIED KINGFISHER

**Scientific Name:** *Ceryle rudis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Alcedinidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 31 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Macharanka

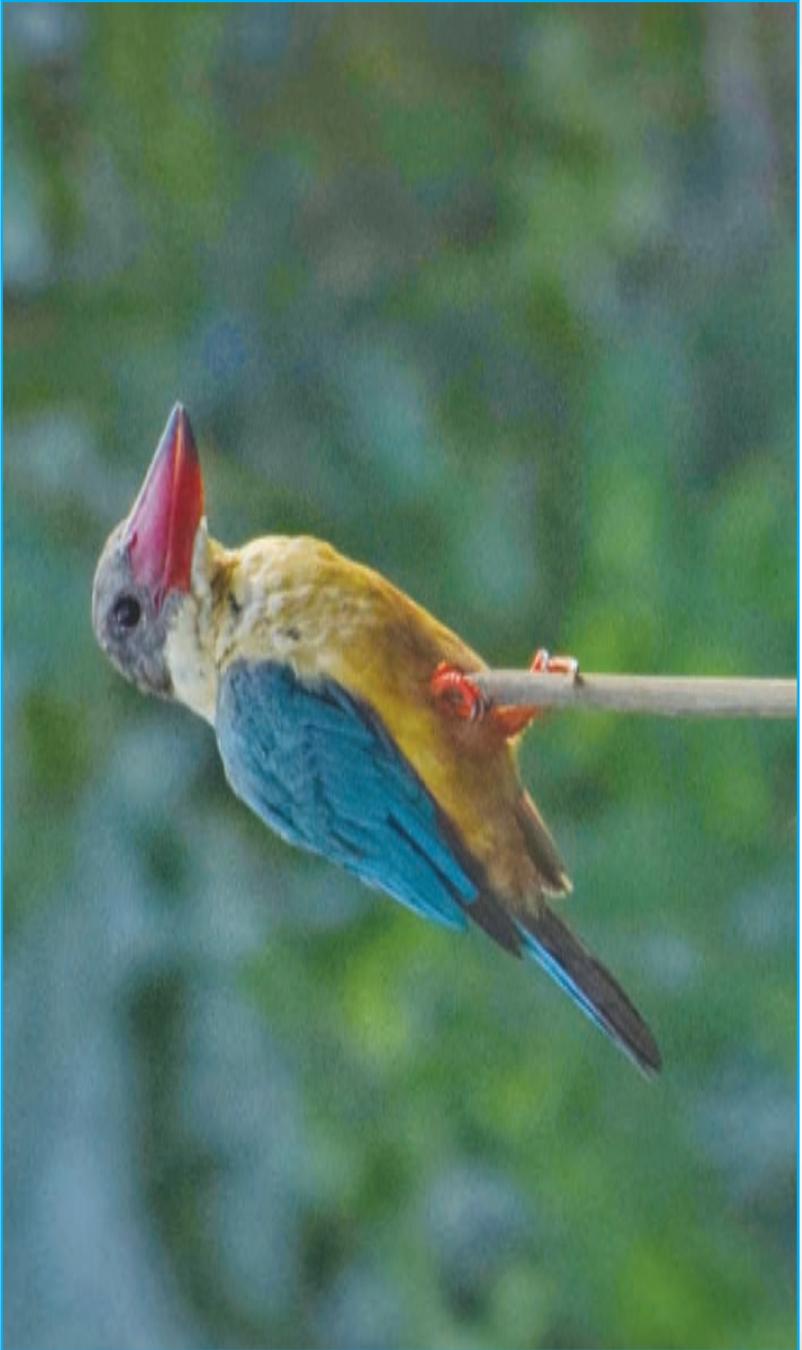
**Field Characters:** It is a large Kingfisher with a black and white blotched plumage. Black bill is large and long. Eyes are black and a black eyeband touches the hindneck. Broad white supercillium present on eye. A small crest is present on streaked black crown. Wings and tail are black and white. Male has double black breastband but female has single and usually broken breastband is present.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary or in pairs. It hunts by hovering over water with bill pointing down along with rapid wingstrokes. Also it can hunt vertically downwards to catch fishes. This peculiar habit of hunting makes it different among all Kingfishers. It is noisy while hunting. Usually found in ponds, lakes, canals, water reservoir, slow running stream and river etc.

