

Birds of the University of Pune

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Introduction

The University of Pune (Savitribai Phule Pune University) campus is a biodiversity hotspot spread across 411 acres (166.33 hectares) in the heart of Pune city. Located at 18.5529°N 73.8352°E, the campus sits at an elevation of approximately 560 meters above sea level.

Campus Environment

The campus features diverse habitats that support a rich variety of birdlife. The landscape includes extensive wooded areas with native and exotic tree species, open grasslands, lawns, artificial water bodies, gardens, and building complexes. This mosaic of habitats provides excellent opportunities for both resident and migratory birds.

Flora and Vegetation

The university grounds host over 150 species of trees, creating a veritable urban forest. Native species like Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*), Peepal (*Ficus religiosa*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), and Red Silk Cotton (*Bombax ceiba*) dominate the landscape, while ornamental and introduced species like African Blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), Rain Tree (*Samanea saman*), Gulmohar (*Delonix regia*), and Copper Pod (*Peltophorum pterocarpum*) add to the diversity. This rich vegetation provides vital nesting sites, roosting areas, and food sources for various bird species.

Human Impact

The campus ecosystem faces various anthropogenic pressures that affect bird populations:

- Regular vehicular movement along campus roads
- Ongoing construction and development activities
- Presence of a large student population
- Regular maintenance activities including gardening and landscaping
- Noise and dust pollution from nearby urban areas
- Light pollution from campus buildings and facilities

When to Watch

Time of Day:

- Early morning (6:00-9:00 AM): Peak activity as birds forage for breakfast
- Late afternoon (4:00-6:30 PM): Second wave of feeding activity
- Midday: Good for watching raptors soaring on thermal currents
- Dusk: Best time to spot nocturnal species like owls becoming active

Seasonal Highlights:

- Winter (November-February): Peak season with numerous winter visitors
- Monsoon (June-September): Best for watching breeding activities
- Summer (March-May): Good for observing resident breeding birds
- Post-monsoon (October): Opportunity to spot passage migrants

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the dedicated birdwatchers who have contributed extensively to documenting the avifauna of SPPU campus through eBird (SPPU eBird Hotspot).

Their systematic observations have greatly enhanced our understanding of bird diversity and seasonal patterns on campus.

How to Watch

Essential Equipment:

- Binoculars: 8x42 or 10x42 recommended for beginners
- Field guide: *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent* by Grimmett, Inskipp & Inskipp
- Notebook for recording observations

Useful Apps:

- eBird: For recording sightings and exploring hotspots
- Merlin Bird ID: Helps identify birds through photos or sounds
- BirdNet: AI-powered bird sound identification

More Tips

- Wear earth-toned clothing to blend with surroundings
- Move slowly and quietly to avoid startling birds
- Avoid using flash photography
- Keep a safe distance from nests and breeding areas
- Record your observations in eBird after each session

About This Guide

This field guide documents the diverse bird species found within the university campus. The most common species, which represent about half the bird species recorded on campus, are included here.

Each entry includes detailed information about the bird's appearance, behavior, and habitat preferences, accompanied by high-quality photographs. The nomenclature follows current taxonomic standards, with both scientific and common names provided for easy reference.

Chapter 1

Birds



Credit: Photo © Christoph Moning / Macaulay Library

1. Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)

Size: Kite size

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: A large bird of prey with a distinctive forked tail and long wings. The plumage is mostly blackish-brown with lighter underparts.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Often seen soaring high in the sky, searching for prey. Feeds on small mammals, birds, and carrion.

Nesting: Breeds December to April. Builds nests in tall trees, using sticks and other plant materials. Lays 2-3 whitish eggs with brown spots. Both parents incubate for about 30 days and care for young.



Credit: Photo Honza Grunwald / Macaulay Library

2. Shikra (*Accipiter badius*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A small hawk with a distinctive red eye and a barred chest. The upperparts are gray, and the underparts are white with fine rufous barring.

Best seen at: Widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Prefers wooded areas and gardens. Feeds on small birds, mammals, and insects.

