



GRATITUDE ECO-HOMESTAY

Bird watching handbook





Welcome Note:

Nestled in rich greenery, **Gratitude Eco- Homestay Dahuli** offers a haven for birdwatchers with its diverse habitats.

Best Times & Places:

- Early mornings & late afternoons for the most activity.
- Near water bodies and open fields.

Birdwatching Tips:

- Stay quiet and patient.
- Use binoculars for a better view.
- Look for movement and listen for calls.



Ethical Birdwatching Practices:

- Avoid disturbing birds or their nests.
- Do not feed wild birds.
- Respect their natural habitat.

Enjoy discovering the avian wonders during your stay at Gratitude Eco- Homestay.





Photographs by **Shainaz Jussa.**

Shainaz spotted these birds and took the pictures during her stay at Gratitude Eco-homestay. She is a dedicated teacher trainer who collaborates with ministries of education across India and African nations to enhance teaching and learning experiences. Beyond her professional work, she is a passionate birder, nature enthusiast, and a recreational runner - always eager to explore the outdoors. She loves the thrill of spotting a rare bird just as much as the sense of freedom that comes with running. Life, for her, is all about learning, exploring, and enjoying the little moments in between!





Asian Bee-eater

(*Merops orientalis*)

Size & Features: 23 cm. Green body, blue throat, and long tail streamers.

Habitat & Range: Open woodlands, fields; resident bird.

Behavior & Diet: Catches insects mid-air, especially bees.

Call/Song: Soft, musical "prree-prree".

Fun Fact: They rub bees against branches to remove stingers before eating.



Asian Koel (Female)

(*Eudynamys scolopaceus*)

Size & Features: 42 cm. Brown with white streaks, red eyes.

Habitat & Range: Gardens, urban areas; resident bird.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on fruits, known for brood parasitism.

Call/Song: Shrill "kee-ooo" repeated.

Fun Fact: Lays eggs in crow nests; chicks are raised by crows.





Asian Koel (Male)

(*Eudynamys scolopaceus*)

Size & Features: 42 cm. Glossy black with red eyes. **Habitat & Range:** Gardens, forests; resident bird. **Behavior & Diet:** Frugivore, highly vocal in breeding season.

Call/Song: Loud "koo-ooo".

Fun Fact: Symbol of love and longing in Indian folklore.



Banded Bay Cuckoo

(*Cacomantis sonneratii*)

Size & Features: 22 cm. Brown body, streaked chest. **Habitat & Range:** Forests; migratory.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, parasitizes nests.

Call/Song: Distinct "pee pee pee" call.

Fun Fact: Known as the 'brain-fever bird' due to its call.





Black Drongo

(*Dicrurus macrocercus*)

Size & Features: 30 cm. Glossy black, deeply forked tail.

Habitat & Range: Open fields, near human habitation; resident.

Behavior & Diet: Agile hunter, catches insects in flight.

Call/Song: Harsh chattering.

Fun Fact: Fearless, often seen mobbing larger birds.



Black-winged Kite

(*Elanus caeruleus*)

Size & Features: 35 cm. Grey body, black wings, red eyes.

Habitat & Range: Grasslands, open country; resident.

Behavior & Diet: Hunts rodents and small birds, hovers before striking prey.

Call/Song: High-pitched whistles.

Fun Fact: Masters of hovering flight.





Blue Rock Thrush (Female)

(*Monticola solitarius*)

Size & Features: 21 cm. Brownish-grey with faint streaks.

Habitat & Range: Rocky cliffs, urban buildings; migratory.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on insects, fruits.

Call/Song: Melodious, flute-like song.

Fun Fact: Unlike its name, only males are truly blue.



Common Kingfisher

(*Alcedo atthis*)

Size & Features: 17 cm. Blue back, orange belly, long sharp bill.

Habitat & Range: Near water bodies; resident.

Behavior & Diet: Dives for fish, perches near water.

Call/Song: Sharp "chee-chee".

Fun Fact: Can dive at high speeds to catch fish.





