

***GBBC 2025 in the Andamans. Story by: G Shaktivel***

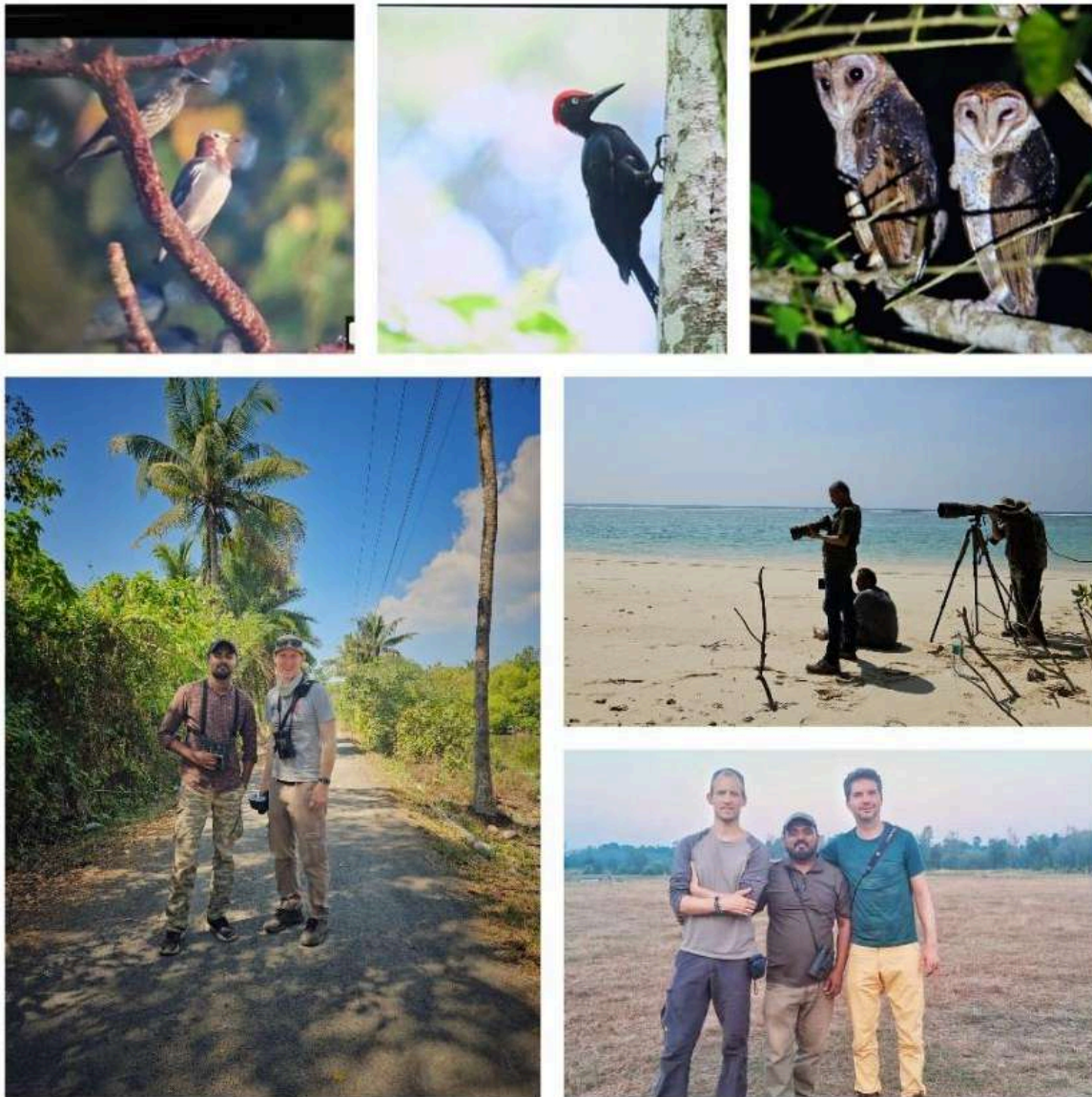


Photo by: G Shaktivel

**Name:**

G SHAKTIVEL

**State:**

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

**Story:**

Since GBBC falls during our peak birding season in February, we are often busy guiding tours and not able to participate properly. This year we decided to create a group composed

of our guides (**Prodip Sarder & Jabili Rao**) and the guests they were leading and to challenge ourselves to cover the maximum number of species to push Andaman's ranking and India's ranking during the event. Prodip & Jabili spent their time birding around South Andaman on various wetlands & forest patches, while I travelled to Little Andamans to cover that region. We collectively managed to spot **147 species (86.4%) out of 170 species** recorded during the entire event. We recorded **all the Andaman endemics** and **majority of the resident species**, including rarities like **Chestnut-cheeked Starling, Nicobar Pigeon, Chinese & Japanese Sparrowhawks**. This GBBC we put our spotting skills to the test and our ability to watch aggressively knowing every species we add, will increase India's ranking in the world list. **Seeing my name show up on the India list** as I reported a Chinese Sparrowhawk in the dying light on the 17th Feb **made it even more memorable**.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Bathallapalli. Story by: Dharani Kumar***



Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava* by [Sandeep Nandani / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Dharani kumar

**State:**

Andhra Pradesh

**Story:**

I went birding at my workplace **RDT Hospital, Bathallapalli**, with **6-10 other people**. We had memorable sightings of **Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Red Avadavat and Oriental Honey-buzzard**.

GBBC helped me **introduce birds to 5-6 new birders**. I was also able to spread **awareness about the ecosystem**. GBBC helped me to learn new things, bring awareness to new people.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Andhra Pradesh. Story by: Dr Swapna***



Photo by Dr Swapna's students

**Name:**

Dr.Ch.swapna

**State:**

Andhra Pradesh

**Story:**

I have been **passionate about GBBC since 2021**, when I began my journey with CBC under the guidance of Rajasekhar Bandi, A.P. State Coordinator. Every year, I eagerly register for



CBC and invite schools and colleges to participate in awareness programs. My love for nature inspires me every day, fueling my enthusiasm for its preservation.

I cherish the moments spent **connecting with nature alongside my college students.**

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Pasighat Reserve Forest. Story by: Rohan Baishya***



Photo by Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi

**Name:**

Rohan Baishya

**State:**

Arunachal Pradesh

**Story:**

I was a part of the 2024 GBBC held in Pasighat by ATREE Siang. As an RA in the project, I was **leading this year's GBBC**. The bird walks were conducted in **Pasighat Reserve Forest**, about 10 km from the main town area. I, along **with my colleague Senan D'Souza**, led the bird walks. We conducted them on **15th and 16th February**. Since this was an area we came often for birding sessions, there was no memorable sighting for me personally;



however, it **felt great showing birds to college students**. What makes it special is the realization that I was on the other side of this interaction at some point and now, leading one feels like a great accomplishment.

Quote from 3rd year zoology student **"Seeing a new bird for the first time was such an amazing feeling—it almost felt like a mini adventure!** It was exciting, surprising, and full of wonder, making me realize how I had never noticed that beautiful bird before."

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Lower Subansiri and Keyi Panyor. Story by: Koj Mama***



Photo by Koj Mama

**Name:**

Koj Mama

**State:**

Arunachal Pradesh

**Story:**

The **Arunachal Pradesh Birding Club (APBC)** has successfully organized a four-day Global Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) in the **twin districts of Lower Subansiri and Keyi Panyor**.

The event, aimed at promoting bird conservation and citizen science, was held from February 14 to 17 at **Ziro** (Lower Subansiri) and **Belo village** under Pistana circle of Keyi Panyor district.

Despite cold and inclement weather, the first two days of the event (**Feb 14-15**) were conducted at **Myolyang village and Kley Pakho forest areas near Ziro**. The bird count then moved to **Belo village** on **Feb 16-17**, where **enthusiastic participation from the local community** was witnessed.

As part of the event, an **interactive awareness session on bird conservation** was held involving school teachers, Panchayat members, Gaon Buras, and members of the Belo Village Welfare Committee. **Birder Millo Tako** gave an insightful presentation on "**How to Identify Birds**," while **Koj Tubing**, a wildlife student from Gauhati University, spoke on the "**Importance of Bird Watching**." The session was moderated by **Likha Tai**, a botanist from RGU, Doimukh, who emphasized the need for long-term bird conservation efforts.

The GBBC-2025 event was **organized by APBC, a pioneering bird conservation organization in Arunachal Pradesh since 2012**. The initiative was spearheaded by renowned **conservationist Koj Mama**, who played a key role in bringing the event to both districts.

=====



## ***GBBC 2025 in Lakhimpur. Story by: Jugal Borah***



Photo by Zakir

**Name:**

Jugal Borah

**State:**

Assam

**Story:**

We birded at **North Lakhimpur College** Campus and **LTK College** Campus in **Lakhimpur District**.

This is the first time where we found many eBirders and we successfully finished 15 and 17 February.

5 বছৰ অপেক্ষাৰ অন্তত লক্ষীমপুৰে পাইছে ৪জন কৈ নতুন পক্ষী নিৰীক্ষক

After 5 years of waiting, Lakhimpur has got as many as 8 new birdwatchers

=====

## *GBBC 2025 in Nalanda. Story by: Rahul Kumar*



Photo by Rahul Kumar

**Name:**

Rahul Kumar

**State:**

Bihar

**Story:**

On the first two days, I, along with two friends **Rahul Kumar Kushwaha** and **Avinash Kumar** from team **Bihar Paryawaran Sanrakshan Abhiyan**, explored rural areas in **Noorsarai, Nalanda** on a bike to document bird species. It was delightful to see a **large flock (60-70) of Yellow-Footed Green Pigeon** on a Peepal tree and **three Indian Grey Hornbill** making loud calls from same tree.

On the third and fourth days, along with **Avinash Kumar** visited **Giddhi Lake**, a large waterbody surrounded by villages in Nalanda, and the **Giriyak Dam on the bank of Panchane River**, where we were joined by the **GBBC Nalanda district coordinator Rahul Kumar** and bird watchers. During our observation at Giddhi Lake, we spotted several migratory visitors, including **Garganey, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Grey Heron, Purple Heron** while we observed **Bar-headed Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Temminck's Stint, Wood Sandpiper, Little Egret, Gadwall** along the Panchane River.



We also ventured into the hilly areas of Nalanda district, where we spotted **Indian Thick-knee and Painted Spurfowl** along with commoners. These sightings were particularly special for our team.

What's more fulfilling than contributing to science while finding inner peace and joy ?

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Patna. Story by: Abhishek***



Photo by NIFT students

**Name:**

Abhishek

**State:**

Bihar

**Story:**

We have been to **Rajdhani Jalashaya in Patna** and also did a small walk in **NIFT campus**. We saw **Pied and White-throated Kingfishers diving at the same place** for fish. I have never seen that in my life. We had around **30 students from NIFT Patna** for the walk , with

the support of a few handouts of birds. These were great and the students wish to have more so that they are also encouraged to do birding by themselves

Seeing the smile on the face of students who got the bird handouts was the highlight.

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Nawada. Story by: Prashant Kumar***

**Name:**

**State:**

Prashant Kumar

Bihar

**Story:**

I am Prashant Kumar , a resident of **Nawada district** in Bihar. I consider myself a volunteer in different initiatives our youth group is actively starting like **GreenLungs Movement**, a citizen led movement where we encourage people to plant trees in their backyards and streets so that they can get nutritious fruits and greenery increases. Since the last 10 years we have been actively working in the area with different friends to increase the curiosity in children through our common space Abdul Kalam Library in Rajauli.

When I was in school I was fascinated by stories of Salim Ali and his dedication towards birds. I didn't know why it was important but I believed there was something happening in this area. I recorded my bird observations in my diaries but it was only 4-5 years back that I started birding in a manner which I say is a little more professional.

**Wherever I go I try to go birding** with friends. This year GBBC was more planned though I couldn't gather many people in the locality. One friend from Gaya, another from Maharashtra and **2-3 children** and I **did a few bird walks**.

Observations from the walks were recorded in eBird. This is my story and I believe there are many who share same story.

Birds live next to us and many in the sky. I feel that it is us who are distant, not them.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Chhattisgarh. Story by: Dr. Hit Narayan Tandan***



Photo by Dr. Hit Narayan Tandan

**Name:**

Dr. Hit Narayan Tandan

**State:**

Chhattisgarh

**Story:**

It was a great experience to go birding with students of PG Zoology.

We found the GBBC/CBC a very helpful and interesting activity for the explanation of biodiversity in and around campuses and residential colonies. It is also helpful for students to find some research topics for their dissertation and PhD too.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Katkona and Korea (Koriya). Story by: Chandan Tripathi***



Photo by Shri Jitendra Gupta

**Name:**

Chandan Tripathi

**State:**

Chhattisgarh

**Story:**

More than 50 college and school students along with naturalists participated in the **Katkona and Korea (Koriya) districts.**

Highlights of the species observed included **Red-crested Pochard, Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Swallows, Wagtails and Spotted Owlet.**

=====



## ***GBBC 2025 in Lalpur Primary School. Story by: Ramde Bhatiya***



Photo by Ramde Bhatiya

**Name:**

Ramde Bhatiya

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

In **Lalpur Primary School**, Ramde Bhatiya, with the help of students from **grades 5th to 8th**, organized a GBBC event. The students **learned how to identify different bird species, how to count them accurately, and how to record their observations**. They then spent time in the schoolyard and surrounding areas, carefully observing and counting the birds they saw.

This event was a great opportunity for the students to learn about birds and their importance in the ecosystem. It also helped them **develop their observation skills and their appreciation for nature**. By participating in the GBBC, the students of Lalpur Primary School contributed valuable data to a global effort to understand and protect bird populations.



=====

***GBBC 2025 in Navsari Agricultural University. Story by: C A Parvathi***



Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* by [Mehala Kumar / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

C A PARVATHI

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

We went for birding at a farm side near the Floriculture department in **Navsari Agricultural University**.

Seeing the **Grey Heron** fly was one of the most memorable sightings; it was truly captivating.