**Food:** Diet comprise of mainly fish, tadpoles and aquatic insect.

**Nesting:** Breeds in late summer and early monsoon; 5-6 roundish oval white eggs are laid in an earthen tunnel along river banks, canals, earth cuttings etc.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 168



## 74. STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER

**Scientific Name:** *Pelargopsis capensis* (Linnaeus, 1766)

**Family:** Alcedinidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 35-38 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Macharanka

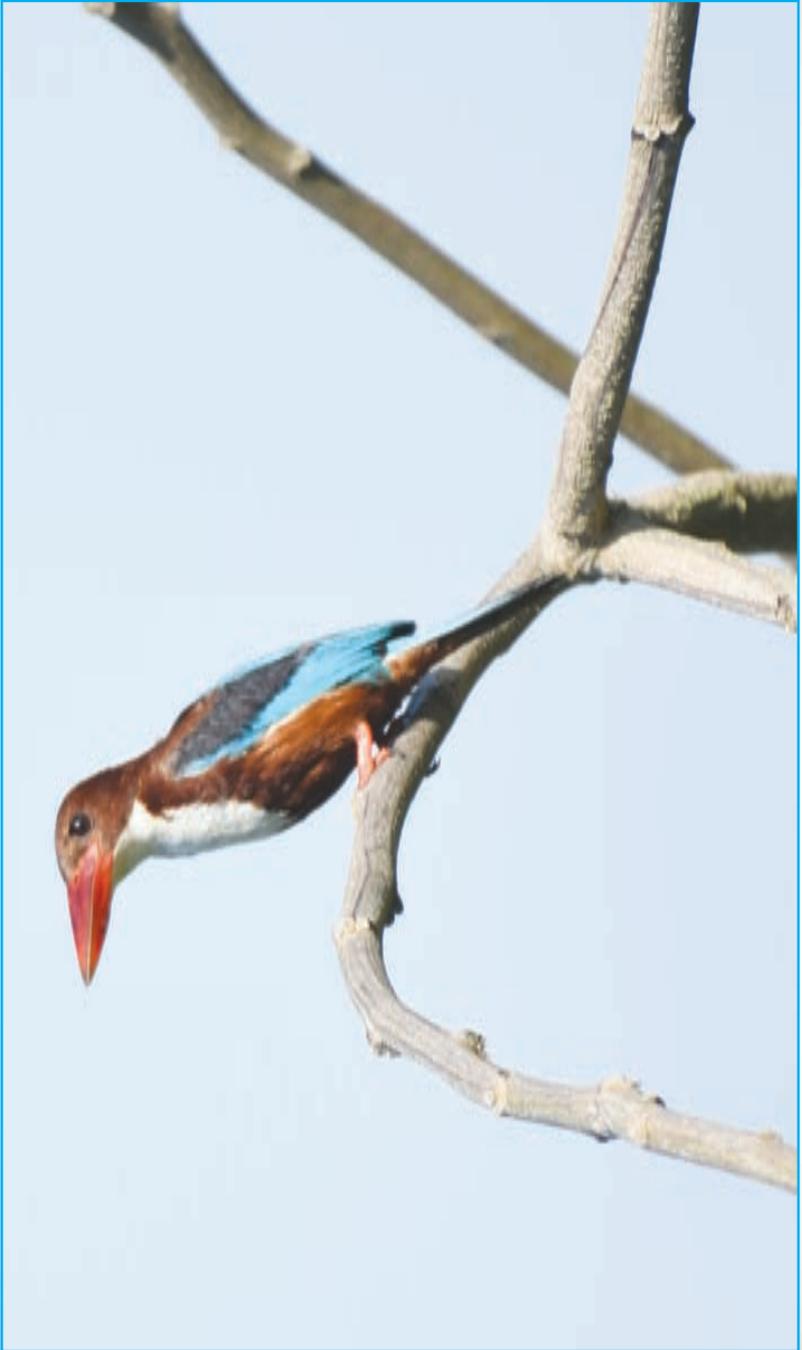
**Field Characters:** It is a large Kingfisher having huge blood red bill, brown head, bluish green upperpart, blue tail, brownish underpart and yellowish hind neckcollar. Leg and feet are red. Sexes are alike but female is larger than male. Juvenile has barring underparts.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary. Moderately forest dependent and generally remains hidden amidst over hanging vegetation at wetlands. Mostly found in Lowland areas, rivers, streams, irrigation channels and lakes.

**Food:** Diet comprise of fishes, frogs, lizards mice and young birds also crabs and water beetles etc.

**Nesting:** Breeds in between January to August. Usually 4-5 glossy white roundish oval eggs are laid in horizontally earthen tunnel nest along river bank, canal etc. Both parents take parts in incubation and other parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 170*



## 75. WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER

**Scientific Name:** *Halcyon smyrnensis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Family:** Alcedinidae

**Order:** Coraciiformes

**Size:** 26-28 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Macharanka

**Field Characters:** It is a large sized Kingfisher with a heavy and large red bill, chocolate-brown head, hindneck, upper back, and lesser secondary covert of wing and underparts except white throat and centre of breast. It has glistening greenish blue upperparts, rump and tail. In flight, the white wing patch is prominent and contrast to black flight feathers. Sexes are alike. Juvenile is duller than adult and have a brownish bill.

**Habit and Habitat:** It is a most commonly available kingfisher found almost every water bodies. Usually found solitary. It perches on telephone or electric wires, poles and branches. A noisy bird and rapidly hunts prey from a particular point. It is found in village ponds, lakes, forests, agricultural field, canals, rivers etc.

**Food:** Diet consists of fishes, crabs, beetles, tadpoles, grasshoppers and other insects. Occasionally eats small birds too.