Common Rosefinch

(*Carpodacus erythrinus*)

Size & Features: 15 cm. Males red, females brownish.

Habitat & Range: Woodlands, gardens; migratory.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on seeds, fruits.

Call/Song: Melodious, warbling song.

Fun Fact: Males turn red with maturity.



Common Woodshrike

(*Tephrodornis pondicerianus*)

Size & Features: 15 cm. Brownish-grey, streaked body.

Habitat & Range: Dry forests, scrublands; resident.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, hunts from branches.

Call/Song: Harsh, chattering sounds.

Fun Fact: Often mistaken for flycatchers.





Indian Blackbird

(*Turdus simillimus*)

Size & Features: 23–28 cm. Males are black with an orange–yellow bill and eye–ring; females are brownish.

Habitat & Range: Forests, gardens, and plantations; found in the Indian subcontinent.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivorous, feeding on insects, berries, and fruits.

Call/Song: Melodious, flute–like song with varied whistles.

Fun Fact: Unlike the Eurasian Blackbird, this species has distinct subspecies across its range.



Indian Robin

(*Copsychus fulicatus*)

Size & Features: 14–16 cm. Males are black with a white shoulder patch and chestnut under–tail; females are brownish.

Habitat & Range: Dry scrub, open woodlands, urban areas; found across India and Sri Lanka.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, often seen hopping on the ground catching insects.

Call/Song: A variety of sharp whistles and melodious notes.

Fun Fact: Males fluff their tail up vertically while perching or displaying.





Indian Scimitar Babbler

(*Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*)

Size & Features: 22 cm. Brown with a long, curved yellow beak and a distinctive white eyebrow.

Habitat & Range: Forests, scrublands; found in peninsular India.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivore, forages in leaf litter for insects, fruits, and seeds.

Call/Song: Loud, whistling call often heard in pairs or groups.

Fun Fact: Named for its beak, which resembles a scimitar sword.



Jungle Babbler

(*Argya striata*)

Size & Features: 25 cm. Brownish-grey plumage with a slightly streaked head and yellow eyes.

Habitat & Range: Gardens, forests, urban areas; widespread in India.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivore, feeds on insects, seeds, and fruits; found in noisy flocks.

Call/Song: Harsh chattering sounds.

Fun Fact: Known as "Seven Sisters" due to their social nature of moving in groups.





Lesser Whitethroat

(*Anthus similis*)

Size & Features: 16–18 cm. Streaked brown with a long, slightly curved bill.

Habitat & Range: Dry grasslands, open rocky areas; found in India and parts of Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, hunts insects and small invertebrates on the ground.

Call/Song: A sharp "tsip" and melodious flight song.

Fun Fact: Often mistaken for larks due to its streaked plumage and ground-dwelling habits.



Long-tailed Shrike

(*Lanius schach*)

Size & Features: 25 cm. Black mask, rufous underparts, long tail.

Habitat & Range: Open country, grasslands, agricultural areas; widespread in Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Carnivore, impales prey on thorns for later consumption.

Call/Song: Harsh chattering and mimicry of other birds.

Fun Fact: Also called "Rufous-backed Shrike" due to its coloration.





Pied Bushchat

(*Saxicola caprata*)

Size & Features: 13 cm. Males are black with a white patch on the wing; females are brown.

Habitat & Range: Open fields, scrub, and farmland; found in South Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, perches on low shrubs to hunt insects.

Call/Song: A mix of whistles, harsh chatters, and mimicry.

Fun Fact: Males often perform aerial displays during courtship.



Puff-throated Babbler

(*Pellorneum ruficeps*)

Size & Features: 15 cm. Brown, streaked plumage with a white, puffed-up throat.

Habitat & Range: Dense forests, bamboo thickets; found across South and Southeast Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, forages in undergrowth for insects and worms.

Call/Song: Loud, repetitive whistling song.

Fun Fact: Often moves in mixed-species flocks.