This experience was special because it allowed me to **learn more about birds and identify** new species. What made it even more memorable was how helpful our group was, enabling me to learn a great deal about birds and birding. Our senior group members shared innovative and new information that proved very helpful. The sights, views, and

enjoyment during birding were fantastic, and I've now **developed an interest** in it because of that mind-refreshing day.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in NAU campus, Gujarat***

**Name:**

**State:**

Shreya Sonal

Gujarat

**Story:**

Experience was **amazing** with many new things to learn. I did bird watching in the NAU **campus** where I saw many different species like **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Small Minivet, Greenish Warbler, Jerdon's Leafbird**. My overall experience was excellent and I am **going to participate next year also**.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in College of Forestry, NAU. Story by: Jyothi Medi***



Photo by Medi.jyothi

**Name:**

Jyothi Medi

**State:**

Gujarat



## Story:

GBBC was conducted on the NAU campus, and we were a group of 10 who went to the farm side of our university. There are a lot of birds like **Gray Francolin, Red-whiskered and Red-vented Bulbul, Black Kite flock, Babbler, Lark sp., and Kingfishers.**

The birds calling in the morning were very pleasant and the birds we saw were very colourful. I felt very happy to see and enjoy it a lot. It was such a nice experience.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in a University Campus. Story by: Yash Karmur***



White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* by [Tisha Mukherjee / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Yash Karmur

**State:**

Gujarat

## Story:

We went birding on our university campus in a **group of 8–10** people. It was a wonderful experience to spot and count campus birds while learning more about them.

One of the most memorable moments was seeing three species of kingfishers - **White-throated Kingfisher, Pied Kingfisher, and Common Kingfisher**, all in the same place within just 4–5 minutes.

=====

## *GBBC 2025 in Gujarat. Story by: Soni Drashti Shaileshbhai*

### Name:

Soni Drashti Shaileshbhai

### State:

Gujarat

## Story:

### **A Heartfelt Day of Birding**

There are days when **nature speaks directly to the heart**, and this was one of them. Surrounded by the gentle rustle of leaves and the crisp morning air, I felt an indescribable connection to the world around me. As the sun painted the sky in hues of gold and pink, the **chorus of birds** began—a melodic symphony that seemed to echo the very rhythm of my heartbeat.

With each sighting, my heart swelled with joy and gratitude. There was something profoundly grounding about witnessing these creatures in their natural element, free and unburdened. It reminded me of the **simple beauty of life**, of being present and embracing the moment.

As the day went on, I found myself **not just observing the birds but feeling a part of their world**. Their songs were no longer just sounds but conversations, whispers of stories carried by the wind. It was a reminder that sometimes, the most profound connections are made in silence, simply by being present and open to the world around us.

Walking back, my heart was full. Birding that day wasn't just about spotting species or ticking names off a list. It was about **feeling alive, connected, and at peace**. It was a reminder of the beauty that exists all around us, waiting to be noticed, felt, and cherished.

That day, among the birds, I found a piece of myself. And for that, I am grateful.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Gujarat. Story by: Mansi Bhikhubhai***

**Name:**

**State:**

Mansi Bhikhubhai

Gujarat

**Story:**

We have surveyed our campus. We have found different species as our campus is an Agricultural University. There is a lot of biodiversity in our university..We have found diverse species of birds. We were 10 people in our team. Field and crop wise different species were there. Our team has identified 40 no. Of bird species. Participating in bird census is a exhilarating experience. I had limited experience with bird identification, but the expertise of our teammates and the hands on experience helped me develop my skills.

"Learn, Observe, Conserve"

**Photo:**

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=16Y2FdcYnm4dCsRI5Nc8ITHJK6glb2D17>

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Gujarat. Story by: Patanvadia Kirteshkumar Jashbhai***

**Name:**

**State:**

Patanvadia Kirteshkumar Jashbhai

Gujarat

**Story:**

I went birding at Navsari Agricultural University, which has a rich and diverse habitat for birds, including wetlands, gardens, and open fields. My most memorable sighting is an Indian Roller . I participated in the birding activity with a group of fellow bird enthusiasts. It was great to share observations and learn from each other.



This Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was special because it allowed me to observe a variety of bird species in a familiar environment while contributing to citizen science. The excitement of spotting new birds, recording data, and discussing findings with others made it a rewarding experience.

Seeing an Indian Roller take flight at Navsari Agricultural University was a breathtaking moment. Its vibrant blue wings shimmered in the sunlight, making this GBBC experience truly unforgettable.

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Gujarat . Story by Vikash Rajbhar***

**Name:**

Vikash Rajbhar

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

We went to our campus for birding at 7:00 am in the morning. My area was wetland and agricultural birds. I covered both the areas. I had a lot of fun during birding and gained a lot of knowledge and learnt new species of birds.

This time the bird count was very good for me because I saw Indian Golden Oriole which I liked very much

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Gujarat. Story by Pateliya Dharmik***

**Name:**

Pateliya Dharmik

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

I was a lot of fun counting the birds and I saw many types of birds. My area was Veterinary College. And we found 45 Birds Species this was my Experience very good

I saw a small minivate bird

**Photo:**

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1awvEdKe33S2gUGq8wbGKpazrGbHKC-lq>

**Photo by:**

Mrudul buch

=====

***Campus Bird Count 2025 in a university campus. Story by: Divyansha Sharma***



Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* by [Manju Sinha / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Divyansha Sharma

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

#### CAMPUS BIRD COUNT!

This was my first bird count and as a nature enthusiast, I eagerly joined my first Campus Bird Count, a citizen science initiative aimed at documenting bird diversity. The thought of spending a morning amidst nature, identifying birds, and contributing to conservation excited me. Armed with a field guide and binoculars, I was ready for the adventure! We started early in the morning, when the air was crisp and filled with birdsong. Within minutes, we spotted a pair of **Spotted Dove** sitting on the branch of a Teak tree as we moved ahead, a flash of vibrant blue caught my eye—it was a **White-throated Kingfisher**! I saw **35 species of birds within 2 hours**. **Rock pigeons** were seen majorly which are turning as a curse nowadays for humans and Nature. **Identifying birds was both exciting and challenging**, as some species were well-camouflaged. Initially, I struggled with distinguishing similar-looking birds, but experienced birdwatchers in the group taught me key identification techniques. I also learned the importance of patience. The overall experience was exciting and created a very good opportunity to learn. Major thanks to our mentor our very own ornithology professor who gave us the opportunity to experience this extremely wonderful event.

Whole event was memorable for me but the most I liked was that when I wasn't able to identify any bird, my team members never made fun of me, instead they helped me out by making me learn more and more, this made me feel confident and helped me learn more about the birds so **THE TEAM WORK !** is the best moment of the event.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in NAU, Navsari. Story by: Ghetiya Dharmi Bipinbhai***



Photo by Anjali Patel

=====

***GBBC 2025 in <State: >. Photo by: <Photo by: >***

**Name:**

Janhvi tomar

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

I recently participated in the Campus Bird Count, a fascinating event that brought together bird enthusiasts, nature lovers, and students to explore and document the avifauna on our campus. This experience not only helped me develop a deeper appreciation for birds but also shed light on the importance of conservation efforts.

we learned about bird identification techniques, using binoculars, and recording observations. We also downloaded the eBird app, which enabled us to submit our sightings and contribute to a global birding community.

On the day of the count, our team gathered at the college entrance, then wr startes our birding adventure. Armed with binoculars, and the eBird app, we set out to explore the

campus. We walked through gardens, woodlands, observing and recording the diverse bird species.

After the count, we compiled our data and submitted it to the eBird platform.

Overall it was a great experience along with our team mate.

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Abrama lake & NAU farmland. Story by: Savaliya zeel***



Photo by Nidhi Patel

**Name:**

Savaliya zeel

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

We went to agriculture farmland early in the morning to watch and count birds in **Navsari Agricultural University**. It is better to see birds in the early morning because in the early morning birds come out from their home and in the early morning many bird species can



be seen. We also went to **Abrama lake** which is in **Navsari** for bird watching. It was a very memorable experience for me. I was really surprised to see the beauty of birds. My group leader and seniors helped me with bird identification.

I saw many new bird species like **Eurasian Spoonbill, Baya Weaver, Red Munia, Pale-billed Flowerpecker** and many other species which I have not seen before. It was really a great experience for me. I saw many birds, some birds were in flocks and some alone. I noticed that some particular birds like particular trees and crops to perch on. I saw that the majority of the **Rosy Starlings on the bombax ceiba tree**. The event helps create awareness about the importance of bird conservation and promotes community engagement in birding activities. We saw **44 species** of birds and also **made a checklist in ebird**.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Sardar Patel University. Story by: Dr. Rupal Vasant***



Photo by Nisarg Sankhla

**Name:**

Dr. Rupal Vasant

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

**Sardar Patel University** has a scattered campus and the effort was to cover campus diversity as much as possible. On Day 1: The urban area of Rampura and graveyard area surrounding Department of Biosciences (Satellite campus) was explored, Day 2: Sardar



Patel University Admin office area, Shastri Maidan and VP Science College was covered; on Day 3: Botanica Gardens of Sardar Patel University and University Staff colony was selected and on Day 4: Post Graduate Department of Biosciences and its 1 km periphery was observed for the presence of avian species. Birding was done in groups of Undergraduate and Post-Graduate students and Faculty members of the University. Birding is a regular activity for us at Department of Biosciences, we do update our checklist annually and its a combined efforts of many Dissertation students to prepare this checklist (<https://www.spuvvn.edu/academics/departments/bio-sciences/campus-diversity/>). This time we gave a **tagline: Lift your heads up from your devices and look the feathered beauty in the sky**, we had conducted a **webinar on tips and tricks for GBBC** by one of our Alumna- **Mr. Jigar Patel** and we posted everyday updates in our Departmental WA groups, instagram page and **various local news channel covered our stories** to widespread the idea of local birding and the significance of avifauna in and around us.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Rajkot. Story by: Ar. Gaurav Vadher***



Photo by Ar. Gaurav Vadher

**Name:**

Ar. Gaurav Vadher

**State:**

Gujarat

## Story:

These photos were taken during Campus Bird Walk as a part of GBBC 2025 at **Indubhai Parekh School of Architecture, Rajkot**, Gujarat campus. Where more than 15 participants joined and we were able to identify more than **31 species** of birds.

Review from the participant:

1. **Pari Vyas:** This was really a great learning experience especially for students like me who want to learn something new and are really keen to know about nature and our environment. Learning about the birds present around us was really thought provoking. We see them regularly but do not have much information about them as we got to know today.
2. **Jadish Barai:** Very nice experience with karyashala, they are doing a beautiful job to expose the people towards nature. We are getting lots of learning and happiness from nature.

=====

**GBBC 2025 in KU-SDAU. Story by: Dr Tarun Sutaria**





**પાલનપુર 17-02-2025**

### સંશોધન અને સંરક્ષણ માટે દસ્તાવેજીકૃત કરવાનો ઉદ્દેશ્ય દાંતીવાડા સરદાર કૃષિ યુનિવર્સિટીમાં 78 જાતિના પક્ષીની ગણતરી કરાઈ

**તિર્થપુર** | દાંતીવાડામાં આવેલ સરદાર સુભાષચંદ્ર બુનિયતિનીયા વેસ્ટીનરી અને મીમાંસાલયર કોલેજના સંયુક્ત ઉપક્રમે કેમ્પસ વર્ડ કનિસ્ટન્ટ-2025નું આયોજન કરવામાં આવ્યું હતું. 13 અને 14 ફેબ્રુઆરીએ યોજાયેલા બે કાર્યક્રમમાં વિદ્યાર્થીઓ, પ્રોફેસરો, સ્ટાફો અને પશુચિકિત્સા અને આગ વીધો હતો. કેમ્પસની કવરિજિયા સંગ્રાહન અને સંરક્ષણ માટે સ્થાનિકીકૃત કરવાના ઉદ્દેશ્ય સાથે આ આયોજન 11મી ધરત્રું હતું.

આ ગણતરી કાર્યક્રમમાં 78 જાતિના પક્ષીઓની નોંધ કરવામાં આવી હતી, જેમાં ભુતર, કાજર, ચક્રી, ટીકેટ્ટો, કિંગફિશર, ટાડ, સોનીશિલ, ડાંગલ, તુઈ અને માચીયાર જેવી વિવિધ જાતિઓ જોવા મળી હતી. આ પક્ષીઓની યાજરી કેમ્પસની ઊંચાતરી અને તપ પર્વારણની સહિતી આપે છે. આ કાર્યક્રમ દ્વારા કેમ્પસની પર્વારણ, સંવેદનશીલતા અને પક્ષીજાતિઓની સંખ્યા અને જાલપુર્ણ માહિતી મળી હતી. સૈજીલક સંગ્રાહન માટે ઉપયોગ પડેા એકત્રિત થયો હતો, અને જીવવિવિધતા જાણવાના પ્રયાસો માટે પ્રેરણા મળી હતી.

Photo by Dr Tarun Sutaria



**Name:**

Dr Tarun Sutaria

**State:**

Gujarat

**Story:**

The Campus Bird Count (CBC) and Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was organized on the university campus on 13th and 14th February 2025. The main objective of this campaign was to **document the biodiversity of the campus for research and conservation**. On Day One (13-02-2024), experts educated all participants on the importance of birds for nature conservation. On Day Two (14-02-2025), participants were taken to the fields in small **groups of 8 to 9** persons, each led by an expert. **Dr. T. V. Sutaria** highlighted the significance of CBC-GBBC to the participants. **Dr. Nishit Soni**, Assistant Professor at the Agricultural College, SDAU, presented an engaging talk on "Bird Identification and Bird Race." Following that, **Dr. Vishal Wankhade**, Assistant Professor at the Agricultural College, SDAU, discussed the topic of bird conservation within agricultural landscapes. **Dr. C. F. Chaudhari** showcased the "e-bird" platform, while **Dr Tarun Sutaria** demonstrated the "Merlin" application. Lastly, **Dr. P. T. Sutaria** delivered a presentation on "The Role of Birds in Veterinary Assessment." **Students, professors, researchers, and bird enthusiasts participated** enthusiastically in this program. During the count, participants **recorded 76 species** of birds, including **pigeons, crows, sparrows, lapwings, kingfishers, robins, and various unique species such as hornbills, eagles, flycatchers, and plum-headed parakeets**. These birds are important for both urban and agricultural environments, highlighting the biodiversity present on campus and reflecting its careful maintenance. This program provided valuable information about the campus's environmental sensitivity and the variety of bird species found there. It served as an inspiration to all participants for further research and for efforts to preserve biodiversity. The expedition yielded significant insights into the campus's bird diversity and ecological importance.