Nesting: Breeds March to July. Builds nests in trees, using twigs and leaves. Clutch of 3-4 pale bluish-white eggs. Female does most incubation for 28-30 days, male provides food.



Credit: Photo Rajkumar Das / Macaulay Library

3. White-breasted Waterhen (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)

Size: Bulbul+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A medium-sized bird with a white face, throat, and breast, and a dark brown body. It has a distinctive red patch on the base of its bill.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Prefers marshy areas and wetlands. Feeds on insects, small fish, and plant matter.

Nesting: Builds nests in dense vegetation near water, using plant materials. Lays 4-6 creamy white eggs with reddish-brown spots. Both parents share incubation duties for about 19-20 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Naithaphat Choijuckdikul / Macaulay Library

4. Indian Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: A medium-sized heron with a brownish body and white wings. It has a distinctive yellow bill and legs.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Prefers wetlands, ponds, and marshes. Feeds on fish, frogs, and insects.

Nesting: Breeds June to September. Builds nests in trees or shrubs near water, using sticks and plant materials. Lays 3-5 pale blue-green eggs. Both parents incubate for about 18-24 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Anonymous / Macaulay Library

5. Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Size: Crow+

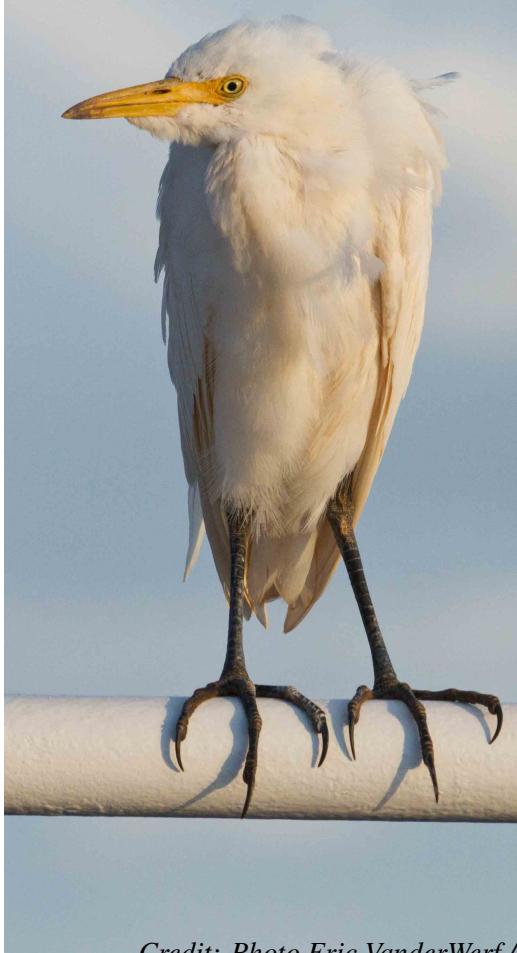
Status: Uncommon resident

Field characters: A medium-sized heron with a black crown and back, gray wings, and white underparts. It has red eyes and a stout bill.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Prefers wetlands, ponds, and marshes. Feeds on fish, frogs, and insects.

Nesting: Breeds June to September. Builds nests in trees or shrubs near water, using sticks and plant materials. Lays 3-5 pale blue-green eggs. Both parents incubate for about 24-26 days and care for the young.



Credit: Photo Eric VanderWerf / Macaulay Library

6. Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

Size: Myna++

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: A medium-sized egret with white plumage and a yellow bill. During the breeding season, it develops orange-buff plumes on its head, chest, and back.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Often seen near cattle, feeding on insects and small animals disturbed by the grazing animals.

Nesting: Breeds June to September during monsoon. Builds nests in colonies, using sticks and plant materials. Lays 3-4 pale blue eggs. Both parents incubate for about 23-26 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Ben Lucking / Macaulay Library

7. Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Size: Myna++

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A medium-sized egret with white plumage, a black bill, and black legs with yellow feet. During the breeding season, it develops long, delicate plumes on its head, chest, and back.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Prefers wetlands, ponds, and marshes. Feeds on fish, frogs, and insects.