**Nesting:** It breeds in between mid-summer and monsoon; usually 4-7 white and spherical eggs are laid in an earthen tunnel nest along river banks, canal bandhs, earth cutting etc. Both sexes take part in parental care.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 172



## 76. PEREGRINE FALCON

**Scientific Name:** *Falco peregrinus* Tunstall, 1771

**Family:** Falconidae

**Order:** Falconiformes

**Size:** 38-40 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Migratory

**Local Name:** Chila

**Field Characters:** It is a stocky raptor and fastest flying bird. Adult bird has black head and bluish grey barred upperparts. Heavily spotted and barred underpart is reddish brown. Pointed wings and under wing covert is also spotted and barred. A broad black cheek stripe is present on white chin and throat. Tail is short and square with heavily barred below. Bluish beak has black tip and bright yellow cere. Leg and feet are yellow. Sexes are alike but female is larger. Juvenile has dark brown upperpart and darker head. Underpart is rufous-white and heavily streaked.

**Habit and Habitat:** Mostly found solitary. It flights faster with rapid wing stroke. It attacks swiftly on flying preys and hunts actively in dawn and dusk hours. It winters near large lakes, rivers, mangroves, sea coasts and marshes.

**Food:** Chiefly hunts ducks, waders and other wintering waterbirds.

**Migrating From:**North Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 174



## 77. WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Motacilla flava* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Motacillidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 16-19 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Haladia Chachadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a small and slender bird, having a long tail, olive green upperpart and yellowish underpart. Two white wing-bars are prominent. Colour variation occurs depending on races. Male (Breeding) has greenish yellow to dark grey crown and ear coverts. Female and non-breeding plumage is brownish with straight pale supercilium. Juvenile has dark malar stripe and prominent breast band.

**Habit and Habitat:** Found as solitary or in small loose flocks. It continuously wags its long tail up and down. Typically associates with grazing livestock while foraging and captures insects disturbed by the animal's hooves. It runs short distance with active and energetic steps. It flies in undulating manner with typical wing stroke. It is found in marshy areas with short vegetation, margins of rivers, lakes and jheels etc.

**Food:** Insectivorous, diet consists of flies, pentatomid bugs, beetles and weevils.

**Migrating from:** Scandinavia to Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 176



## 78. GREY WAGTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Motacilla cinerea* Tunstall, 1771

**Family:** Motacillidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 19 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Migratory

**Local Name:** Chachadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a predominantly grey and yellowish Wagtail. Adult has narrow white supercilium. Head, upperparts, rump and tails are greyish. It has a long tail comparing to other Wagtails. Brownish wings have yellowish white wingbars. In breeding plumage, male has black throat and yellow underparts. In case of females, it has white throat and paler yellow underparts.

**Habit and Habitat:** The bird mostly found as solitary or in pairs. Typically moves like other species of wagtail. It feeds on ground with continuously by waging its tail in up and down manner. It is very common near marsh areas, lakes, rivers and inland waterbodies.

**Food:** Mainly insectivorous, diet comprising of beetles, locusts, dragonflies, snails and small seeds.

**Migrating From:** Himalayas.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 178



## 79. CITRINE WAGTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Motacilla citreola* Pallas, 1776

**Family:** Motacillidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 16-19 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Migratory

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a small, slender and long tailed bird having diagnostic yellowish face and head and greyish back. Male has bright yellow head and underparts, black mantle and prominent whitish wingbar. Female has broad yellow supercilium, face and throat. Greyish crown; upperpart and underpart mainly yellow. Juvenile has brownish crown, ear-coverts and mantle, pale supercilium and buff-white underparts.

**Habit and Habitat:** A gregarious bird, often found near water with vegetation. It winters around lakes, wheels and tanks. Sometimes forages on floating vegetation in lakes. It wags tail in up and down manner and flight pattern also resembles with other species of Wagtails.

**Migrating from:** Siberia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 180



## 80. WHITE-BROWED WAGTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Motacilla maderaspatensis* J.F. Gmelin, 1789

**Family:** Motacillidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 21 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident

**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a large wagtail with pied plumage which separates it from all other wagtails. Adult bird has blackish upperpart, head, neck and breast. Wingband and Supercilium are white. Sexes are alike but male is black whereas female is brownish. Juvenile has brownish grey head, mantle and breast, with white supercilium.

**Habit and Habitat:** Most often seen in pairs or in small flocks near inland waterbodies, banks of rivers, cannals, lakes and irrigation barrages. It wags its tail in up and down manner and flight pattern also resembles with other species of wagtails.