CBC/GBBC served as an inspiration to all participants for further research and for efforts to preserve biodiversity.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Bandipora. Story by: SEED***



Photo by: Akhter Hussain

**Name:**

Society for Environment Education and Development SEED

**State:**

Jammu and Kashmir

**Story:**

We birded at **Sumbal, Bandipora** — spotting the **Ruddy Shelduck** was an incredible experience. We were a team of seven, and what makes it even more special is the opportunity we got to represent our organization on an international forum

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Jammu and Kashmir. Story by: Akhter Hussain Najar***

**Name:**

Akhter Hussain Najar

**State:**

Jammu and Kashmir

## Story:

Manasbal and Khurwan sar were chosen to birding and it got a wonderful chance for me to cover the story of areas in Bandipora of J&K, however I started the birding alone but got few members' letters to join the same. As i love birding and i feel privileged to do for the sake of energy booster and mood relaxing and a measure for conservation

=====

## ***GBBC 2025 in Marh. Story by: Sachin Kumar Bhagat***



Photo by Mohit Kalotra

**Name:**

Sachin Kumar Bhagat

**State:**

Jammu and Kashmir

## Story:

**Government Degree College Marh, Jammu**



We've been birding here for the past three years, covering events like the CBC and GBBC, along with conducting birding workshops on various themes — from the Black-necked Crane, our former state bird, to the current UT bird, the Kalij Pheasant.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in MAHE, Bangalore. Story by: Chandrima Home***



Photo by Chandrima Home

**Name:**

Chandrima Home

**State:**

Karnataka

## Story:

We conducted a Campus Bird Count in the **Manipal Academy of Higher Education** (Bangalore off campus). This was our 2nd bird count for the campus and across 2 lists we observed around **44 species**.

There were quite a few memorable sightings:

1. We saw the **wing display of Black-shouldered Kite mid-air** before coming down to catch prey
2. However, something that I personally encountered for the first time is the behaviour between the **White-cheeked Barbet** and 2 **Coppersmith Barbets** where the larger barbet (WC) was driving away the 2 Coppersmith for a tree-hole resource. Both could be potentially competing for tree holes for nesting in the campus.
3. A group of **Drongos** calling like other birds around them.

We were a group of three people. The sighting of resource competition between the two barbet species was something that I encountered for the first time and definitely made this GBBC memorable.

=====

## *GBBC 2025 in Elita Promenade. Story by: Mayank Tiwary*



Photo by Mayank Tiwary

### **Name:**

Mayank Tiwary

### **State:**

Karnataka

### **Story:**

The **Elita Promenade** Campus Bird Count (CBC) was a **first-of-its-kind event in our apartment community**, initiated through awareness efforts on WhatsApp groups and the community portal. With the support of the apartment management team, we encouraged registrations and engagement from residents.

To ensure participants were well-prepared, we held a debrief session the day before, explaining the process and what to expect.

The CBC took place on February 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 AM, drawing an enthusiastic



response. Of the 41 registrations, around **29 participants** joined, including students, homemakers, business professionals, wildlife conservationists, and photographers.

Gathering at 5:45 AM with cameras, binoculars, the Merlin app installed on their phones, and with notebooks and pens , participants split into four groups to explore different birding hotspots across the campus.

Among the highlights was spotting an **Ashy Prinia** and a group of seven **Munias**, which thrilled the participants. Watching a **Pond Heron** observing us with quiet amusement was the perfect reminder of how nature and curiosity go hand in hand. We recorded a total of **27 species**.

This event was particularly special as it marked the first time a birding activity of this scale was conducted in our apartment campus. The overwhelming enthusiasm and positive feedback reinforced the importance of such initiatives, and we are excited to plan more bird walks in the future.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in BGS Lake. Story by: Dr Ashwini R***



Photo by Mr. Pradeep G

**Name:**

Dr Ashwini R

**State:**

Karnataka

**Story:**

### **Engaging Young Minds**

This year's GBBC was special as it focused on engaging children and introducing them to the fascinating world of birds. To enhance their experience, we distributed **Early Bird Pocket Guides (NCF)**. These portable guides listed common regional bird species, making them ideal companions for young birders. Armed with these guides, the children shared their own stories of spotting birds—whether near their homes, during family trips, or on school excursions. These narratives set the stage for **a day of discovery and learning**. We also took this opportunity to educate the children about the critical role birds play in ecosystems and the importance of conserving them. Through interactive sessions, they **learned how birds contribute to pollination, pest control, seed dispersal, and maintaining ecological balance**. It was heartening to witness their curiosity and growing awareness of environmental stewardship.

### **A Day of Discovery**

Our journey began near a majestic banyan tree, where a **flock of Black Kites** soared overhead, setting the tone for an exciting day ahead. As we ventured further, the lake's surroundings came alive with avian activity. The children were thrilled to spot a **vibrant Common Kingfisher** and an **Indian Cormorant perched gracefully** on a branch. **Little Swift** circled above us, their **swift, erratic flights** captivating everyone.

One of the most exciting moments of the day was spotting **Jerdon's Bushlark**. This small bird amazed the children with its **unique flight pattern**—soaring high into the air before parachuting down with its wings held open, singing melodiously all the way back to its perch. The children were thrilled by its aerial display and fascinated by its song.

The unmistakable calls of **Red-wattled Lapwing** announced our presence, earning them the nickname "whistle blowers." Nearby, a **Little Egret** perched atop a tree, while a **White-cheeked Barbet** made a brief appearance. A pair of **Spot-breasted Fantail** dazzled us with their **full fan display**, earning appreciative gasps from the young birders.

As the day unfolded, we encountered flocks of **Scaly-breasted Munia** perched on the highest branches, **chirping melodiously**. Other notable sightings included the **Black Drongo**, **Red-whiskered and Red-vented bulbuls**, **Pied Bushchat**, **Rose ringed Parakeet**, **Asian green Bee-eater and the iridescent Purple Sunbird**. The highlight of the day, however, was the children's encounter with a **muster of Indian Peafowl**. The sight



of these regal birds strutting gracefully amidst the city chaos left everyone awestruck.

### **Lessons from Nature**

One of the most profound realizations for the children was that nature is everywhere—even within urban environments. The sheer diversity of bird species thriving in and around a small lake amidst the hustle and bustle of the city was an eye-opener. They discovered that bird watching requires not only observation but also patience, attentiveness, and a genuine love for nature.

### **The Impact of GBBC**

The Great Backyard Bird Count serves as more than just an event; it is a gateway to environmental awareness and action. Each checklist submitted during GBBC contributes to global research, helping scientists understand bird populations, distribution, and the impacts of habitat and weather changes. By involving children, we not only ignite a lifelong passion for birding but also plant the seeds of conservation in young hearts.

### **Looking Ahead**

As the day ended, the children carried home memories of a surreal experience and a newfound appreciation for the avian world. This year's GBBC reinforced the idea that **engaging young minds in activities like bird watching can cultivate a deep respect for nature**. We hope to continue inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards through such initiatives, proving that even amidst urban chaos, the wonders of the natural world are always within reach.

=====

## *GBBC 2025 in lakes in and around Bangalore. Story by: Ranjeet Sahani*



Photo by: Narendra Babu

**Name:**

Ranjeet Sahani

**State:**

Karnataka

**Story:**

On the day one-14th February, all staff from FES Karnataka was assembled at **Puttenhalli Kere**, a bird sanctuary, revived through citizen group in Bengaluru urban area. Since all staff from FES Karnataka were participating in a GDI training at Ramanashree California Resort, close to Puttenhalli Kere in Yelahanka, this was the best option for us to start the GBBC together.

On 13th February, we briefed the team about the importance of GBBC and how to use the hard copy of bird identification pamphlet, how to use the binoculars, how to check birds' IDs in Merlin application and how to enter them in the E-Bird application. The time for the birding was decided to be early morning from 6:30 am when the sun rises. We were not expecting that many of them will turn up for the event and this made me very anxious about the morning. However, when I got up in the morning, I was surprised to see that 20 plus members were already waiting for us to go for birding. In fact, we reached the site by 6:15 am itself and had to wait for the sunrise. It was amazing see how **observers were using both the hard copy of bird ID pamphlet and the Merlin Application**. We made sure to keep quiet and do not disturb the birds. Most of the observers were keen on using

the binoculars and tell us which bird they saw and how many are present in the birding site. The pleasant surprise was to see **two pairs of Malabar Hornbill** fly by. Everyone was thrilled to see them. In total we could identify **55 species** of which majority were aquatic birds such as **kingfishers, cormorants, egrets, ducks and herons. Oriental Darter** was new sighting for us apart from the hornbills, **Golden Oriole, Barbets and Indian Spot-billed Ducks**. It was a fun activity and most of the observers were happy to participate in the event.

On day two of GBBC, I was accompanied by **Narendra Babu CR** at Sidlaghatta. We went to **Ammana Kere, Sidlaghatta**, a tank located outside of the town and generally do not have water all round the year, so I was very skeptical. However, when we reached there, I was surprised to see the quantity of water in the tank and the number of aquatic birds.

To start with I was very surprised and happy to see a **large number of Eurasian Coot, Painted Stork, Indian Spot-billed Duck, Northern Shoveler and Garganey**. We were equally excited to witness **large number of Black Headed Ibis and Glossy Ibis** along with **good number of Sandpipers and Black Winged Stilts and Cormorants**. This was a great experience and we went all around the tank spending more than an hour to document all the species and take their photographs.

Day 3 of GBBC 2025 was very special for me because we went a great length to see birds at Lakshmipura Kere in Shrinivaspura Block. We realized that this site has great Potential for bird conservation (Community Bird Sanctuary) **Lakshmipura Kere, Shrinivaspura block, Kolar**.

On 15th of February **Shreerang Hedge**, my colleague at Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), Karnataka and I, decided to go for birding in afternoon at Lakshmipura Kere, Shrinivaspura Block, Kolar, 40 kilometers from Chintamani where our state office is located. Shrinivaspura block has some 20 plus cascading tanks in the Papagni river basin, of which Lakshmipura Kere (tank) is one of the last in the catchment and hence one of the biggest. Initially, I was hesitant to go that far and was skeptical about bird sighting.

However, when we reached there, I was surprised to see the clean and crystal water of the tank. We were welcomed by the very close sighting of **Paddyfield Pipit and Common Kingfisher**. As we move towards the tank along the bank, we witness a huge gathering of aquatic birds flying all around the main waterbody of the tank.

Luckily, we had a Nikon Pro-Staff Binocular through which we could make out some of the bird species. We however could make out all of the species only when we reach very close to the tank bund. It was a pleasant surprise for us to see some of the migratory birds such



as **Northern Pintail, Indian Spot billed Duck, Lesser Whistling Duck, Garganey, Gadwall and Green Winged Teals** in large group. Off these Northern pintail and Spot billed ducks were in the largest number. We encountered total **63 species** which included both aquatic and terrestrial birds. The interesting part of the birding was the landscape and the habitat of the birds around the tank.

The tank is a perfect habitat for some of the important aquatic and terrestrial species such as sandpipers, plovers, stilts, cormorants, egrets, lapwings, jacanas and herons and the terrestrial species such as paddy field pipits, bush chats, robins, gray francolin, quills, warblers, sunbirds, bee eaters and prinias. The tank is spread across huge area surrounded by mango orchards and bamboo forest and provide much needed shelter for migratory birds as well as resident birds.

The songs of migratory birds have found a home in the environment of villages. Their conservation and evolution are our responsibility.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Udupi & Manipal area. Story by: Adithya Bhat***



Black-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher *Ceyx erithaca* by [SIRISH KUMAR / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Adithya Bhat

**State:**

Karnataka

**Story:**

I did birding in **Udupi Manipal** surroundings. **Black-backed dwarf kingfisher** was the one memorable sighting. GBBC encourages you to meet other birders, birds around different places, look for the habitat changes, some rarities. Always enjoyed looking at birds. Looking at their activities in my backyard is so fun. Honestly, it makes me feel connected to the beauty and resilience of nature.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Kundapura. Story by: Praveen Kumar T***



Photo by Praveen Kumar T

**Name:**

Praveen Kumar T

**State:**

Karnataka

## Story:

Panchagangavali Estuary, Feb 16, 7am to 9:30am

The Great Backyard Bird Count at the **Panchagangavali Estuary**, in **Kundapura** was initiated by **naturalist Praveen Kumar T**, a Kundapura resident and conservation advocate. Our 'backyard' was the **vast, biodiverse wetland** where many resident and migratory species thrive at this time of the year.

The bird count was led by Praveen and **Dr. Deepta Sateesh**, a design educator, architect and planner, focused on creating new pathways in research, eco-pedagogies and policy. The group included design **students and researchers from Srishti Manipal Institute, MAHE**, who were **documenting the nature-culture relationships** in this ever-shifting monsoonal landscape.

We started at the edge of the estuary, where local **Kharvi fisherfolk** begin their clam collection and artisanal fishing well before sunrise, attracting watchful **Brahminy Kites, Little Cormorants and Kingfishers** — experts at catching the slightest activity at the water's surface.

Our journey into the waters was made possible by the **Kharvi fishermen Narayana and Dasa**. They punted old **wooden donis (traditional fishing boats)** through the estuary, expertly navigating above the bed of silt strewn with oysters, and around fishing poles and mangroves. We were guided by their immense knowledge and keen intuition, developed by engaging with the estuarine waterscape and its inhabitants over decades. They called to one another across the boats, spotting many species of birds with their bare eyes which included **Curlews, Kentish Plovers, Terek Sandpipers and Whimbrels**.

From our donis (traditional fishing boats) we saw the **elegant dance of the Little Cormorant** in the Panchagangavali estuary's waters at break of dawn. **Locally called the Neer-kaage (watercrow)**, we saw it diving for catch and washing its feathers, joined by two others in a synchronized formation.

Mid-way into the waters, we witnessed the majestic **Peregrine Falcon**, perched on a bamboo pole. The poles, set at intervals, are used by fishermen to tie nets and fishing boats, and by birds such as **Black Kites and Brown-headed Gulls** as a vantage points and roosting. This is one of many examples of **multispecies kinships** that run like a thread amongst all communities — human and other-than-human, that fish in the commons of these waters for their sustenance.



The receding water revealed sand bars, a habitat for crustaceans, shellfish and tubeworms of all sizes. We rolled up our pants and took off our shoes to greet this sticky ground seeping with moisture — a unique material formed by the churning of the sand from the coast and the grey silt or kesaru, carried by rivers and monsoonal waters to the estuary. We observed the ground patterned with the movement of the tides and the impressions of forked feet. It was a marvelous sight to see the **Greater Egrets, Black-headed Ibis, Open-Billed Storks, Grey Herons, a large flock of Caspian Terns and Slender-billed Gulls** flying to and from the surrounding mangroves, wading in the pools using their stilted legs, catching their prey. Other than a **dramatic brawl between three kites**, the different bird species were coexisting on their abundant feeding ground.

With the rising of the tide, it was time for us to head back to the edge, hoping to return to our great backyard in the coming year, when the misty waters and rising sun reveal to us the estuary's winged dwellers.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Bangalore University & TG Halli. Story by: Guru Prasad***



Photo by Guruprasad

**Name:**

Guru prasad

**State:**

Karnataka

**Story:**

We went for the **CBC at Bangalore University** — the **Paradise Flycatcher** and **Tickell's Blue Flycatcher** were the highlights of the walk.

For the **GBBC**, our group of five members visited **TG Halli backwaters**. Watching a **Marsh Harrier** trying to catch coot chicks was the main highlight.