Nesting: Breeds June to September. Builds nests in colonies, using sticks and plant materials. Lays 3-5 pale blue-green eggs. Both parents incubate for about 21-25 days and care for the young.



Credit: Photo David Turgeon / Macaulay Library

8. Blue Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: A plump, grey-colored bird with iridescent neck feathers. Two dark wingbars and a dark terminal tail band are distinctive features.

Best seen at: Found throughout the Indian subcontinent, particularly abundant in urban areas including the University of Pune campus.

Habits: Highly adapted to urban life. Often seen in flocks, feeding on grains and seeds on the ground.

Nesting: Breeds throughout the year. Nests in building ledges, window sills, and other artificial structures, using twigs and small sticks. Lays 2 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 17-19 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Louis Backstrom / Macaulay Library

9. Spotted Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*)

Size: Myna

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A slim, long-tailed dove with pinkish-grey plumage and distinctive black-and-white spotting on the nape.

Best seen at: Widespread across the campus and surrounding areas.

Habits: Usually seen in pairs or small groups, foraging on the ground for seeds and grains.

Nesting: Builds a flimsy platform nest in trees and shrubs, often in dense foliage. Lays 2 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 14-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Wojciech Janecki / Macaulay Library

10. Little Brown Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*)

Size: Myna-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A small, delicate dove with pale brown plumage and a lilac tinge to the neck. Black-and-red checkered pattern on neck sides.

Best seen at: Common throughout the campus, especially in open areas.

Habits: Often seen in pairs, feeding on seeds on the ground. Has a distinctive soft, musical call.

Nesting: Creates simple twig nests in bushes and low trees. Lays 2 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 13-15 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Raghavendra Pai / Macaulay Library

11. Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*)

Size: Myna++

Status: Common resident

Field characters: A large plover with distinctive red wattles in front of the eyes. Brown wings, black head and breast, white face and underparts.

Best seen at: Found in open areas across the campus, particularly near water bodies.

Habits: Known for its alarm call "did-he-do-it". Active during day and night, feeds on insects and small invertebrates.

Nesting: Nests on the ground in shallow scrapes, often on gravelly or rocky areas. Lays 3-4 olive-brown eggs with black spots. Both parents share incubation duties for about 28-30 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Prashobh Alyam Nair / Macaulay Library

12. Asian Koel (*Eudynamys scolopacea*)

Size: Crow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male glossy black with red eyes; female brown with white spots, barred underneath. Sexual dimorphism prominent.

Best seen at: Common throughout the campus, especially in wooded areas.

Habits: Known for its distinctive "ku-oo" call. Parasitizes crows' nests. Feeds mainly on fruits and berries.

Nesting: Brood parasite, lays eggs in nests of crows and other birds.



Credit: Photo Parmil Kumar / Macaulay Library

13. Greater Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*)

Size: Crow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Large, black bird with chestnut wings and long tail. Red eyes and curved black bill are distinctive.

Best seen at: Found in dense vegetation across the campus.

Habits: Skulking habit, often seen walking on ground. Deep booming calls. Feeds on insects, small vertebrates.

Nesting: Builds a domed nest in dense vegetation, usually close to the ground. Lays 3-5 white eggs. Both parents share incubation duties for about 15-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Sharif Uddin / Macaulay Library

14. Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

Size: Myna++

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Bright green parakeet with long tail. Males have pink and black neck ring, females lack this feature.

Best seen at: Abundant throughout the campus, especially in wooded areas.

Habits: Noisy, gregarious birds. Often seen in large flocks. Feeds on fruits, seeds, and grains.

Nesting: Breeds December to May. Nests in tree hollows, often competing with other cavity-nesters. Lays 3-4 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 22-24 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Nattaphat Chotjuckdikul / Macaulay Library

15. Alexandrine Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*)

Size: Crow

Status: Uncommon resident

Field characters: Larger than Rose-ringed Parakeet, with massive red beak. Males have pink and black collar.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas of the campus, less common than other parakeets.

Habits: Similar habits to Rose-ringed Parakeet but more wary. Feeds on fruits and seeds.

Nesting: Nests in large tree cavities, preferring old growth trees. Lays 2-4 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 23-26 days and care for the chicks.