**Food:** Mainly insectivorous, diet comprising of beetles, locusts, dragonflies, snails and small seeds.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 182



## 81. WHITE WAGTAIL

**Scientific Name:** *Motacilla alba* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Motacillidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 18 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Migratory

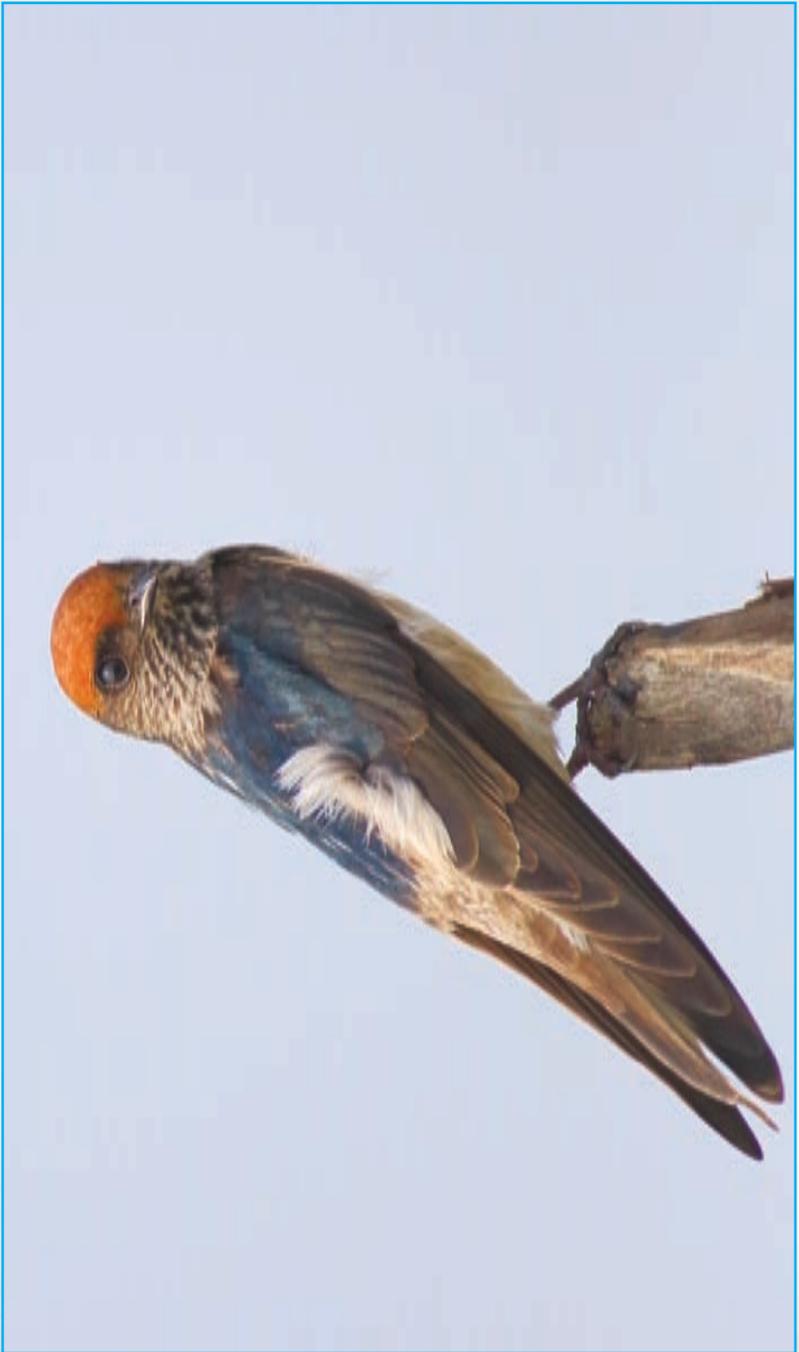
**Local Name:** Cha Chadhei

**Field Characters:** It is a small Wagtail with black and silvery white plumage. Adult has black and white head, greyish or black mantle, black wing-coverts and black neck and breast. Color variations may occur among different races. Sexes are alike Juvenile has greyish head, mantle and breast with whitish supercilium.

**Habit and Habitat:** Usually found as solitary or in pairs. It moves around wetland and field for foraging and wags its tail continually up and down. It inhabits near rivers or in hill streams during summer, winters in open areas near marshes, rivers, stream, canal, lakes etc.

**Migrating from:** Europe and Asia.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 184



## 82. STREAK-THROATED SWALLOW

**Scientific Name:** *Petrochelidon fluvicola* (Blyth, 1855)

**Family:** Hirundinidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 16-19 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Migratory

**Local Name:** Chataka

**Field Characters:** It is a small and compact Swallow. Adult has glossy purplish blue upperpart with narrow white streaks on mantle. It has chestnut forehead and crown. Brown streaked chin, throat and breast and rest of underparts are fulvous white. Rump pale brown and tail is broad and squarish. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has duller upperparts, browner crown, and brownish mantle and wings.

**Habit and Habitat:** A gregarious bird, perches on telephone and electric wire. It roosts communally along with other Swallows. In winter morning, roosting flock size may vary up to thousands. It forages in close proximity to water with other Swallows. Very commonly found in agricultural field, lakes, rivers, canals and reservoirs etc.