Excited to contribute to the Great Backyard Bird Count!

=====

*GBBC 2025 in Taliparamba. Story by: Sneha C*



Photo by Jahana Izzath CK

**Name:**

Sneha C

**State:**

Kerala



## Story:

We were thrilled to participate in the Campus Bird Count at **Sir Syed College, Taliparamba**. With 20 enthusiastic participants, we **submitted 105 checklists** and recorded **58 bird species**.

One of the most exciting moments was witnessing an **Asian Paradise Flycatcher** and a **Yellow-browed Bulbul** enjoying a bird bath installed in our college's botanical garden. It was a delightful sight and a reminder of how small conservation efforts can create meaningful interactions with wildlife.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in PIECC Garden Moshi, Pune. Story by: Sumeet Sudam Sadgir***



Red-wattled Lapwings *Vanellus indicus* by [Kirubakaran Valayapathi / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Sumeet Sudam Sadgir

**State:**

Maharashtra

## Story:

As a space farming researcher and environmental conservationist, I have always been passionate about nature and sustainability. This year, I participated in the GBBC for the first time, and it was an unforgettable experience.

I went birding at **PIECC Garden in Moshi, Pune**, a peaceful place with plenty of birdlife. The most memorable moment was watching **two red-wattled lapwings drinking water together by a lake** inside the campus. Seeing them in their natural habitat, undisturbed and calm, was a beautiful sight that I will always remember. Their calm presence in nature reminded me of the beauty of wildlife and the importance of conservation

I went birding alone, taking my time to observe and photograph the birds. Even though I was by myself, I felt part of a global community of bird lovers who were also participating in GBBC. This event was special because it was my first time joining. I have always loved watching birds, and this opportunity gave me the right guidance and a way to contribute to bird conservation.

Being involved in space farming and environmental conservation, I understand the importance of preserving ecosystems, both on Earth and in space. This experience strengthened my connection with nature and reminded me why protecting biodiversity is so important. It was a wonderful memory, and I look forward to participating again in the future.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at Bhandup Pumping Station (BPS) Birdwatching Area, Mumbai. Story by: Gaurav S. Soman***



Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* by [Satyajit Shinde / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Gaurav S. Soman.

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

Each year, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) brings together bird lovers across all ages to celebrate the diversity of avifauna around us. Making the GBBC2025 special, I had the opportunity to join (both as a participant and an external resource person) for a **birdwatching trail organized by WWF-India** (Maharashtra State Office) at the Bhandup Pumping Station (BPS) Birdwatching Area in Mumbai. This site is part of the Thane creek Ramsar site and favourite hotspot of local birders.

We started early in the morning, a group of 15 eager participants armed with binoculars, field guides, and birding apps, provided - considerably - by the WWF team. The air was cool, and **the landscape, a mix of bushy scrubs, wetlands and mangroves**, was alive with

the calls of birds. Within minutes of our arrival, we could hear robins, bulbuls and prinias calling around us. This area is famous for open salt-pans which provide feeding grounds for waders and we could see several egrets and cormorants around. As for many metro city-dwellers, the bird life in cities only consists of the flocks of pigeons, crows and sparrows feeding near houses and the occasional bulbul. So, everyone was pleasantly surprised that within a mile from their suburb, there exists such rich habitat.

After formal introductions, we presented the participants with the **basic instructions for using binoculars**, using tree habit structure to spot birds effectively and **basics of making a checklist using eBird app**. For many in the group, including myself, the GBBC was not just about bird-watching; it was about sharing knowledge resources and encouraging curiosity. First-time birders learned how to identify birds by their size, shape, calls, and preferred habitats. One of the highlights of the day was **observing the different feeding behaviour of birds**. We watched sunbirds delicately sipping nectar from flowers, coppersmith barbets pecking at fruits, and the ever-opportunistic Black Kites scavenging on carrion. The diversity was remarkable—large wading birds like Eurasian Spoonbills and Black-winged Stilts patrolled the shallows, while agile Sandpipers darted along the marshy edges. We spotted flocks of **Lesser and Greater Flamingos** wading gracefully in the lake, their pink hues contrasting against the blue water, a sight to behold. As we ventured deeper into the trails, we observed shrikes, drongos and bee-eaters flitting between trees, catching insects' mid-air and guarding their turf. Importantly, each species had its own ecological niche, and witnessing these interactions added a new layer of appreciation to our observations.

As the sun climbed higher, signalling the end of our birding session, we took a moment to revise our findings for the day. We had successfully documented nearly **60 bird species**, totaling over **300 individuals**. With our checklists submitted and memories captured in photographs and recordings, we wrapped up the day with a sense of fulfillment. The experience will surely encourage our passion for birding and citizen science further, inspiring us to participate in many more such initiatives in the coming months.

Thanks to eBird and GBBC we get an opportunity to monitor recent bird sightings in our area and be a part of a larger initiative such as State of Birds in India. These events highlight how the checklists recorded by simple curious birdwatchers can drive conservation efforts further towards habitat conservation.

=====



## *GBBC 2025 at Ram Mula Confluence, Pune. Story by: Ajay Homkar*



Photo by Ajay Homkar

**Name:**

Ajay Homkar

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

Ram Mula confluence is a pristine forest at the heart of Baner suburb of Pune City. It is a **protected sacred forest** (Devrai) for hundreds of years. Due to its unique habitat, one can see waterbirds and birds in protected forests. For GBBC, we organized four walks on the weekend so as to engage with birders from various age groups. The walks were scheduled from 7.00 am to 9.00am in morning and 4.00 pm to 6.00pm in evening. Noted birders from Pune conducted the bird walks. Kedar Champhekar, Gopal Bhaskraan, Ranjeet Rane and Sanjeev Naik provided an in-depth knowledge about the birds, their habitats and why/how we should protect such habitats.

Every session was unique and we could spot some unique bird in every session. It was very pleasant to observe some common birds in this picturesque habitat. **Common and painted snipes**, Asian paradise flycatcher, **black bittern**, **forest wagtail** were among the memorable sightings. Migratory birds like ruddy shelduck, stilts, and various types of sandpipers were also new sightings for kids participating in this walk.

Together **150+ birders** participated in these 4 walks and we could spot **97 species** at this location. In terms of species, this hotspot ranked 4th in Pune district. People from **age 2 to 70+** participated in this event.

**This birdwalk also helped highlight the importance of this habitat as an ecologically sensitive biodiversity hotspot.** Hope the government will take the right steps to protect this beautiful habitat.

Birds and their habitat, both need to be protected. If you protect the habitat, the other will automatically happen !

=====



## *GBBC 2025 at Pashan Tekdi, Pune. Story by: Dhruva Punde*



Photo by Avanish Raut

**Name:**

Dhruva Punde

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

I was in charge of leading the GBBC at **Pashan Tekdi**, Pune. It was an absolutely memorable experience for me to lead and organise 3 walks there, with around 20 people in total. I met a lot of new birders. It was great connecting with like minded people. Pashan Tekdi is right behind my home, and we had some incredible sightings like the Indian **Paradise Flycatcher**, **Spotted Owlets**, **Booted Eagle**, **Honey Buzzard**, etc. It was especially interesting for new birders and I'm glad to have ignited the spark of birding in them. Along with this, my team was also in charge of making posters for all the 20+ bird counts for GBBC happening in Pune city. This was also a really unique experience. I'm happy to see the

extensive collaboration and effort taken for this year's GBBC, one of my best birding experiences so far.

The most memorable moment was when we were photographing Spotted Owlets and suddenly an Indian Paradise Flycatcher appeared right above the owlets, really unexpected and beautiful.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Vijaysinha Yadav College. Story by: Dr Amol Anandrao Patil***



Photo by Sandeep Lohar

**Name:**

Dr Amol Anandrao Patil

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

GBBC 2025 was a great experience. We held campus bird counts in 3 colleges. We uploaded all the species of bird observed along with their numbers in ebird. Many teachers and students were astonished to see the large variety of birds and learn about their habits. It was very new to them. The special moment for us was the flock of the Rosy starling birds.

When in Vijaysinha Yadav College we saw plenty of **Oriental White Eye** chirping on the Alangium Salvifolium (ankol) tree which is a very rare tree - native to India.



***GBBC 2025 at Bharati Vidyapeeth, Pune. Story by: Thuhina J R***



Photo by Thuhina J R

**Name:**

Thuhina J R

**State:**

Maharashtra



## Story:

This year's Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) at **Bharati Vidyapeeth** was a memorable experience. We spent four days birding across our campus, observing nature closely and enjoying the beauty around us.

The most special sighting, for me, was the **small minivet**, its bright orange throat standing out vividly against the green leaves. Another unforgettable moment was spotting the white morph of the **Indian Paradise flycatcher**, its long, flowing white tail trailing behind like a ribbon of pure elegance.

What made this GBBC even more meaningful was the sense of togetherness. As part of our college club, Prakrithi Parichay, around 20 of us participated, sharing our excitement and discoveries. It was not just about counting birds but also about appreciating nature and **creating lasting memories with friends.**

Watching birds in their natural habitat, moving gracefully among the trees, filled us with wonder and awe.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at Pashan Lake, Pune. Story by: Surbhi Tiwari***



Photo by: Rahul Tiwari

**Name:**

Surbhi Tiwari

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

I have started a birding initiative for kids (I call it Young birder group), during GBBC I birded alone in my backyard and inspired other people to participate in GBBC, sending them **videos on how to upload checklists**.

In one bird walk on 16th February at Pashan Lake with a small group, **we saw spot breasted fantails** dancing on low perch. Watching them dance made me want to dance myself.

I saw **Indian white-eye** for the first time, on the lower branches of a Chickoo tree, they looked amazing.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at MIT-WPU, Pune. Story by: Anuja Abhyankar***



Photo by Ninox Nature Club

**Name:**

Anuja Abhyankar

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

We went birding around our campus at **MIT-WPU**, with my fellow **Ninox Nature Club members** and a few others, where we saw several types of birds including Purple Sunbird, Green Bee-eater and Magpie Robin.

My most memorable sighting was the Oriental White-eye.

What made GBBC special for me was identifying the birds and discovering that we have a large diversity of birds in our campus.



Being the most observable creatures, birds really show us the rich natural diversity of our land.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Shamrao Nagar Gunthewari Area, Sangli. Story by:  
Manjusha Sagar Patil***



Photo by Santosh Aphale

**Name:**

Manjusha Sagar Patil

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

As a part of GBBC2025 we visited **Shamrao Nagar Gunthewari area in Sangli**. I led this event which was attended by around 12 birders. Respected Sharad Apte Sir also gave his valuable suggestions on this event.

Our interesting sighting on that day was of **Common Snipe** (four in all), **Spotted Redshank** and several **Painted storks**. I have attended GBBC previously, but this year was special for me as I led it and I could make some contribution to greater efforts by eBird and Cornell labs.

The most memorable moment during this year's GBBC was respectable Sharad Apte's guidance. Also when we recorded the first sighting in Sangli District of the **ultramarine flycatcher** at the **Shantiniketan** patch on the previous day.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Peth Vadgaon. Story by: Dr Amol Patil***



Photo by Dr Shubham

**Name:**

Dr Amol Patil

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

We held GBBC for the first time in various campuses near to our town Peth Vadgaon. The bird lists were duly uploaded in ebird. The campus bird count received a wonderful response from students and teachers of the school, colleges we went to.

We saw a flock of rosy starling birds in the air. We also saw a flock of **Oriental white-eye** gathered on an **Ankol** tree. As we watched them feed on nectar, we realised how important **native trees** are for **supporting bird diversity**.

=====

**GBBC 2025 in Jalgaon. Story by: Shilpa Rajendra Gadgil**



Photo by Rajendra Damodar Gadgil

**Name:**

Shilpa Rajendra Gadgil

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

GBBC & CBC अंतर्गत 105 प्रजातीच्या पक्ष्यांची नोंद .

दरवर्षी प्रमाणे या वर्षीही आम्ही निसर्गमित्र तर्फे GBBC आणि CBC साठी आम्ही विविध ठिकाणी पक्षी गणना केली. या वर्षी या गणनेत महिलांचा सहभाग विशेष होता.

\* सहभागी सदस्य : - कविता नेमाडे, मृणाल काळे, सुशीला जोशी, अनिता दलाल, सुशीला पाटील, राजेंद्र गाडगीळ आणि अनिकेत खरे.

\* Campus

=====

1) कृषी विज्ञान केंद्र, जळगाव.

2) कण्वमुनी आश्रम, कानळदा, जळगाव.

3) कचरा डेपो,जळगाव.

\* GBBC

=====

1) ममुराबाद रोड,जळगाव.

2) कानळदा रोड,जळगाव.

3) कपिलेश्वर मंदिर नदी संगम,अमळनेर,जळगाव.

या ठिकाणी आणि अन्य काही ठिकाणी पक्षी गणना केली.

Campus गणनेत तेथील अधिकारी व कर्मचारी यांनी सहभाग नोंदवला.

\* या वेळी त्यांना त्यांच्या कॅम्पस मध्ये आढळणाऱ्या पक्षी जातींची माहिती सांगितली. मान्सून आणि हिवाळी

स्थलांतर करून येणारे पक्षी ,ते कधी येतात,का येतात याची त्यांना माहिती दिली. त्यांना पक्षी निरीक्षणाचे महत्त्व सांगितले.

कपिलेश्वर मंदिर,अमळनेर परिसरात महिलांसाठी विशेष GBBC उपक्रम

=====

\* कपिलेश्वर मंदिर हे नदी संगमावर वसलेले आहे तरी पाणथळ पक्ष्यांची कमी होती. (तेथे भाविकांची गर्दी आणि बोटिंग ).

\* या ठिकाणी निवासी वेदपाठशाला आहे . तेथील विद्यार्थ्यांना या उपक्रमाची माहिती सांगणे गरजेचे होते कारण ते इथंच मुक्कामी असल्याने वर्षभर प्रत्येक मोसमातील पक्षी त्यांना दिसत असणार. हे लक्षात घेऊन त्यांना सविस्तर समजावून सांगितले.

\* या वेळी सहभागी लोकांनी जे प्रश्न विचारले त्यावरून अनेक वर्षांपासून पक्ष्यां विषयी असलेले समज- गैरसमज अजूनही दूर झालेले नाही हे लक्षात आले.

\* विशेष उपलब्धी :-

बुरखाधारी हळदुया (Black-hooded Oriole),

हिवाळी स्थलांतर करून येणारे वटवटे (Warblers),काळा

थोरथिरा (Black Redstart),

धोबी (Wagtails) ,

तीर चिमणी (Pipits),

श्वेतकंठी ( Lesser Whitethroat),

चक्रवाक (Ruddy Shelduck) ,

दगडी गप्पीदास (Siberian Stonechat)

कवडा झुडपी गप्पीदास ( Pied Bushchat )

गुलाबी मैना (Rosy Starling)

रंगीत करकोचा (Painted Stork)

यांची नोंद झाली.