P.Manjunath

Credit: Photo Prabhakar Manjunath / Macaulay Library

16. Plum-headed Parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*)

Size: Myna

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male has purple-red head, female bluish-grey. Both have green body and yellow-tipped tail.

Best seen at: Regular visitor to wooded areas of the campus.

Habits: Usually in pairs or small flocks. More arboreal than other parakeets. Feeds mainly on fruits and seeds.

Nesting: Nests in tree hollows, breeding season varies with location. Lays 3-4 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 22-24 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo John Clough / Macaulay Library

17. House Swift (*Apus affinis*)

Size: Myna-

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Small swift with white rump and forked tail. Overall dark brown-black plumage.

Best seen at: Common throughout urban areas of the campus.

Habits: Aerial feeder, constantly on wing. Often seen in large groups swooping near buildings.

Nesting: Colonial nester, builds mud nests under building eaves and bridges. Lays 2-3 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 19-21 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Sourav Mandal / Macaulay Library

18. White-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)

Size: Myna+

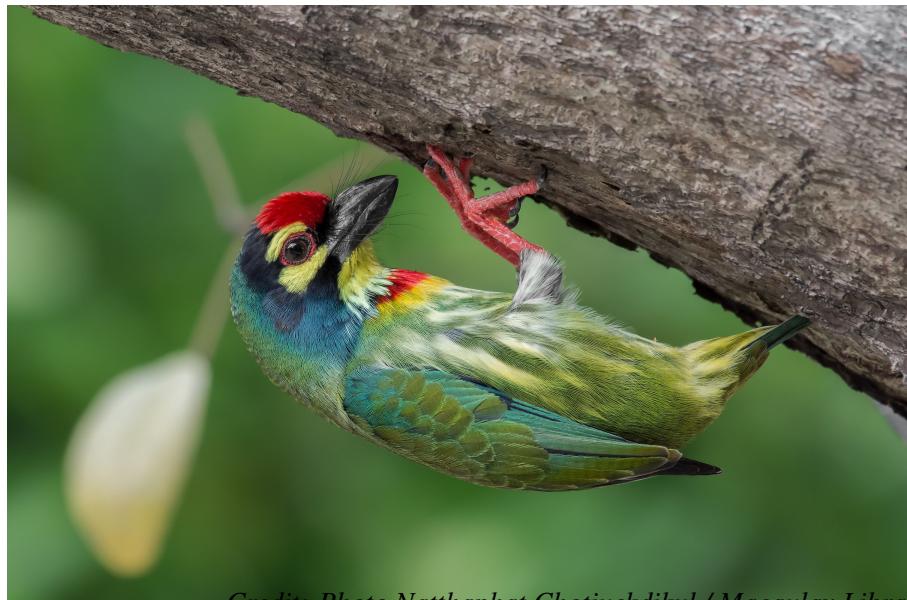
Status: Common resident

Field characters: Large kingfisher with bright blue back, chocolate brown head, and white breast. Large red bill distinctive.

Best seen at: Found near water bodies and in gardens across campus.

Habits: Perches prominently, diving for prey. Feeds on fish, frogs, lizards, and large insects.

Nesting: Breeds March to June. Nests in horizontal tunnels dug in earth banks. Lays 4-7 white eggs. Both parents share incubation duties for about 20-22 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Natthaphat Chotjuckdikul / Macaulay Library

19. Coppersmith Barbet (*Megalaima haemacephala*)

Size: Bulbul+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Small, green bird with crimson forehead and throat. Yellow eye-patch distinctive.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas throughout the campus.

Habits: Known for its metallic 'tuk-tuk-tuk' call. Feeds mainly on fruits, especially figs.

Nesting: Excavates nest holes in dead tree trunks or branches. Lays 2-4 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 13-15 days and feed the chicks.



Credit: Photo Abhishek Das / Macaulay Library

20. Dusky Crag Martin (*Hirundo concolor*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Small, dark brown martin with slightly forked tail. Uniform dusky plumage.

Best seen at: Found around buildings and rocky areas of campus.