**Food:** Mainly insectivorous, diet comprising of midges, gnats and other insects.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 186



### 83. RED-RUMPED SWALLOW

**Scientific Name:** *Cecropis daurica* (Laxmann, 1769)

**Family:** Hirundinidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 16-19 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name :** Chataka

**Field Characters:** It is a slender, small and fast flying bird. Adult has distinct rufous or chestnut rump. Neck, sides of the head, supercilium and rump are rufous-orange. Upperpart of the bird is glistening bluish black whereas underparts pale white, with fine brown streaked throat and upper breast. Tail is long and deeply forked. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has less shining bluish crown, mantle and wing; paler neck-collar and rump; and shorter tail streamer

**Habit and Habitat:** It spends maximum time of its life on wings. Social bird and prefers communal roosting. Gather in huge number in winter and during migration. It is frequently seen in close packed flock on telephone wire, roost communally in reed bed. Very often found in upland cultivation and on open grassy hill slopes during summer and in open scrub area, cultivated land, lakes, reservoirs and rivers etc.

**Food:** Insectivorous, diet comprising of Dipteran, Coleopteran winged ant and termite.





*Birds of Ansupa* ■ 188



## 84. WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW

**Scientific Name:** *Hirundo smithii* Leach, 1818

**Family:** Hirundinidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 14 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident/Migratory

**Local Name :** Chataka

**Field Characters:** It is a slender, small and fast flying bird. Adult has shining purplish blue upper part, peculiar bright chestnut cap; bright pure white underparts and two long tail-wires projected out from tail feathers. Sexes are alike, but female has shorter tail-wire than male. Juvenile has dull brownish blue upperparts and dull brownish crown.

**Habit and Habitat:** Though it is a solitary bird but often found in the mixed flocks. Generally found in vicinity of water, either while perched or foraged over the water surface. Often roosts communally in reed beds, electric and telephone wire Very often found in cultivation land, bank of rivers, jheels, lakes and reservoirs etc.

**Food:** Insectivorous, mainly aquatic insects.





*Birds of Ansupa ■ 190*



## 85. BARN SWALLOW/COMMON SWALLOW

**Scientific Name:** *Hirundo rustica* Linnaeus, 1758

**Family:** Hirundinidae

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Size:** 18 cm

**IUCN/WPA Status:** Least Concern / Schedule-IV

**Residential Status:** Resident and Local Migratory

**Local Name :** Chataka

**Field Characters:** It is a slender, small and fast flying bird. Adult has glistening purplish blue head, neck and upperpart. Rusty forehead and throat, bluish black breast band and underpart is pale white. Black wings are long, narrow and pointed. Tail is black and deeply forked having long tail-streamers. Sexes are alike. Juvenile has pale orange forehead and throat, breast-band is browner and less prominent; upperparts are duller; and tail less deeply forked with shorter tail-streamer.

**Habit and Habitat:** It spends majority of its life by flying. It is very swift and agile flier. It forages over low shallow water, highly sociable and roosts in large flocks on telephone and electric wires. Found on inland water bodies, rivers, lakes, ponds etc. Generally found near water.

**Food:** Insectivorous

**Migrating From:** Himalayas.



## Glossary

*This section deals with frequently used words in the book and their meanings which follows Kumar et al. (2005).*

**Adult:** a bird that has attained its definitive plumage.

**Aquatic:** frequenting water.

**Breeding plumage:** a different plumage acquired by many species during the breeding season.

**Cap:** a well-defined patch of colour or bare skin on the top of the head.

**Carpal joint:** the small bones of the 'wrist' joint.

**Cere:** a waxy fleshy covering at the base of upper beak

**Collar:** a well-defined band of colour which encircles or partly encircles the neck.

**Colonial:** nesting in groups or colonies rather than in isolated pairs.

**Contour feather:** any feather forming part of the outer surface of the bird's plumage.

**Cosmopolitan:** Worldwide in distribution or at least occurring on all continents except Antarctica.

**Coverts:** the contour feathers that overlap the main wing or tail feathers.

**Crepuscular:** active at dusk.

**Crest:** a tuft of elongated feathers on the crown.

**Crown:** the top of the head.

**Decurved or downcurved:** curved downward.

**Dimorphic:** of species or sexes having two colour forms.

**Diurnal:** active during the day.

**Eclipse:** dull female-like plumage of male ducks (drakes) for a period after the breeding season.

**Edges:** outer feather margins, which can frequently result in distinct colour on wings or tail.

**Endemic:** restricted to certain area or region.

**Eyebrow or supercilium:** a conspicuous stripe of colour running above but not through the eye.

**Eye ring:** feathered ring immediately surrounding the orbital ring.

**Eye stripe:** a stripe that runs horizontally from the base of the bill through the eye and beyond.

**Filoplume:** a thin, hair like feather.

**Birds of Ansupa ■ 192**



**Flight feather:** the long well developed feathers of the wings and tail used during flight. The flight feathers of the wings are divided into primaries and secondaries of wings.

**Fringes:** complete feather margins, which can frequently result in a scaly appearance to body feathers or wing coverts.

**Frontal shield:** a fleshy, featherless and often brightly coloured area on the forehead.

**Fulvous:** tawny, dull yellowish-red or red wine coloured.

**Gregarious:** a species often found in flocks when feeding in the non-breeding period, etc.

**Gular pouch:** a loose and pronounced area of skin extending from the throat.

**Immature:** a bird in a plumage in between juvenile and adult.

**Iris:** the coloured membrane which surrounds the pupil of the eye and which can be brightly coloured.

**Jheel:** a shallow lake in a low-lying natural depression, usually with floating and submerged vegetation, reed beds and partially submerged trees.