मोठ्या संख्येत आढळलेले पक्षी-

गुलाबी मैना (Rosy Starling) - 3035

गाय बगळा ( Eastern Cattle Egret) - 504

कबुतर ( Rock Pigeon ) - 420

साळुंखी ( Common Myna) - 413

कानळडा रोडच्या आजूबाजूला उघड्या गटारी आणि तुंबलेल्या पाण्याची डबक्यांच्या नदी, तलावात पाणी असूनही नेहमी दिसणारे पाणकावळे, बगळे, वंचक, बदक सोडून हिवाळी स्थलांतर करून येणारे पाणथळ पक्षी जाती नगण्य .त्यात बदक ,हंस तर अजिबात दिसले नाहीत.

या चारही दिवसात विशेष म्हणजे तुंबलेल्या गटारी, घाणपाण्याची डबकी आणि त्याच्या आजूबाजूला असलेल्या गवताळ पट्यात पाणथळ पक्ष्यांची नोंद जास्त संख्येत झाली. ज्या ठिकाणी नदी होती तेथे मात्र पाणथळ पक्षी अल्प आढळले. GBBC पक्षी निरीक्षणात कपिलेश्वर येथील वेद पाठ शाळेतील विद्यार्थ्यां समोर पक्षी जीवन यावर बोधपर माहिती शिल्पा गाडगीळ यांनी दिली.

Like every year, this year too, we conducted a bird census for GBBC and CBC at various locations on behalf of Nisargamitra. This year, the participation of women in this census was special.

\* Participating members: - Kavita Nemade, Mrinal Kale, Sushila Joshi, Anita Dalal, Sushila Patil, Rajendra Gadgil and Aniket Khare.

\* Campus covered: Agricultural Science Center, Kanvamuni Ashram, Garbage Depot.

\* Other locations covered : Mamurabad Road, Kanalda Road, Kapileshwar Temple River Confluence.

On the campuses, Officers and employees of the campus participated in the census.

At this time, they were informed about the bird species found in their campus, particularly the monsoon and winter migrants, when they are expected and why they come. They were told about the importance of bird watching in understanding the behaviour and movements of birds.

Key Sightings:- Black-hooded Oriole, Winter Migratory Warblers, Black Redstart, Wagtails, Pipits, Lesser Whitethroat, Ruddy Shelduck, Siberian Stonechat, Pied Bushchat, Rosy Starling, Painted Stork

During these four days, a large number of waterfowl were recorded in stagnant drains, stagnant water bodies and the grassy areas around them. However, few waterfowl were found in the places where there was a river. Shilpa Gadgil gave informative information on bird life in front of the students of Ved Path School, Kapileshwar during the GBBC bird observation.

]

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Mahatma Hill, Pune. Story by: Arjit Jere***



Photo by Rohit Khare

**Name:**

Arjit Jere

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

I, an Environment Educator with Conservation Ecologist, Arnav Gandhe conducted a GBBC Birding Trail at **Mahatma Hill**. It is one of the many **hilly grassland "tekdis"** dotting Pune. While this hill pales in size and avian diversity to its much larger and famous sibling, Vetar hill, it still harbors some special birds. The morning of the trail on Saturday, 15th November was **sunny with a hint of a chill in the air**. Our trail group was blessed with **people across the age spectrum**- youth, middle-aged adults and kids. On this fun trail. We enjoyed sightings of the **Yellow-Wattled Lapwing**, a graceful bird symbolic of grasslands, and a cute family of adult and immature Laughing Doves. In the ponds of the hill we saw the regular fare of waterfowl like **White-Breasted Waterhen** and **Eurasian Moorhen**.

As the walk ended, a massive brown silhouette with huge wings and strong beak appeared in the sky. We got excited by its sheer size when the smaller kites and crows chased it. One look with binoculars confirmed the identity - a majestic **Steppe Eagle**, a rare winter

migrant to Pune. The fact that we saw this uncommon bird in the heart of the urban jungle was quite thrilling.

Enriched by an enjoyable walk and memorable sightings, we emphasized **the importance of grassland habitats and preserving them**. This GBBC introduced me to several new birders, and I was happy to **share the joy of birding** with beginners and children eager about nature and wildlife.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Matunga. Story by: Robin P. Mathew***



Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* by [Siya Ul Haque / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Robin P. Mathew

**State:**

Maharashtra

## Story:

Participating in the Campus Bird Count (CBC) under Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) at Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Matunga (E) was an enriching and memorable experience. The campus, though nestled in an urban setting, proved to be **a vibrant haven** for various bird species, allowing us to appreciate the diversity of avian life in our surroundings.

One of the most exciting aspects of the bird count was spotting a Shikra, a small yet powerful raptor that stood out among the more commonly seen birds. The presence of Alexandrine Parakeets, Silverbills, Purple-rumped Sunbirds, Asian Koels, Black Drongos, Black Kites, Rose-ringed Parakeets, and an abundance of pigeons, crows, and sparrows added to the richness of our sightings. A particularly engaging moment for the students was learning to **distinguish between the common crow and the large-billed crow**, both of which inhabit our campus. This small but significant discovery highlighted the **importance of keen observation** in birding.

I had the privilege of birding with a group of enthusiastic students, most of whom were **using the eBird and Merlin apps for the first time**. It was wonderful to see their curiosity and excitement grow as they identified and logged various bird species. Many students expressed their **joy at recognizing birds they had previously overlooked**, deepening their appreciation for urban biodiversity.

What made this GBBC truly special was that it was our first time participating in the event as a Campus Bird Count. **Engaging in structured birdwatching on our own college grounds allowed us to see the familiar in a new light**. The students not only honed their bird identification skills but also developed a greater sense of **connection with nature**. Their enthusiasm and willingness to learn made the experience even more fulfilling.

Overall, this GBBC was a fantastic opportunity for learning and exploration. It reinforced the importance of conservation and the role each of us can play in documenting and protecting bird populations. We look forward to making this an annual tradition, continuing to observe and appreciate the wonderful birds that share our campus.

"Watching a Shikra soar above our campus while students excitedly identified their first birds using eBird and Merlin was truly special. Seeing their joy in discovering the difference between a common crow and a large-billed crow made this GBBC an unforgettable learning experience!"

=====



## ***GBBC 2025 in a Campus. Story by: Muskan Shrivastava***



Photo by Muskan Shrivastava

**Name:**

Muskan Shrivastava

**State:**

Maharashtra

**Story:**

CBC 2025: A Birding Adventure to Remember

Birdwatching is not just a hobby; it's an experience, a journey, and sometimes, a series of unexpected adventures. This year, Campus Bird Count 2025 (CBC'25) was extra special for me, not just because of the birds, but because I was the head-coordinator for the entire event. It was a responsibility filled with excitement, chaos, and unforgettable memories. Over four days, I experienced everything from being chased by dogs at 4 AM to climbing hills in search of elusive birds. Every moment was a reminder of why I love birding so much.

The adventure began on the first day, quite literally, when I stepped out onto the roads before dawn, only to be greeted by a gang of street dogs. Now, I don't know if they mistook me for a thief because of my attire or just wanted to test my running skills, but I ended up sprinting towards campus like my life depended on it. Not exactly the peaceful start I had imagined, but definitely an energetic one! Upon reaching, the campus was dark and eerily quiet. Then, out of nowhere, **the call of a Spotted Owlet broke the silence**, instantly filling me with joy and a smile appeared on my face. It was as if the Owlets were cheering me on at the starting line, kicking off the CBC race. Another thrilling moment was hearing **the eerie call of a Barn Owl**, only to see it take off in a **silent, white ghost-like flight**. It was breathtaking as it is quite rare on our campus.

As the sun began to rise, slowly more people started joining, and we found creative ways to entertain ourselves. One of them was **mimicking the calls of birds**. Early morning crow calls mimicking, followed by Coppersmith Barbet and Black Kites in the afternoon, it surely made for some hilarious moments as **sometimes crows would call back**, which seemed as if it was teasing. And then there were the bird sightings, each one special, but some truly unforgettable. It was mesmerizing to sit and watch a **Coppersmith Barbet** go in and out of **its nest in the hollow of a tree** for hours. This also became a hot topic of discussion on campus, like every other person was asking, have you seen the Barbet nest?

The last day of CBC tested my dedication, as a message flashed: **"Chestnut-tailed Starling spotted at Bombax tree near Main building"** I wanted to see this bird since last year as it only visits our college campus around this time. So without thinking twice, I took off as I was at the other end of the campus, running up and down hills, panting, gasping for breath, only to reach the spot and find... nothing. The starling was long gone but still me and my friend waited there in the hope that it'll show up. It never did. But strangely, in that moment, I realized just how much I love the joy of birding, not just for the birds, but for the thrill of the chase.

One of the most blissful and interesting parts of birding was, **curious onlookers** would watch us with puzzled expressions, asking, "What exactly are you staring at?" The joy of explaining, pointing out a bird, and **seeing their eyes light up in excitement** and them telling their interesting bird stories was rewarding. It was a reminder for me that birding isn't just about watching birds; it's about sharing the experience with others.

As a ritual of our Campus, on the last day of CBC everyone gathered on the college ground to **count the thousands of parakeets flying overhead**. We laughed, joked about our endless hallucinations of Coppersmith Barbet calls, and reflected on our experiences. It was an emotional moment—four days of waking up very early, walking countless steps; four

days of shared laughter, and unforgettable sights was coming to an end. And as we wrapped up, I knew one thing for sure, this was an experience I would cherish forever.

CBC 2025 was more than just a bird count; it was a journey of passion, patience, and pure exhilaration. From sprinting past street dogs at dawn to chasing a fleeting starling, every moment reminded me that birding **isn't just about sightings—it's about the stories, the pursuit, and the connection with nature** that lingers long after the last bird call fades.

=====



***GBBC 2025 at Maharashtra Nature park, Mumbai. Story by: Team PashooPakshee***



Photo by Savini Sonavaria

**Name:**

Team PashooPakshee

**State:**

Maharashtra

## Story:

We went on Friday morning to Maharashtra Nature park sceptical of having a good birding session. Maharashtra Nature park runs parallel to Mumbai's Mitthi river which is extremely polluted. Four of the eleven people were birding for the first time. It was fascinating to see them light up when they were observing birds up close through binoculars. Our most memorable moment was seeing at least **300 brown headed gulls take flight at once!** We also acknowledged and felt bad about the kind of plastic and water pollution people are adding in cities, leaving hardly any clean spaces for birds & animals. GBBC is special each year because it gives a chance to the new members of PashooPakshee team to get introduced to birding, understand and learn about the diversity and appreciate the work we do. This was our second year as a team! And we absolutely loved **learning the names of the birds in Marathi** thanks to the **Early Birds Marathi bird guide**.

Our most memorable moment was seeing 300 brown headed girls take flight at once.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Meghalaya. Story by: Duwaki Rangad***



Photo by Duwaki Rangad

**Name:**

Duwaki Rangad

**State:**

Meghalaya



## Story:

The GBBC has always been an event that I personally enjoy being part of and like many other previous years, this year's GBBC was a little different in terms of the active participation of our College students. After **a one-day training programme** conducted by Mr. Ezra Lawanker Rynjah in collaboration with the Department of Zoology, St. Edmund's College, Shillong, held on the 12th of February 2025, our enthusiastic students, most of whom were new to birding, were very excited to learn and count birds. This year we had almost 50 students actively involved in the bird count. The first day of GBBC was held at **Mawjrong and Laitkroh Village, East Khasi Hills District** of which the interesting sightings include a flock of Little Bunting, Daurian Redstart and a Blue-fronted Redstart. The second day was a CBC at **St. Edmund's College Shillong** while the third day of GBBC was conducted at an **extended Campus of our College in Umroi, Ri Bhoi District**. I would like to put on record the **support** and encouragement from the **Principal** of our College, Br. Sunil Britto for providing us the **College bus** and thus making it convenient for us to travel to these mentioned places. The final day of the GBBC was held in **West Jaintia Hills District** with sightings of the **Shikra, Eurasian Kestrel, Siberian Stonechat, Black-breasted Thrush and the Grey Treepie**. Throughout the activity, our students had the opportunity to engage in hands-on data collection, utilizing various techniques such as observation, recording calls, and documenting species sightings. This **experiential learning** approach not only **enhanced participants' understanding of ornithology** but also **instilled a sense of curiosity and appreciation for the diverse birdlife within the region**. As compared to last year, the GBBC this year saw a **coverage of all the districts in Meghalaya** and this is something positive and encouraging and hopefully the event will grow big with more participation in the years to come.

The GBBC 2025 has exemplified the importance of experiential learning and community engagement in nurturing a deeper understanding and appreciation for our natural world.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Nagaland. Story by: Lesemew . M***



Photo by Lidenno Patton

**Name:**

Lesemew . M

**State:**

Nagaland

## Story:

My experience of GBBC 2025:

Every year, Since 2022, our **Eco-Warriors** initiates the GBBC, where we take the students for birding and also Village Councils and student leaders. However this time also conducted birding sessions in **colonies and fields of every district of Nagaland** with our Eco-Warriors Volunteers.

Every time our experience is fascinating. This time, as we were conducting awareness sessions on how birds are important pollinators, we were surprised to learn that most of the students were very well aware of birds and wildlife and yet they were not aware of their importance in nature. As they mentioned the name of the bird species, I felt the strong and meaningful connection of children with the birds. We shared about the nature and behaviors of birds and their habitat, including the story of the Great Hornbill and the Tragopan which is the state bird of Nagaland.

So this experience has posed a challenge to me. People love nature and are ready to come together for its conservation. We just need to make them a little more aware of why conservation is important.

Birding is always fun, there is no one who doesn't love birds so, start birding and enjoy the colorful nature of birds and their habitat.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in an agronomy field. Story by: Sriyan Kumar Gouda***



Photo by Sriyan Kumar Gouda

**Name:**

Sriyan Kumar Gouda

**State:**

Odisha

**Story:**

We had our GBBC on 16th Feb at our own university campus. The agronomy field was the place where we conducted the birdwalk along with 20 fellow friends. Some of them were experiencing their first birdwalk. The joy with which newbies participated was mesmerizing. The **Eurasian Hoopoe** was the most memorable to them. This was our first GBBC , hence it was indeed a great moment for everyone to cheer for.

When the newbies were getting fascinated by the colourful birds, their joy was indeed very great to see.