Habits: Aerial feeder, catching insects in flight. Often seen gliding near buildings.

Nesting: Builds cup-shaped mud nests on buildings and rock faces. Lays 2-3 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 14-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Ryan Sanderson / Macaulay Library

21. Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common winter visitor

Field characters: Long, deeply forked tail. Blue-black above, rufous forehead and throat, pale underparts.

Best seen at: Winter visitor to campus, seen in open areas.

Habits: Graceful flier, catching insects on wing. Often perches on wires.

Nesting: Does not breed on campus; winter visitor only.



Credit: Photo Albin Jacob / Macaulay Library

22. Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Similar to Barn Swallow but with rufous rump and shorter tail streamers.

Best seen at: Found throughout campus, especially near buildings.

Habits: Aerial feeder, often in mixed flocks with other swallows.

Nesting: Builds bottle-shaped mud nests under structures. Lays 3-4 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 14-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Kavi Nanda / Macaulay Library

23. Wire-tailed Swallow (*Hirundo smithii*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Distinctive long wire-like tail streamers. Glossy blue-black above, white below.

Best seen at: Found near water bodies and open areas on campus.

Habits: Graceful flier, often perches on wires. Feeds on flying insects.

Nesting: Builds cup-shaped mud nests under bridges and buildings. Lays 2-3 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 14-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Natthaphat Chotjuckdikul / Macaulay Library

24. Long-tailed Shrike (*Lanius schach*)

Size: Bulbul+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Grey-brown above, whitish below with black mask through eye. Long graduated tail.

Best seen at: Found in open areas with scattered trees.

Habits: Hunts from prominent perches. Impales prey on thorns. Feeds on insects, lizards, and small birds.

Nesting: Builds neat cup-shaped nest in thorny bushes. Lays 3-6 white eggs with brown spots. Both parents share incubation duties for about 15-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Novelkumar M S / Macaulay Library

25. Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male bright yellow with black wings and tail; female duller greenish.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas across campus.

Habits: Shy bird, keeps to canopy. Melodious flute-like calls. Feeds on fruits and insects.

Nesting: Builds hammock-like nest suspended in tree fork. Lays 2-4 white eggs with reddish-brown spots. Both parents share incubation duties for about 14-16 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo © Raghavendra Pai / Macaulay Library

26. Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Glossy black bird with deeply forked tail. Strong hooked bill.

Best seen at: Found throughout campus in open areas with trees.

Habits: Bold and aggressive. Often seen chasing other birds. Excellent aerial hunter.

Nesting: Breeds March to July. Builds cup nest in outer branches. Lays 3-5 pinkish eggs with red-brown spots.



Credit: Photo © Ian Hearn / Macaulay Library

27. Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucophaeus*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Winter visitor

Field characters: Similar to Black Drongo but grey overall. Less deeply forked tail.

Best seen at: Winter visitor to wooded areas of campus.

Habits: Less aggressive than Black Drongo. Catches insects in air and from foliage.

Nesting: Does not breed on campus; winter visitor only.



Credit: Photo Denny Swaby / Macaulay Library

28. Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*)

Size: Myna

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Brown body with black head, yellow bill and legs. White wing patches visible in flight.

Best seen at: Abundant throughout campus in all habitats.

Habits: Bold, adaptable bird. Often in pairs or groups. Omnivorous diet.

Nesting: Nests in holes in trees, buildings, and other structures. Lays 4-6 blue-green eggs. Both parents share incubation duties for about 13-15 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo © Ian Mo / Macaulay Library

29. Oriental Magpie-Robin (*Copsychus saularis*)

Size: Bulbul

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Striking black and white plumage in male, greyer in female. Long tail often held upright.

Best seen at: Found throughout campus in wooded areas and gardens.

Habits: Bold and melodious songster. Feeds on insects and berries.

Nesting: Breeds March to July. Nests in tree hollows and building holes. Lays 4-5 greenish-white eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo Ramesh Desai / Macaulay Library

30. Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*)

Size: Bulbul

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Dark brown-black with scaled pattern, distinctive red vent and black crest.