**Juveniles:** a bird in its first plumage that replaces the downy one.

**Leg projection:** indicates that part of the legs project beyond the tail when the bird is in flight.

**Local:** occurring or common within a small or restricted area.

**Lores:** the area between the eye and the base of the bill sometimes distinctively coloured.

**Mandible:** the lower or upper half of the bill.

**Mantle:** the back of a bird together with the upper surface of the wings.

**Migrant:** a bird that regularly passes through an area on its way to or from its normal breeding range.

**Moult:** the process of shedding and replacing feather.

**Nape:** back of neck.

**Nocturnal:** a species active at night.

**Nomadic:** wandering or erratically occurring species, which has no fixed territory when not breeding.

**Non-breeding plumage:** plumage worn by birds when not breeding.

**Omnivorous:** eating almost any kind of plant and animal food.

**Ornithology:** the study of birds.



**Plume:** a feather larger or longer than the feathers around it, generally used in display.

**Polygamy:** the formation of a sexual bond between one male and more than one female.

**Primaries:** the outermost and longest flight feathers on a bird's wing, usually numbering 10.

**Race or subspecies:** a geographical population of a species that is slightly different from other populations of that species.

**Range:** the geographical area or areas inhabited by a species.

**Recurved or upcurved:** bent upwards.

**Resident:** staying in one place all the year, non-migratory.

**Roosting:** the bird is said to be roosting when either actually sleeping or resting for more than a brief nap.

**Rufous:** reddish-brown.

**Rump:** lower back and base of tail.

**Scapulars:** a group of feathers on the shoulder.

**Secondaries:** the large flight feathers along the near edge of the wing, inward from the primaries.

**Speculum:** a distinctively coloured area on the wings of a bird, especially the metallic-coloured patch on the secondaries of some ducks.

**Subadult:** young birds, with a mixture of immature and adult plumage, the last stage before full adult plumage.

**Subterminal band:** a dark or pale band, usually broad, at the tip of a feather or feather tract (especially the tail).

**Tarsus:** the lower, usually featherless, part of a bird's leg above the feet.

**Taxonomy:** the science of classification of organisms.

**Tertials or tertiaries:** the innermost flight feathers on a bird's wing, immediately adjacent to the body.

**Trailing edge of wing:** the rear edge of an extended wing.

**Underparts:** under surface of body from throat to undertail-coverts.

**Upperparts:** upper surface of body including wings and tail.

**Vent:** the area around the cloaca (anal opening) just behind the legs (should not to be confused with the under-tail-coverts).

**Vermiculation:** irregular, wavy marking, reminiscent skin attached to the head.

**Wattle:** a lobe of bare, often brightly coloured skin attached to the head.

**Wing-bar:** a line across the wing contrasting in colour with the rest of it.

**Wing projection:** used to describe the projection of the tip of the primaries beyond the tail when a bird is at rest.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Ali, S. (2002).** *The book of Indian Birds*, Oxford University Press, India. 326 pp.

**Balachandran S., P. Sathiyaselvam, and S. Panda (2009).** *Bird Atlas of Chilika*. Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, Chilika Development Authority, Bhubaneswar. 326 pp.

**Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, & E.T. LaRoe (1979).** *Classification of wetlands and deepwaterhabitatas of the United States*. FWS/OBS79/31

**Grewal, B., B. Harvey, and O. Pfister (2002).** *A Photographic guide to birds of India, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, The Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan*. Christopher helm, London. 512 pp.

**Grewal, B., S. Sen, S. Singh, N. Devasar & G. Bhatia (2016).** *A pictorial field guide to birds of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh*. Om Books International, India. 791 pp.

**Grimmet, R., C. Inskipp & T. Inskipp (2014).** *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*, Oxford University Press India. 528 pp.

**Kumar, A., J. P. Sati, P. C. Tak, and J. R. B. Alfred (2005).** *Handbook on Indian Wetland Birds and their Conservation*. Zoological Survey of India. 468 pp.

**Nair, M.V., S.M. Pradhan, & A.K. Pradhan (2012).** *Common Nesting birds of Odisha- a photographic Guide*, Wildlife Organisation, Forest & Environment Department, Government of Odisha. 160 pp.

*National Wetland Atlas: Orissa, SAC/EPSS/AFEG/NWIA/ATLAS/28/2010*, Space Applications Centre (ISRO), Ahmedabad, India, 204p.