=====



***GBBC 2025 at Central University of Odisha. Story by: Dr Aman Kumar***



Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus* by [Aman Kumar / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Dr Aman Kumar

**State:**

Odisha

**Story:**

I participated in the GBBC at the campus of the **Central University of Odisha**, exploring the diverse birdlife in the area. This year's count was special as **many unreported bird species were recorded**, adding valuable data to bird conservation efforts. I joined a group of birding enthusiasts, making the experience more engaging and informative. Observing birds in their natural habitat and contributing to global research made this survey meaningful. The GBBC once again strengthened my connection with nature, and I look forward to the next count!

Discovering unreported bird species during this year's GBBC filled me with immense joy, knowing that **every sighting contributes to a better understanding** of our avian world.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Chittorgarh. Story by: Deeptanshu soni***



Photo by Raju soni

**Name:**

Deeptanshu soni

**State:**

Rajasthan

**Story:**

As part of the GBBC I birded at Rajgarh talab (Begun), Nagawli talab (Mangalwad), Talau dam (Dungla).

The most memorable sighting was of **Sarus cranes less than 50 meters away** at Nagawli dam and our first time sighting of **black necked stork**. We also saw **6 honey buzzards together** for the first time.

=====

**GBBC 2025 in Menar Lakes. Story by: Darshan Menaria**



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* by [Sayanta Basak / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Darshan Menaria

**State:**

Rajasthan

**Story:**

We went birding at Menar Lakes (Brahma Talab and Dhandh Lake) with 10 members. At Brahma Talab the new birders were thrilled to see a great crested grebe just 20 metres away. The sighting of a black Necked stork and its fledgling was a pleasant moment. After a half hour walk we reached Dhandh Lake and Lo! The flamingo 🦩 show! There were already 2 families watching with their bare eyes. We had a spotting scope and they were thrilled to have a look at the beautiful birds through the lenses. All the flamingos lined up not too far away.

At the viewpoint we saw four marsh harriers together - a first for me at this location.

Our team had participants ranging from 7 years to 70 years of age.

The flamingos standing in a line and so close by and yet undisturbed.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Fambonglho Wildlife Sanctuary. Story by: Laxman Rai***



Photo by Laxman Rai

**Name:**

Laxman Rai

**State:**

Sikkim

**Story:**

I birded at **fambong lho** wildlife sanctuary in Pangthang, East Sikkim and my own village **Namin basti**, east Sikkim. It was a wonderful day for me. I encountered so many birds and some of them are my lifers. I birded with my friends who helped me identify many birds that were new to me. I wanna say thank you to GBBC to provide this platform for Bird counting. 🙏🙏🙏🙏

=====



## ***GBBC 2025 in Khimseeka village. Story by: Firoj Gurung***



Photo by Dechen pradhan

**Name:**

Firoj Gurung

**State:**

Sikkim

**Story:**

GBBC 2025 was a most memorable experience for me. I spotted more than hundred birds around my village - Khimseeka. The most memorable sighting for me was the flock of Scarlet finch on the top of the mowaa tree near my Eco hut. There were more than fifteen individuals in the flock.

This GBBC was special because I also made a banner to promote Khimseeka village for the bird watchers and nature lovers.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Lingmoo ,Namchi District. Story by: Babina Limboo***



Photo by Babina Limboo

**Name:**

Babina Limboo

**State:**

Sikkim

## Story:

I birded in my village forest in Lingmoo, Namchi District. It was a good experience for me. I'm so thankful that I have participated in GBBC.

I had a chance to observe many birds and their behaviour - like **bulbul mobbing an Asian barred owlet**, and **sunbirds sipping the nectar in flowers** to mention a few. Birding was quite a challenge for me because I was birding solo and my binoculars had limited range. I took the help of merlin to identify birds. I gained some knowledge about birds and the experience piqued my interest in birds.

The takeaway from this GBBC was that watching birds is so peaceful. Contributing to GBBC was a labour of love . I love to watch birds. It makes me happy. Someone said, "Whenever you are birding you have to first become part of the silence".

=====



***GBBC 2025 in a University. Story by: J Akhash***



Photo by J Akhash

**Name:**

J Akhash

**State:**

Tamil Nadu



## Story:

We went birding on our university campus and we recorded around 50 species. I also helped my team members identify the basic birds and as a result they have also learned something. I taught them **how to use eBird and Merlin** apps.

The more memorable sightings were of **golden oriole, jungle prinia, black headed cuckoo shrike**. We also sighted a **spotted deer** during the trail

I enjoyed sharing my knowledge with my new found friends.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at Thiagarajar School of Management. Story by: Senthil V***



Photo by Hari Veerababu

**Name:**

Senthil V

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

## Story:

Thiagarajar School of Management (TSM) organized a Campus Bird Count on 15-02-2025, at its Thiruparankundram campus as part of its green initiative. This event, aligned with the annual great backyard bird count (February 14-17), aimed to **foster biodiversity awareness and environmental responsibility** among students.

Led by Dr. V. Senthil, Associate Professor, over **50 students** from Thiagarajar School of Management, and nearby schools, enthusiastically participated in the birdwatching activity. Volunteers headed by Parvathy.S and Arul Aadhavan.M from TSM coordinated the event, guiding school students in identifying and documenting the bird species. The lush 17-acre green campus proved to be **a haven for avian diversity**, with participants spotting 26 different species, including the Rufous Treepie, White Throated Kingfisher, Black-rumped Flameback, Eurasian Hoopoe, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Indian Pond Heron, Yellow-billed Babbler, Common Myna, Spotted Dove, Asian Koel, Indian Peafowl, and Greater Coucal, Coppersmith Barbet, Shikra and more.

Dr. Senthil emphasized that **bird watching** is not just a leisure activity but also a means to **enhance focus and concentration**. He also highlighted the **crucial role** that birds play in maintaining the ecosystem by controlling pests, pollinating plants, and dispersing seeds. School students were thrilled to identify various birds and actively participated by collecting feathers and collaborating with volunteers to identify bird species. Also, the students expressed gratitude for the session, appreciating **the chance to learn about bird species and their environmental significance**. Director of TSM, Murali Sambasivan awarded the certificates to all the participants.

I saw the "**Asian Hoopoe**" for the first time on our campus- the colourful crown of feathers was amazing. Students were also excited to see the orange bird with zebra-striped wings.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at Kazhuveli wetlands. Story by: Baranidharan.S***



Cotton Pygmy-Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* by [H Nambiar / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Baranidharan.S

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

I have been visiting **Kazhuveli wetlands** for a few years now. It is one of my favourite places to bird, the waterbody is so huge that **different parts of it have different avifauna** and the **surroundings can vary from green banks of grass, to reed banks, to mangroves and salt pans!** So when I was thinking about conducting an GBBC event, it was my first choice.

I chose **Vandipalayam bridge**, a spot in the narrower section of the lake as it has a very **good vantage point** and also because it is within walking distance of another lake - **Aathikuppam Lake**. I, my father, my brother, a few of my friends and a few other birders participated in the event. By 06:30 AM we were at the shores of Aathikuppam lake, and the birdlife was nothing short of amazing. There were so many birds moving about in all directions, I was afraid of missing out on spotting and recording any of them! Thankfully,



everyone lent their eyes for the cause and we had a marvelous morning of birding ! We recorded **97 species** that morning. Some of the remarkable ones include Richard's Pipit, Reef egret, Thick-knees, Black and Yellow bitterns and Cotton Pygmy Goose. It was amazing to see **huge flocks** of Pacific golden plovers, Painted storks, Pelicans, Spoonbills, Shovellers, Godwits, etc. This, along with the birding I did in my campus and a few other locations put my total GBBC species count to 124, which I was very pleased with. Doing all of this with friends and family made this event even more special - a GBBC I will never forget.

As I strolled along the path with friends, binoculars and camera out ready, I was completely immersed in the joy of birding. We listened intently for calls and songs and waited patiently for shy birds to emerge. The thrill of spotting a new species is matched only by the delight of sharing it with friends, exchanging knowing smiles. This was bird watching at its finest – an unforgettable experience that combines **nature, camaraderie, and pure joy**.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in IIT Madras. Story by: Susy Varughese***



Brown Hawk-Owl *Ninox scutulata* by [Avijit Sutradhar / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Susy Varughese

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

We did birding inside our campus - **IIT Madras** - which is about **250 ha** in area and has a **mosaic of habitats** suitable for terrestrial and aquatic bird life. More than **50 people** participated during the **5 sessions**, each lasting more than **90 minutes**. The participants included IITM students, staff and residents. The maximum **species count was 45** on one of the days. The most memorable sighting was a **pair of brown hawk owls** calling to each other and finally meeting on a tree branch, early in the morning at 6 am, when we just started birding that day. The **densely wooded areas make it difficult to spot these owls**, even when we hear their calls. Therefore, it was exciting, especially for our young birders, to finally see them.

Another memorable aspect was the excitement of the 5-year old in the group when he sighted the birds. On the first day he came half-sleepy with his mother. On the second day his mother said he was excited about bird watching, On the third day he said I like bird watching and did not want to go back. Another one of the participants was 10 years old and was birding for the first time. It felt nice to introduce youngsters to birding.

=====

## *GBBC 2025 in Mannampandal. Story by: Anjoe Shaiju*



Photo by Anjoe Shaiju

**Name:**

Anjoe Shaiju

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

We birded in our own campus, AVC College Autonomous, Mannampandal. Our tutor, J.Pandiyan accompanied us. Five students from our class participated. We were surprised to see a **pair of Shikras** in our campus which is a bit of a rare sighting here. This was our first GBBC and will always be memorable for us because, having birded on the campus for the first time - that too as a whole group.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Topslip. Story by: S. Kalaiyarasi***



Photo by G. K. Tharagha sri

**Name:**

S. Kalaiyarasi

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

We went to Topslip in order to bird for the GBBC. Our team cooperation will always be remembered.

**Southern hill myna** - with its song - was really amazing. Looking for birds and listening for their songs was pleasurable as always. Their jubilant movements revealed their joie de vivre.

The story behind every tree was special to me.

The beauty of nature and the selflessness of birds is simply superb.

=====



***GBBC 2025 at the Great Salt Lake. Story by: Abdul Musawwir Syed***

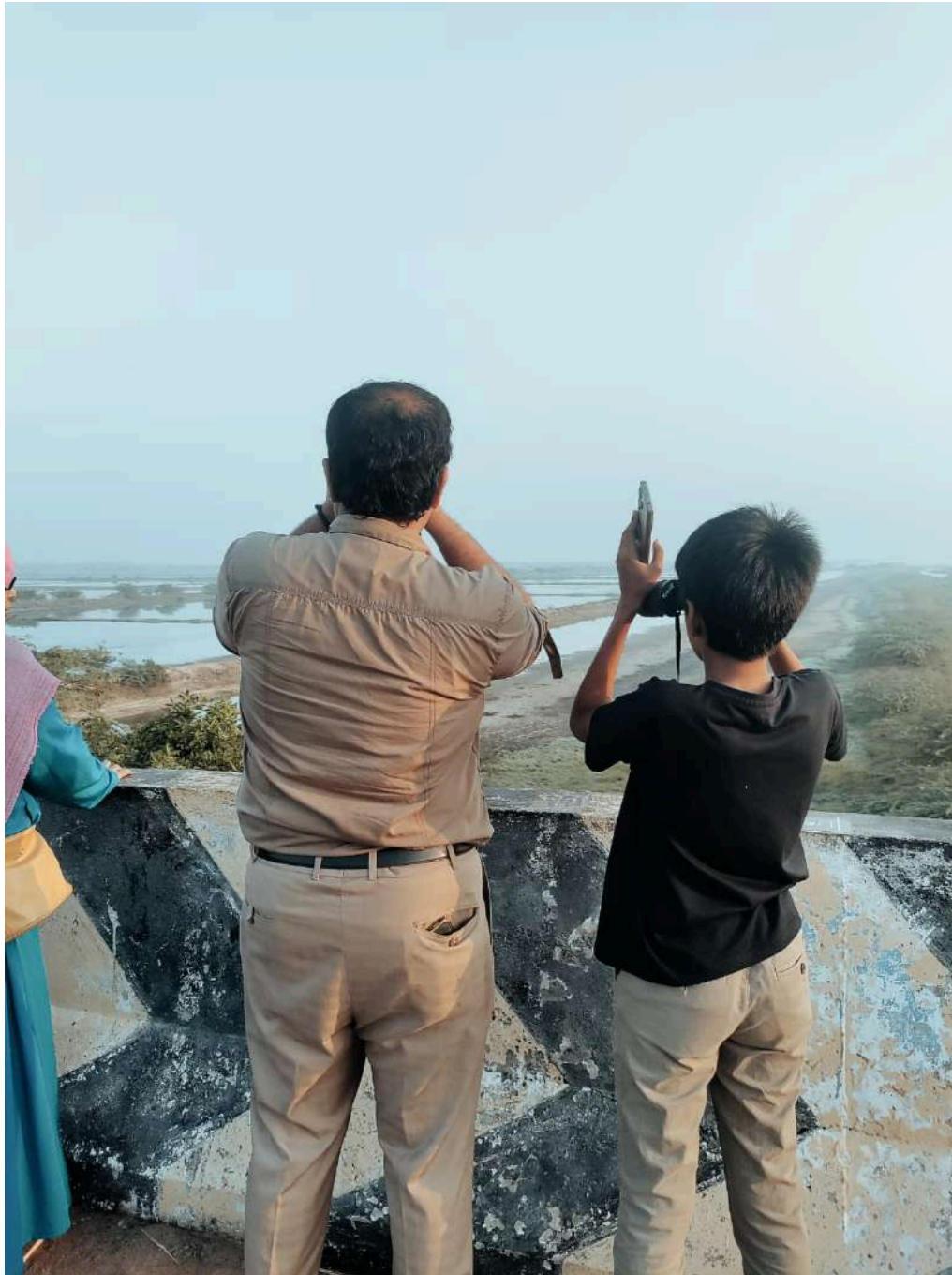


Photo by Salma Zaithoon

**Name:**

Abdul Musawwir Syed

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

## Story:

This year, I participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) **with the elementary kids** from my school. It was a fun and learning experience for all of us. The location for our birding was the **Great Salt Lake**, recommended by Mr. Srinivasan.

We left school at 5:30 AM and reached the lake by 6:00 AM. It was worth starting early. When we got there, the view was way better than I expected, and the area was full of birds. In the morning, we spotted several fascinating species, such as Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, and even Black-Winged Kite.

Apart from birds, we noticed other creatures too. For example, we spotted spiders that were huge and hairy. It reminded us that nature has so much to show if we just stop and observe.

The GBBC was more than just birdwatching—it was about learning, observing, and experiencing the natural world. I liked seeing **the joy of the younger kids** when they observed new birds and asked questions about them.