Best seen at: Common throughout campus in all habitats.

Habits: Active and noisy. Often in pairs or small groups. Feeds on fruits and insects.

Nesting: Breeds year-round, peak February to May. Builds cup-shaped nest in bushes and small trees. Lays 2-3 pinkish-white eggs with red-brown spots. Both parents incubate for 14 days and feed chicks.



Credit: Photo Nattaphat Choijuckdikul / Macaulay Library

31. Red-whiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*)

Size: Bulbul

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Brown above, white below with distinctive red cheek patch and pointed black crest.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas and gardens across campus.

Habits: Lively bird with pleasant calls. Often in pairs. Feeds on fruits and insects.

Nesting: Builds neat cup-shaped nest in shrubs and small trees. Lays 2-3 pinkish-white eggs with red-brown spots. Both parents incubate for about 12-14 days and care for the chicks.



Credit: Photo Dr Mohammed Umer Sharieff / Macaulay Library

32. Large Grey Babbler (*Turdoides malcolmii*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Grey-brown bird with pale streaking. Long graduated tail and curved bill.

Best seen at: Found in open scrub and gardens across campus.

Habits: Lives in noisy groups. Forages on ground, flicking leaves. Feeds on insects and berries.

Nesting: Breeds March to September. Builds untidy nest in thorny bushes. Lays 3-4 turquoise blue eggs. Group members help in nesting duties.



Credit: Photo Arpit Bansal / Macaulay Library

33. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (*Muscicappa tickelliae*)

Size: Bulbul-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male bright blue above, rufous below. Female duller.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas with good undergrowth.

Habits: Active bird, makes short flycatching sallies from perch. Sweet whistling calls.

Nesting: Breeds April to July. Builds neat cup nest in tree hollow or cleft. Lays 3-4 pale eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo Sourav Mandal / Macaulay Library

34. Ashy Prinia (*Prinia socialis*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Ash-grey above, whitish below. Long graduated tail often held cocked.

Best seen at: Found in gardens and scrub throughout campus.

Habits: Active bird, moves through vegetation making harsh calls.

Nesting: Breeds mainly June to September. Builds deep cup nest in grass or bushes. Lays 3-5 brick-red eggs.



Credit: Photo Rahul Singh / Macaulay Library

35. Jungle Prinia (*Prinia sylvatica*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Grey-brown above, pale below. Darker than Ashy Prinia.

Best seen at: Found in scrub jungle and grassland areas.

Habits: Skulking habit, reveals presence by loud calls.

Nesting: Breeds June to September. Builds ball-shaped nest in grass clumps. Lays 3-5 greenish-white eggs.



Credit: Photo Matthew Plante / Macaulay Library

36. House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Male grey-brown with black bib and chestnut nape; female plain brown.

Best seen at: Common around buildings and human habitation.

Habits: Gregarious, feeds mainly on grains and seeds.

Nesting: Breeds almost year-round. Nests in holes in buildings. Lays 4-6 white eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo © Naithaphai Chotjuckdikul / Macaulay Library

37. Baya Weaver (*Ploceus philippinus*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male bright yellow in breeding with brown back; female sparrow-like.

Best seen at: Found in grassland areas and reed beds on campus.

Habits: Colonial nester. Males build elaborate pendant nests. Feeds on grass seeds.

Nesting: Breeds during monsoon. Males build multiple helmet-shaped nests. Lays 2-4 white eggs.



Credit: Photo © Arijit Banerjee / Macaulay Library

38. Indian Robin (*Copsychus fulicatus*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male glossy black with white wing patches, female brown. Cocked tail characteristic.

Best seen at: Common in open areas and scrub throughout campus.

Habits: Active ground feeder, frequently flicks tail upward. Sweet songs and calls.

Nesting: Breeds mainly March to September. Nests in holes in walls or ground. Lays 2-4 white eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo © Natthaphat Chotjuckdikul / Macaulay Library

39. Oriental White-eye (*Zosterops palpebrosus*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Tiny olive-green bird with distinctive white eye-ring. Yellow throat and undertail.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas and gardens across campus.