**Pattanaik C., S.N. Prasad, C.S. Reddy (2008).** Warning Bells in Ansupa Lake, Orissa. *Current Science*, Vol.94, NO. 5 Page-560

**Payra, A., S. K. Dash, H. S. Palei, A. K. Mishra, R. K. Mishra, S. Rout (2019)** Updated Avifaunal list of Ansupa lake and its adjoining areas, Cuttack, Odisha, India, with notes on the record of Grey-necked Bunting (*Emberizabuchanani*) *Ela Journal of Forestry and Wildlife* Vol.8 (1 & 2): 558-568 ISSN 2319-4361



**Pradhan, R. N., U. P. Das, R. K. Mohapatra and A. K. Mishra (2013).** Checklist of Birds in and Around Ansupa Lake, Odisha, India. *Int. Res. J. Environment Sci.* Vol. 2(11), ISSN 2319–1414

**Praveen, J., R. Jayapal & A. Pittie (2016).** *A checklist of the birds of India*, Indian BIRDS, 11(5&6) 113-172.

**Rahmani, A.R. & M.V. Nair (2015).** *Threatened birds of Odisha*. Oxford University Press, India. 180 pp.

**Swain, K.K. and S. Debata (2018).** *Birds of Chandaka Wildlife Division*. Department of Forests and Environment, Government of Odisha, 120 pp.

**Vijayan, V.S., S.N. Prasad, L. Vijayan and S. Muralidharan (2004).** *Inland wetlands of India-Conservation priorities*, SACON, Coimbatore.



## APPENDIX-I

### List of Landbirds found around Ansupa

FAMILY	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Phasianidae	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Phasianidae	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i> Linnaeus, 1758
Phasianidae	Grey Francolin	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i> (J.F.Gmelin,1789)
Phasianidae	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> (J.F. Gmelin,1789)
Columbidae	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Columbidae	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> J.F. Gmelin, 1789
Columbidae	Spotted Dove	<i>Stigmatopelia chinensis</i> ( Scopoli, 1786)
Columbidae	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> (Frivaldszky, 1838)
Columbidae	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i> (Latham, 1790)
Columbidae	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Columbidae	Yellow-footed Green pigeon	<i>Treeron phoenicopterus</i> (Latham, 1790)
Caprimulgidae	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i> Latham, 1790
Apodidae	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasinensis</i> (J.E. Gray, 1829)
Cuculidae	Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomentis merulinus</i> (Scopoli, 1786)
Cuculidae	Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i> (Boddaert, 1783)
Cuculidae	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scoloparius</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Cuculidae	Common Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i> (Vahl, 1797)
Cuculidae	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i> (Stephens, 1815)
Turnicidae	Yellow-legged Buttonquail	<i>Turnix tanki</i> Blyth, 1843
Accipitridae	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1788)
Accipitridae	White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i> (Franklin, 1831)
Accipitridae	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanuscaeruleus</i> (Desfontaines, 1789)
Accipitridae	Oriental Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> (Temminck, 1821)
Accipitridae	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i> (Temminck, 1822)
Accipitridae	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i> (Boddaert, 1783)
Accipitridae	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i> (Latham,1790)
Strigidae	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i> (Temminck, 1821)
Strigidae	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glucidium radiatum</i> (Tickell, 1833)
Strigidae	Collard Scops Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i> Pennant, 1769
Tytonidae	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i> (Scopoli, 1769)
Upupidae	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i> Linnaeus, 1758
Picidae	Greater Golden-backed Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i> (Scopoli, 1786)
Picidae	Lesser Goldenbacked Woodpecker	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Picidae	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i> (Vieillot, 1818)
Ramphastidae	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i> (J.F. Gmelin,1788)
Ramphastidae	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i> ( Stratiusmuller, 1776)
Meropidae	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i> Latham, 1801
Coraciidae	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Falconidae	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i> Linnaeus, 1758
Falconidae	Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i> Daudin, 1800
Psittacidae	Plum headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Psittacidae	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Psittacidae	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i> (Scopoli, 1769)
Campephagidae	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i> (J.r. Forster,1781)
Campephagidae	Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i> (Horsfield, 1821)
Campephagidae	Black-headed Cuckooshrike	<i>Lalage melanoptera</i> (Rüppell, 1839)
Oriolidae	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i> (Linnaeus,1766)
Oriolidae	Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i> Sykes,1832
Artamidae	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i> Vieillot, 1817
Aegithinidae	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Dicruridae	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i> Vieillot, 1817
Dicruridae	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caeruleus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)