Overall, the experience was both fun and useful. It was great to be a **part of a global project** while also spending time outdoors. I look forward to lots more activities like this in the future!

I wasn't just about counting birds, it was about learning and **connecting with nature** through birds.

=====

***GBBC 2025 at the Women's Christian College. Story by: Department of Advanced Zoology and Biotechnology***



Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephalus* by [anand bora / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Department of Advanced Zoology and Biotechnology, Women's Christian College, Chennai

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Women's Christian College is recognized as a hotspot and Department of Advanced Zoology and Biotechnology participated in Campus Bird Count on 17th February, 2025. **Thirteen final year students** of the department along with one of the course teacher of Field Zoology, Dr. Jancy Merlin were involved in taking the bird count. The entire campus was divided into **12 major sites** and the observers were assigned different sites on campus to take the **bird count from 8:00 to 9:00 AM in fifteen minute intervals**. Observers identified the birds by sight and call.

Students participated enthusiastically and have recorded **17 different species** of birds on campus. Students spotted the following birds on campus: Jungle Crow, Common Crow, Common Myna, Blue Rock Pigeon, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Black Kite, Asian Koel Male and Female, Flameback Woodpecker, Purple rumped sunbird, **Coppersmith Barbet**, Shikra, Rufous Treepie, Redwattled lapwing, Asian Palm Swift, Bee eater and Pond Heron. Taking part in CBC increases students' curiosity to explore campus and their enthusiasm to record the number of birds found. They were also interested in doing bird counts on a daily basis and had great fun birding.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Yercaud. Story by: Gopi R***



Photo by: Gopi R

**Name:**

Gopi R

**State:**

Tamil Nadu



## Story:

I am working as a teacher at Yercaud. I travelled 84 km daily. I crossed some scrub, ponds, and grasslands. These gave me a good opportunity to count birds.

Over the weekend I travelled Saturday with some of my co-birders.

Large hawk cuckoo was one of the most memorable sightings among all. It is a passage migration bird to Salem. Very few records are available in eBird.

I got myself 3 lifers in this GBBC

=====

## ***GBBC 2025 at Kolarampathy Lake. Story by: Sathish Ramamoorthy***



Photo by: Hariharan

**Name:**

Sathish Ramamoorthy

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

## Story:

This year, I organized a GBBC bird walk with the **photography club students** of Yuvabharathi Public School and **my TREE NGO team members** at **Kolarampathy Lake** in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.

Although the lake was 50% dry, we ventured inside to explore the area, and the kids thoroughly enjoyed the location. We were thrilled to record nearly 80 species, with notable sightings including **Ruddy-breasted Crake** and **Forest Wagtail**.

This was my **first time leading a team for a GBBC bird walk**, and it was a truly wonderful experience. I'd like to extend my gratitude to the organizers for making this event possible.

The GBBC walk inspires the young generation to appreciate and protect nature and birds, nurturing young minds for a brighter future.

=====



***GBBC 2025 at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary. Story by: Priyatharsini Rajendran***



Photo by: Santhiya Shri S

**Name:**

Priyatharsini Rajendran

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

## Story:

We decided to do birding in the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary campus in Madurai. A memorable sighting on this campus was **3 pairs of coucal** at very close range. They were **busy around their nests** in the thickets. The group had students of the seminary and volunteers from our institution, Lady Doak College and a few kids from the residential area within the campus. I was surprised by the enthusiasm shown by the kids. The campus administrator said that no birding event has taken place on campus and yet - to my amazement - the kids led us to various locations to see birds. **They were not familiar with the names of the birds, but they knew where we could find one.** They happily scanned through the bird guide and their **joy** when they **spotted the birds through the binoculars** was special. They volunteered to keep track of the birds till the next GBBC.

There are still people around who have not taken time to observe birds around them. GBBC/CBC enabled it to happen

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Muttukadu- Kelambakkam. Story by: RAMYA SHREE N***



Eastern Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* by [Dr Kavita Bandivadekar / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

RAMYA SHREE N

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Participating in the Backyard Bird Count is an exhilarating experience that brings us closer to nature's fascinating avian wonders. We, a team of 3 members went to **Muttukadu-Kelambakkam** backwaters situated in Chennai. As you step into your backyard armed with a pair of binoculars and a trusty bird guide, the excitement of spotting diverse bird species fills the air. You become attuned to the fluttering of wings, the melodic calls, and the vivid flashes of color amidst the foliage. Each sighting feels like a treasure discovered. We saw many water and shorebirds which are mostly migrants. The bird of the day was

**Red-rumped Swallow.** Because of this GBBC we are able to find some of the unexplored regions of Muttukadu backwaters.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Kovai Kutralam. Story by: Sathish Ramamoorthy***



Photo by: APARNA

**Name:**

Sathish Ramamoorthy

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

The GBBC bird walk at **Kovai Kutralam** was a resounding success, with 15+ students from VLB College and TREE NGO members joining forces to spot an impressive 94 species of birds. But beyond the thrill of birdwatching, this event underscored the importance of bird conservation.

As we explored the lush surroundings of Kovai Kutralam, our team was reminded of the pressing need to protect bird habitats and populations. The sighting of rare species like the **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Common Woodpecker, and Rusty-tailed Flycatcher** served as a poignant reminder of the beauty and diversity of birdlife.

Through initiatives like the GBBC bird walk, we aim to promote bird conservation and sustainability. By engaging with local communities and inspiring the next generation of bird enthusiasts, we hope to create a ripple effect of positive change.

The GBBC bird walk was more than just an event – it was a call to action. As birders and conservationists, we recognize the urgent need to protect bird populations and habitats. By working together, we can make a difference and ensure the long-term survival of our feathered friends.

We extend our gratitude to the students and TREE NGO members who participated in this event. Together, we can create a brighter future for birds and the environment.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Vellar estuary. Story by: Srinidhi Himani C***



Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* by [Arjun Dev / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Srinidhi Himani C

**State:**

Tamil Nadu



## Story:

We went to our college which is located near the Vellar estuary. It has a lot of salt marshes, wetland, etc nearby as well. We saw a lot of beautiful birds in the mornings and evenings. It's a rich and diverse ecosystem.

My most memorable sighting was seeing **egrets** and **Caspian terns**.

I went with some of my friends. This bird count helped us learn about birds and connect with nature.

Just like us, birds have their own complex lives and stories. It's fascinating how intricately balanced their lives are.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Karaikudi. Story by: Narayanan Meyyappan***



Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* by [Ravi Jesudas / Macaulay Library](#)



**Name:**

Narayanan Meyyappan

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

பொங்கல் பறவைகள் 2025 கணக்கேடுப்பில் பங்கு கொண்ட மகிழ்ச்சியில் அதே ஆர்வத்தோடு கொல்லைபுற பறவைகள் கணக்கேடுப்பிற்கு (2025) மகன் இராமும் நானும் தயாரானோம். நான்கு நாட்களில் மூன்று இடங்கள் ஏற்கனவே சென்ற இடமாகவும் ஒரு புதிய இடமாகவும் இருக்கும்படி பார்த்துக்கொண்டோம், அதன் படி ஒரு தொடர்ச்சியாக ஒரு இடத்தை பதிவு செய்ய வாய்ப்பு இருக்கும் அத்தொடர் தமிழக பறவைகள் ஆர்வலர்கள் குழுவில் புதிய பறவைகள் பார்ப்பது போலேவே ஒரு இடத்தில் தொடர்ந்து பறவைகள் பார்த்து பதிவு செய்வதும் சுற்றுதூழலை புரிந்துக்கொள்ள உதவியாக இருக்கும் என்ற சொல்ல கேட்டதும் ஒரு காரணம். அதன் படி முதல் நாள் உமையாள் இராமநாதன் கல்லூரி தொடங்கி அழகப்பா பொறியில் கல்லூரி வரை, இந்த சாலையில் சில மாதங்களுக்கு முன் ஒரு ஆரஞ்சு ஹெட்டட் திரஸ்ட் பார்த்தோம் இப்பொது இருக்குமா என்ற ஆவலில் இங்கே இருந்து தொடங்கினோம். காலையில் அழகப்பா உடல்பயிற்சி கல்லூரி மாணவர்கள் பெரும் திறனாக ஓடிக்கொண்டிருந்தார் இவர்களை முதல் முறை பார்க்கிறேன் போதுவாக அதிகாலை 4 மணி முதலே பொது மக்கள் நடைபயிற்சியில் இருப்பார்கள் பார்க்கலாம். இங்கு மத்திய வேதியியல்துறை, பல்கலைக்கழக குடியிருப்பு, பொறியில் கல்லூரி மாணவர்கள் விடுதி என்று சில இயற்கை சூழல் நிறைந்த வளாகங்கள் இருப்பதால் சாலை ஓரமாக இருந்த கவனித்தால் பறவைகள் தென்படும். பொதுவான பறவைகள், அத்தொடர் பொன்முதுகு மரங்கொத்தி மரக்கிளைக்கு பின்னால், புள்ளி ஆந்தை மூன்று நான்கு, கட்டை சுவரின் மேல் வரிசையாக நான்கு மயில்கள் என்று தரிசனம் கிடைத்தது. பொறியில் கல்லூரி கடந்து ஒரு அய்யனார் கோயில் இருந்த இடத்திற்கு சென்றோம் அங்கே தான் இன்னும் சில பறவைகளை நான்கு மரங்களுக்கு மத்தியில் நின்ற இடத்தில் இருந்தே கண்டது மகிழ்ச்சி. மூன்று நான்கு மீன் கொத்திகள், கூட்டமாக பச்சைக்கிளிகள், மாங்குயில், பிராமனி ஸ்டார்லிங், கருஞ்சிட்டு, செம்மார்பு குக்குறுவான் மற்றும் வெண்மார்பு வாலாட்டி. அருகில் குளத்தில் தாழைக்கோழி தாமரை இலைகள் மேல் ஓடி திரிந்துக்கொண்டிருந்தது. அப்பாடா என்ற நிறைவுடன் முதல் நாள் முடிந்தது.

ஜனவரி மாதத்தில் பார்த்த போது, நீர் வரத்துக்கள் தடைப்படிருந்தாலும் பருவ மழையால் கண்டனூர் கண்டனி கண்மாயில் நீர் நிறைந்திருந்தது. இந்த முறை பிப்பவரியில், கணக்கேடுப்பின் இரண்டாவது நாள் இந்த

கண்மாயிற்கு மிண்டும் வந்தோம் ஒரு மாதத்தில் நீர் குறைந்திருந்தது. கரை சாலை தொடக்கத்தில் இருந்து முடியும் இடத்தில் இருக்கும் அய்யனார் கோயில் வரை பறவைகள் பார்த்தோம். குறிப்பாக பாதி தூரத்தில் ரம்மியமாக காட்சியளிக்கும் இரண்டு ஆலமரங்கள் இருக்கும் இடத்தில் சற்று நின்று கவனித்தோம் ஜனவரியில் எங்களை கொட்ட கொட்ட பாக்குது பார் என்று சொல்லுக்கு ஏற்றபடி பார்த்த புள்ளி ஆந்தை இந்த முறை இருக்கிறதா என்று பார்த்தோம். புள்ளி ஆந்தை இல்லை ஆனால் அருகே இருந்த மற்ற பொந்தில் கிளிகள் பார்க்க முடிந்தது அருகே சில மாங்குயில்களும். சற்று நடந்து போய் வெளியே இருந்து ஆலமரத்தை கவனித்தோம், சுமாராக ஏழு மாங்குயில்கள் இருக்கும், படங்களில் பார்ப்பது போல கடைசி நோடிப்பொழுதுகளில் மூடப்போகும் இண்டு இடுக்குகளில் இருந்து தப்பித்து வெளியே வருவது போல இமைக்கும் நோடியில் சல் சல் என்று கிளைகளுக்கு வெளியே வருவது உள்ளே போவது என்று லாவகமா பறக்கும் இந்த மாங்குயிலை பார்த்து இரசிப்பதற்கும் ஒரு கொடுப்பினை வேண்டும் அது அன்று எங்களுக்கு இருந்தது. சமயங்களில் துப்பாக்கியில் இருந்து வெளியேரும் தோட்டா போல, இரண்டு சிறகையும் விரித்து ஒரு முறை அழுத்தி சிறகை உடலுடன் இணைத்து படு வேகமா கிளைகளிலின் ஊடே ஊடுருவி செல்வது இருக்கும்.

அய்யனார் கோயில் வரை சென்று மிண்டும் திரும்புகையில் இராம் ஒரு இடத்தில் இறங்கி ஊருக்குள் செல்லும் பாதையில் போகலாம் என்றான் போன முறை ஒரு புதரை காட்டி போகலாம் என்று அவன் சொல்லி அங்கு சென்று பார்த்த அரசவால் பறவை நினைவில் வரவே சரி போகலாம் என்று இறங்கி நடந்தோம், அங்கு ஒரு மரத்தில் சிக்ரா, கரிச்சான் மற்றும் காக்கை என்று மூன்முனை சீற்றம் நடந்தது ஆகா நல்ல உயிர்ப்புடன் இருக்கும் இடம் என்று தொன்றவே சற்று கூதூகளமாக உள்ள நடந்தோம். எதிர்பார்த்தது போலவே சில ஊர்புற பறவைகளை சுற்றி திரிந்து கும்மாளமிட்டது அங்கிருந்த கரும்பு தோட்டத்தில். சாம்பல் கதிர்க்கருவி (ஆசி பிரினியா), கூட்டமா சல்லை (ஸ்கேலி பிரஸ்ட்ட மூனியா) மற்றும் பழுப்பு கீச்சான் (பிரௌவன் சிரைக்) என்று. அத்தொடு அருகே இருக்கும் சிவன் கோயில் கோபுரம் தொடங்கி நீண்ட தூரம் வரை தகைவில்லான்கள் கூட்டமாக நடனமாடிக்கொண்டே இரண்டு முறை சுற்றி வந்ததை பார்க்க முடிந்தது. இரண்டவாது நாளும் திருப்தியடை பொதுமான காரணங்களால் இருந்தது.