Purple Sunbird

(*Cinnyris asiaticus*)

Size & Features: 10 cm. Males are glossy purple-black; females are olive above, yellow below.

Habitat & Range: Gardens, scrub, woodlands; found across South Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Nectarivore, also eats small insects.

Call/Song: High-pitched chirping and metallic calls.

Fun Fact: Can hover like a hummingbird while feeding on nectar.



Red-whiskered Bulbul

(*Pycnonotus jocosus*)

Size & Features: 20 cm. Black crest, white cheeks, red patch below the eye.

Habitat & Range: Gardens, forests, and urban areas; found in South and Southeast Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivore, eats fruits, insects, and nectar.

Call/Song: Loud, musical whistles.

Fun Fact: Often kept as a pet due to its pleasant song.





Spotted Dove

(*Spilopelia chinensis*)

Size & Features: 30 cm. Brownish-grey with distinctive black-and-white spotted neck patch.

Habitat & Range: Urban gardens, open woodlands; widespread in Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on seeds and grains, often seen foraging on the ground.

Call/Song: Soft, rhythmic cooing.

Fun Fact: A common sight in city parks and urban areas.



Rufous Treepie

(*Dendrocitta vagabunda*)

Size & Features: 45 cm. Rufous-brown body, long tail with a black-tipped blue-grey end.

Habitat & Range: Forests, gardens; found across the Indian subcontinent.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivore, eats insects, fruits, and even scavenges.

Call/Song: Harsh, loud calls.

Fun Fact: Frequently seen near human habitation, often stealing food.





River Tern

(*Sterna aurantia*)

Size & Features: 38 cm. Grey wings, black cap, bright yellow bill.

Habitat & Range: Rivers, lakes, reservoirs; found across South Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on fish, diving swiftly into water.

Call/Song: High-pitched, sharp "kreee" calls.

Fun Fact: Breeds on sandy riverbanks, making shallow scrapes for nests.



Red-vented Bulbul

(*Pycnonotus cafer*)

Size & Features: 20 cm. Black head, brown body, red vent.

Habitat & Range: Gardens, forests, urban areas; widespread in Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Omnivore, eats fruits, nectar, and insects.

Call/Song: Cheerful, bubbly song.

Fun Fact: Plays an important role in seed dispersal.





Square-tailed Bulbul

(*Hypsipetes ganeesa*)

Size & Features: 24 cm. Blackish body, red beak and legs, squared tail.

Habitat & Range: Hill forests in South India and Sri Lanka.

Behavior & Diet: Feeds on fruits and insects, active and restless.

Call/Song: Loud, musical notes.

Fun Fact: Previously considered a subspecies of the Black Bulbul.



White-cheeked Barbet

(*Psilopogon viridis*)

Size & Features: 22 cm. Green body, white cheeks, streaked head.

Habitat & Range: Evergreen forests, gardens; found in South India.

Behavior & Diet: Frugivore, also eats insects.

Call/Song: Repetitive "kutroo-kutroo" call.

Fun Fact: Nests in tree holes carved by its beak.





Long-billed Pipit

(*Anthus similis*)

Size & Features: 16–18 cm. Streaked brown with a long, slightly curved bill.

Habitat & Range: Dry grasslands, open rocky areas; found in India and parts of Asia.

Behavior & Diet: Insectivore, hunts insects and small invertebrates on the ground.

Call/Song: A sharp "tsip" and melodious flight song.

Fun Fact: Often mistaken for larks due to its streaked plumage and ground-dwelling habits.



Yellow-throated Sparrow

(*Gymnoris xanthocollis*)

Size & Features: 14 cm. Grey-brown with a yellow throat in breeding males.

Habitat & Range: Open woodlands, gardens; found across India and Pakistan.

Behavior & Diet: Seed-eater, also feeds on insects.

Call/Song: Chirpy "chip-chip" sounds.

Fun Fact: Unlike House Sparrows, prefers natural habitats over urban areas.





Find stillness in nature's gentle rhythm

Hope you enjoyed going through our handbook

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