Dicruridae	Hair-crowed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Rhipiduridae	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i> Lesson, 1831
Laniidae	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Laniidae	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i> Linnaeus, 1758
Corvidae	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i> (Latham, 1790)
Corvidae	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus culminatus</i> Wagler, 1827
Corvidae	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i> Vieillot, 1817
Monarchidae	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i> (Boddaert, 1783)
Monarchidae	Indian Paradise-flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Dicaeidae	Thick-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum agile</i> (Tickell, 1833)
Dicaeidae	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i> (Latham, 1790)
Nectariniidae	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Nectariniidae	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i> (Latham, 1790)
Irenidae	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i> (Blyth, 1844)
Ploceidae	Black-breasted Weaver	<i>Ploceus benghalensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Ploceidae	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Estrildidae	Red Munia	<i>Amandava amandava</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Estrildidae	Indian Silverbill	<i>Eudice malabarica</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Estrildidae	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Estrildidae	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Estrildidae	Black-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Passeridae	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Motacillidae	Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i> Vieillot, 1818
Motacillidae	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i> Vieillot, 1818
Emberizidae	Grey-necked Bunting	<i>Emberiza buchanani</i> Blyth, 1845
Paridae	Black-lored Tit	<i>Machlolophus xanthogenys</i> (Vigors, 1831)
Alaudidae	Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i> (Scopoli, 1786)
Alaudidae	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i> Franklin, 1831
Cisticolidae	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i> (Rafinesque, 1810)
Cisticolidae	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i> Sykes, 1832
Cisticolidae	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i> Sykes, 1832
Cisticolidae	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i> (Pennant, 1769)
Acrocephalidae	Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i> (Temminck & Schlegel, 1847)
Pycnonotidae	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Pycnonotidae	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Pycnonotidae	White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i> (Lesson, 1841)
Phylloscopidae	Common Chiffchaf	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> (Vieillot, 1817)
Phylloscopidae	Chestnut Leaf Warbler	<i>Seicecrus trochiloides</i> (Sundevall, 1837)
Zosteropidae	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i> (Temminck, 1824)
Timaliidae	Indian Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus horsfieldii</i> Sykes, 1832
Pelloroneidae	Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pelloroneum ruficeps</i> Swainson, 1832
Leiotherichidae	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i> (Dumont, 1823)
Sturnidae	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Sturnidae	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Sturnidae	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i> (J.F. Gemlin, 1789)
Sturnidae	Chestnut-tailed Starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i> (J.F. Gemlin, 1789)
Sturnidae	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Sturnidae	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i> (Wagler, 1827)
Muscicapidae	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulcatus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Muscicapidae	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
Muscicapidae	White-rumped Shama	<i>Kittacincla malabarica</i> (Scopoli, 1786)
Muscicapidae	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i> Pallas, 1811
Muscicapidae	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i> (Swainson, 1838)
Muscicapidae	Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i> (Pallas, 1831)
Muscicapidae	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
Turdidae	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Geokichla citrina</i> (Latham, 1790)

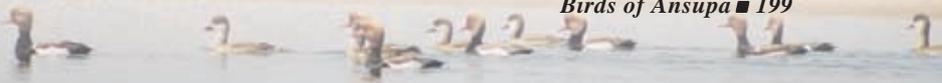




**Sri Susanta Nanda, IFS** is currently working as Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority. He has joined Indian Forest Service in the year 1989 and posted as Divisional Forest Officer in various Forest Divisions during initial days. Later he served as Director in various departments of Government of Odisha. For his contribution to forestry sector, he was honoured with the Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra award in 2007, the highest award in Forestry in India. After joining the CDA, his work is commendable for eviction of the illegal prawn gherries from Chilika Lagoon which allowed restoring the wetland of international importance. He is the key person for restoration of the Ansupa Lake. Apart from this, he is an avid Naturalist and Conservationist. Being a scientific person, he has published many research papers related to wetland biodiversity in various international journals. He has also co-authored the prestigious book 'Fish and Shellfish Diversity and its sustainable management in Chilika Lake'.



**Dr. Samrat Gowda, D.S, IFS** is working as the Additional Chief Executive of Chilika Development Authority. Additionally he is also In-Charge of Divisional Forest Officer of Chilika Wildlife Division. He has joined Indian Forest Services in the year 2012. Later he has worked as DFO in various forest divisions of Odisha. He has completed his Ph.D in Plant breeding and Genetics from Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi in the year 2012. He has published many research papers in several reputed international journals. Dr. Gowda is one of the young, talented, promising forest officers of India. As a wetland manger, he is committed to protect birds and other aquatic biodiversity. Besides this, he is an eminent Naturalist, Conservationist, Conservation photographer, Creative artist and Writer too. He has documented many precious moments of bird behaviour through his lens from various sanctuaries and wetlands of Odisha.





**Dr. Fanindra Bhusan Nanda, OFS** is presently working as Assistant Conservator of Forest in Chilika Development Authority. He is a sincere and dedicated forest officer. Being an outstanding officer, he has rescued and saved various species of Birds, Mammals and Reptiles. He is the key person in the discovery of a rare grass species *Coix aquatica* from Similipal Biosphere Reserve. Besides the forest officer, Dr. Nanda is a well-known face as a dynamic Poet, Writer, Critics, Editor and Researcher in Odia Literature too. He has written more than 25 books and recipient of several prestigious literary awards. He played a significant role in publishing various wildlife articles and books in regional language. He is a sincere forest officer and a passionate wildlife lover.



**Tuhinansu Kar** is an enthusiastic wildlife researcher with special interest on Mammals and Waterbirds. He has been studying the Breeding Ecology of Threatened waterbirds since last three years. His research findings have been published in many national and international scientific journals. He has also co-authored the book 'Habitat Utilization Pattern of Vulnerable Indian Skimmer: A Remote Sensing and GIS approach'. He got his Master's degree and Master of Philosophy degree in Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources from Central University of Orissa, Koraput. He is currently working as a Junior Research Fellow (JRF) in Chilika Development Authority.