Habits: Active and acrobatic. Moves in small flocks through foliage. Feeds on insects and nectar.

Nesting: Breeds March to September. Builds neat cup nest in tree fork. Lays 2-4 pale blue eggs.



Credit: Photo © Abhijit Mishra / Macaulay Library

40. Scaly-breasted Munia (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Small brown finch with distinctive scaly pattern on breast. Short thick bill.

Best seen at: Found in grassy areas and scrub throughout campus.

Habits: Social, feeds in small flocks on grass seeds. Sweet twittering calls.

Nesting: Breeds July to October. Builds large ball nest in thorny bushes. Lays 4-6 white eggs.



Credit: Photo Ian Hearn / Macaulay Library

41. House Crow (*Corvus splendens*)

Size: Crow

Status: Very common resident

Field characters: Grey and black crow with distinct grey neck collar.

Best seen at: Abundant throughout campus, especially near human activity.

Habits: Bold and opportunistic. Omnivorous diet.

Nesting: Breeds March to July. Builds platform nest in trees. Lays 4-5 pale blue-green eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo © Ian Davies / Macaulay Library

42. Large-billed Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*)

Size: Crow+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Larger than House Crow, all black with massive bill. More solitary habits.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas of campus and surrounding regions.

Habits: More cautious than House Crow. Often seen singly or in pairs. Omnivorous diet.

Nesting: Breeds March to June. Builds large platform nest high in trees. Lays 3-5 pale greenish eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo Phil Chaon / Macaulay Library

43. Spotted Owlet (*Athene brama*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Small, chunky owl with white spotting. Large yellow eyes and white eyebrows give it a stern expression.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas and gardens across campus.

Habits: Active at dawn and dusk. Bobs head when alert. Feeds on insects, small vertebrates.

Nesting: Breeds February to April. Nests in tree hollows and old buildings. Lays 3-5 white eggs. Female incubates for 28-30 days while male provides food.



Credit: Photo © Arpit Bansal / Macaulay Library

44. Indian Grey Hornbill (*Ocyceros birostris*)

Size: Crow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Large grey bird with long tail and distinctive casque on bill. Female has smaller casque.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas across campus with large old trees.

Habits: Usually seen in pairs, moving from tree to tree. Feeds mainly on fruits, especially figs.

Nesting: Breeds March to June. Female seals herself in tree cavity, leaving narrow slit through which male feeds her and chicks. Lays 2-4 white eggs.



45. Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*)

Size: Myna++

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Crow-sized bird with brilliant blue wings and tail. Brown head and back.

Best seen at: Found in open areas with scattered trees.

Habits: Conspicuous percher, makes dramatic rolling display flights. Feeds on large insects, small lizards.

Nesting: Breeds March to July. Nests in tree hollows. Lays 3-5 white eggs. Both parents incubate for about 17-19 days.



Credit: Photo Parmil Kumar / Macaulay Library

46. Black-headed Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina melanoptera*)

Size: Myna+

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male grey with black head; female grey with faint barring.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas and gardens.

Habits: Methodically searches foliage for insects. Often joins mixed hunting parties.

Nesting: Breeds April to July. Builds small cup nest on horizontal branch. Lays 2-3 grey-green eggs with brown spots.



47. Small Minivet (*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*)

Size: Sparrow

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Male black and orange; female grey and yellow. Both have long tails.

Best seen at: Found in wooded areas throughout campus.

Habits: Active, moves through canopy in small groups. Sweet whistling calls.

Nesting: Breeds March to June. Builds tiny cup nest in tree fork. Lays 2-4 pale green eggs with brown spots.



Credit: Photo Raghavendra Pai / Macaulay Library

48. Tickell's Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*)

Size: Sparrow-

Status: Common resident

Field characters: Tiny bird with grey-brown above, dirty white below. Short tail and curved bill.

Best seen at: Found wherever flowering and fruiting trees occur.

Habits: Very active, flits rapidly between flowers. Feeds on berries and nectar.

Nesting: Breeds year-round, peak March to May. Builds pear-shaped hanging nest. Lays 2-3 white eggs. Both parents care for young.

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