திரும்பி கண்மாய் கரை வரும் வழியில் ஒரு செந்தலை அரிவாள் மூக்கன் தரையில் கடந்ததை பார்த்த இராம் பறவை துடிக்கிறது ஏதும் உதவி செய்யலாம் என்று சொன்னான் எனக்கு எப்படி உதவ முடியும் என்று தெரியவில்லை. சரி, இருக்கட்டும் அருகே சென்று குச்சிகள் வைத்து

பறவையை தூக்கி பார் என்று சொல்ல அப்படி செய்தும் தூக்க முடியவில்லை அந்நேரம் அந்த வழியாக வந்த ஒரு பெரியவர் அதன் கழுத்து பகுதியை பிடித்து தூக்க அதன் உடலில் இருந்து கழிந்து ஒற்றியது, பின் அவர் செத்துப்பொச்சு என்று போட்டுவிட்டு சென்றார். இராம் சோர்வாகிவிட்டான் அவனை கொஞ்சம் தேற்றினேன், முடிந்ததை செய்தாச்சு பின் அதற்காக சோர்ந்து இருப்பது தேவையற்றது என்று. ஒரு வகையில் அந்த சமயம் என்ன செய்ய வேண்டும் என்பது தெரியாமலும் இருந்தது. பின் அவனே விஷ்ணுபுரம் பறவைகள் குழுவில் செய்தி பரிமாறினான் அங்கு அவர்கள் கொடுத்த அறிவுரை எங்களுக்கு புது தகவல் (நேரடியாக தொடுதல் கூடாது, தக்க சாதனங்கள் இல்லாமல் கையாளுவது கூடாது, வன அலுவலர்களுக்கு தகவல் சொல்ல வேண்டும் என்று). அவர்களுடன் குறுஞ்செய்திகள் அனுப்பி பேசி சோர்வில் இருந்து மீண்டான்.

மூன்றாவது நாள் புது இடத்திற்கு செல்வது என்று முடிவெடுத்து, அருகே உறவினர் ஊரான கல்லுப்பட்டி கோயில் கும்பாபிஷகத்திற்கு சென்று நிகழ்ச்சி முடிந்ததும் காரைக்குடி திரும்பும் வழியில் அமராவதிபுதூரில் நெடுஞ்சாலையில் இருந்து வலதுபுறம் இறங்கி ஒரு காந்தி ஆசிரம தொடக்கப்பள்ளிக்கு எதிரே போகும் சாலையில் உள்ளே போனால் இருக்கும் கருப்பர் கோயில் கண்மாய் அடைந்தோம். ஜனசந்தி அதிகம் இல்லாமல், மரங்கள் நிறைந்த அதிக வெய்யிலும் இல்லாத ஒரு மதிய வேளையில், எந்த எதிர்பார்ப்பும் இல்லாமல் பறவைகள் பார்க்க தொடங்கினோம். முதல் பறவையே செந்நீல நாரை தனியாக இருந்ததை பார்க்க முடிந்தது. பின் சில நோடிகளில் இராம் பரவசமானான், ஒரு வெற்றி குறிப்புகள் கைகளில் காட்டினான், என்னடா என்று விபரம் கேட்டு பின் கவனித்தால் கண்மாயின் நடுவில் இருந்த ஊற்று கிணற்றின் சுற்று சுவற்றில் மற்ற பறவைகளுடன் மஞ்சள் மூக்கு ஆள்காட்டி மற்றும் நெடுங்கால் உள்ளான் (பிளாக் விங் ஸ்டீல்ட்) இருந்தது. இது போக, மண் கொத்திகள் (காமன்), சாண்ட் பிளோவர், நெல்வயல் நெட்டைக்காலி (பெடி பிப்பட்), புதர் வானம்பாடி (ஜோர்டன் புஷ்லார்க்), முக்குளிப்பான், ஒரேயோரு பாம்புதாரா, நத்ததைக்கொத்தி நாரை, செந்நாரை, பறந்தமணியமாக தகைவில்லான்கள், மாங்குயில், ஆறேழு பனங்காடை, அரிவாள் மூக்கன் என்றும், அருகில் புதரில் தாழைக்கோழி, மற்றும் இனம் கண்டுக்கொள்ள தெரியாததால் விட்ட சில குட்டி பறவைகள் என்று உயிர்ப்புடன் இருந்தது இந்த இடம். கண்மாயில் இரண்டு நாமக்கோழிகள் சேர்ந்து நீர் புதரின் அருகில் வந்த நீர் பாம்பை கொத்தியும் சப்தமிட்டும் விரட்டிய காட்சி, அந்த புதரில் இருந்து வெளியே வந்து தூரமாக விலகி சென்றது மூன்று குட்டிகள். இவற்றை காப்பாற்ற தான் இப்படி பரபரப்பாக துடிப்புடன் இருந்தது அந்த இரண்டு நாமக்கோழிகள் என்று புரிந்தபோது நான் இராமை பார்த்து தம்பி ரொம்ப தண்ணிக்கிட்ட போகாத தள்ளியே இரு என்று சொன்னது இயல்பானதானா அல்ல நம்ம மனதில் ஆழமாக பதிந்த

தற்காப்பு உணர்ச்சிகளை படக்காட்சியாக பார்த்தும் ஒரு முறை அதை நிகழ்த்திக்கொண்டேனா என்று தெரியவில்லை.

அங்கு ஒரு மரத்தடியில் எங்களை கவனித்துக்கொண்டிருந்து சிறுவன் எங்களிடம் விசாரித்துவிட்டு தொலைநோக்கி (பைனாக்குளர்) மூலம் கண்மாயில் இருந்த பறவைகள் பார்த்தான், பின் இங்கிருந்து இன்னும் சற்று துழைவு உள்ளே சென்றால் வாழ்வு தந்தநாயகி அம்மன் கோயில் இருக்கிறது அங்கு இன்னும் பார்க்கலாம் என்றான். இராம் போகலாம் என்றான், எனக்கு நேரம் போதாமையால் வீடு திரும்புவோம் என்று சொன்னேன்.

நாளாவது நாள் என் பணிகள் காரணமாக போகமுடியவில்லை, ஆனால் இராம் மாலை தன் வகுப்புகளுக்கு போய்வரும் பாதையில் இருக்கும் குளத்தில் சில பறவைகள் பார்த்து வந்தான். அன்று முதல் அந்த குளத்தில் இருக்கும் பறவைகளை தொடர்ந்து கவனித்து வருகிறான். இதனை தொடர்ந்து ஈ-பெர்ட் தளத்தில் அவன் சில தகவல்களை பதிந்து வைத்தான் பறவையின் பருவ காலமா, இளமை காலமா என்ற குறிப்புகள் கொண்டது அதனை மேற்பார்வை செய்த விஷ்ணுபுரம் பறவைகள் குழு நண்பர் விஜய்பாரதி ஒரு பதற்றத்துடன் இது என்ன ஏது என்று என்னிடம் கேட்க சத்தியமா எனக்கும் இதுக்கும் எந்த சம்பந்தமும் இல்லைங்க என்று பின்வாங்கிக்கொண்டேன். பின், இராம் விஜய்பாரதியுடன் பேசினான். அப்படியான தகவல்கள் இப்போதைக்கு வேண்டாம் என்றும் அவற்றை பற்றி முழுதாக கற்று தெரிந்துக்கொண்ட பின் பதியலாம் என்று சொல்ல அதன் பின் தளத்தில் திருத்தங்கள் செய்தான்.

இந்த 2025 ஆண்டு, பொங்கல் கணக்கேடுப்பு தொடங்கி கொல்லைபுற பறவைகள் கணக்கேடுப்பு வரை ஒரு மாத காலம் இந்த ஆர்வத்தில் சுற்றி திரிந்தது அதன் மூலம் தெரிய வந்த நீர் நிலைகளின் பரிதாப நிலை (அதனை கண்மாய்), காண கிடைக்காமல் போய்க்கொண்டிருக்கும் கண்மாய் (வீரன் கண்மாய்), இறந்த பறவை கள அனுபவங்களையும், இரசிக்க முடிந்த பறவைகளின் லாவகங்கள், பெரும் திரள எனக்கூடி இசைந்து ஆடிய நடனம், மும்முனை சீற்றம், குடும்பமும் குடித்தனம் என்று உணர்வுபூர்வமான அனுபவங்களையும் பெற்று தந்திருகிறது.

குடும்ப அமைப்பு என்பது இயற்கை காட்டும் ஒரு பாதுகாப்பான அமைப்பு முறை என்பதை நேரில் உணர கிடைத்த மற்றுமொரு அனுபவம்.

ஒருபக்கம் குடும்ப அமைப்பு பாதுகாப்பு அமைதி என்று எடுத்துக்கொண்டால் அதற்கு மாற்றாக பட வேகமா லாவகமாக சுற்றி திரியும் பலநேரங்களில் பரபரப்பாக இருந்த மாங்குயில்களின் அட்டகாசங்களும் என்றும் நினைவில் இருக்கும். இயற்கையில் அனைத்தும் வெளிப்படையாகவே இருக்கிறது நாம் திறந்தமனதோடு அனுக பழகிக்கொள்ள வேண்டும்.



My son Ram and I prepared for the Backyard Bird Census (2025) with the same enthusiasm as we had participated in the Pongal Bird Census 2025. We made sure that, out of four days, three places would be ones we had already visited and one would be a new place, so that there would be an opportunity to document a place continuously. Along with that, just like how Tamil Nadu bird enthusiasts record new birds, continuously watching and recording birds in a single place would also help in understanding the environment — hearing that was also one of the reasons.

Accordingly, on the first day, we started from Umayal Ramanathan College and went up to Alagappa Engineering College. A few months ago, we had seen an **Orange-headed Thrush** on this road — we began here with the curiosity of whether it might still be around. In the morning, students from Alagappa Physical Education College were running in large numbers — I was seeing them for the first time. Usually, from as early as 4 AM, the general public can be seen walking for exercise.

Since this area includes the Central Chemistry Department, university housing, and the engineering college hostels — all surrounded by some natural greenery — birds can be spotted if one pays attention along the roadside. Along with common birds, we were able to spot a **Golden-backed Woodpecker** behind a tree branch, three or four **Spotted Owlets**, and four **peacocks** in a row on top of a compound wall.

After passing the engineering college, we went to the place where an Ayyanar temple is located. It was there, standing among four trees, that we were delighted to spot a few more birds. Three or four **Pond Herons**, a group of **Rose-ringed Parakeets**, **Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Brahminy Starling**, **Black Drongo**, **Red-vented Bulbul**, and **White-browed Wagtail**. In the nearby pond, a **Purple Moorhen** was running around on lotus leaves.

With a sense of satisfaction, the first day came to an end.

When we visited in January, even though the water channels were blocked, due to the seasonal rains, the **Kandanur Kandani Kanmoi** (tank) was filled with water. This time in February, on the second day of the bird count, we came again to this tank — in just one month, the water had reduced.

We watched birds along the path from the beginning of the bund road up to the Ayyanar temple at the end. In particular, we stopped for a moment near the two banyan trees that offer a lovely view about halfway along — in January, this was the spot where we exclaimed, 'Look, it's watching us closely!' referring to the Spotted Owlet. This time, we looked to see if it was still there. The Spotted Owlet wasn't there, but we did get to see the nearby Rose-ringed Parakeets, and a few Racket-tailed Drongos.

We walked a little further and observed the banyan tree from a distance — there were about seven Racket-tailed Drongos. Just like in photographs, during the final moments before sunset, as if escaping from narrow, closing slits, they **swiftly emerged from within and flitted through the branches in a blink** — flying in and out with such ease. Watching these Racket-tailed Drongos fly like that is something to savor, and that day, we had that gift. At times, just like a bullet fired from a gun, they would stretch both wings, give one strong beat, then fold their wings back against their body, and shoot rapidly through the branches.

After reaching the Ayyanar temple, on the way back, Ram suggested we get down at one spot and walk along the path that goes into the village. The last time, he had pointed out a bush and said we could go that way, and when we went there, I remembered spotting the Indian Paradise Flycatcher — so I agreed, and we got down and walked.

On one of the trees there, a **Shikra**, a **Black Kite**, and a **crow** were having a **three-way aggressive confrontation** — it felt like a place full of life, and we walked through with some excitement. As expected, some countryside birds were flitting about noisily around the sugarcane fields there — the **Ashy Prinia**, a **flock of Scaly-breasted Munias**, and the **Plain Prinia**. Nearby, starting from the Sivan temple's gopuram and stretching over a long distance, we were able to witness Indian Peafowls dancing in a group and circling around twice.

The second day too felt fulfilling — for many such reasons.

On the way back along the bund path of the tank, Ram saw a Red-wattled Lapwing crossing the ground, struggling. He said the bird was flailing and asked if we could help. I didn't know how we could possibly help. He said, 'Alright, let's try anyway — go closer, place a few sticks around it and try lifting it,' so I did that, but we couldn't lift it. Just then, an elderly man who was passing by came, held it by the neck and lifted it — its neck detached from the body as he did. He said, 'It's already dead,' and left. Ram was disheartened. I tried to console him a bit — told him we did what we could, and that it wasn't worth being upset over something we couldn't control. In a way, we didn't even know what exactly we should have done in that moment. Later, he shared the incident in the Vishnupuram Birders' Group. The advice given there was new information to us — that birds should not be handled directly, and that without the proper tools they shouldn't be managed at all, and that forest officials should be informed. After exchanging messages with them, he slowly recovered from that feeling of disappointment.

On the third day, we decided to go to a new place. After attending a relative's temple consecration ceremony at Kalluppatti, we headed back to Karaikudi. On the way, we turned off the highway at Amaravathipudur, to a road opposite a Gandhi Ashram Primary School, and arrived at a tank near the Karuppar temple. It was a quiet midday with little human

activity, shaded by trees and not too hot — without any particular expectation, we began birdwatching.

The very first bird we saw was a **Purple Heron**, alone. A few moments later, Ram became excited and held up his fingers, signaling a "victory." I asked what was going on, and when I looked closely, I saw — on the circular wall of a spring well in the middle of the tank, among other birds — a **Yellow-wattled Lapwing** and a **Black-winged Stilt**. In addition to those, there were **Common Sandpipers**, **Little Ringed Plovers**, **Paddyfield Pipits**, **Jerdon's Bushlarks**, **Red-wattled Lapwings**, a solitary **Pond Heron**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Purple Herons**, **Indian Peafowls** moving around like scattered jewels, Racket-tailed Drongos, around six or seven **Jungle Babblers**, **Red-wattled Lapwings** — and near the nearby thicket, a **Purple Swamphen**, and a few small birds we couldn't identify. The place was full of life.

In the tank, two **Red-wattled Lapwings** were aggressively pecking at and chasing away a **water snake** that had approached near the aquatic vegetation. As the snake retreated and moved away from the thicket, three chicks emerged and followed. Realizing that the two lapwings had been frantically flapping about just to protect their young made me instinctively tell Ram, 'Thambi, don't go too close to the water, stay back.' Was it simply instinct, or was I, perhaps, acting out that deep-seated sense of self-preservation we carry within — seeing it play out like a scene from a film — I'm not sure.

Under a tree there, a young boy who had been watching us came and asked a few questions, then used the binoculars to look at the birds in the tank. After that, he said, 'If you go a little further in from here, there's the Vaazhvu Thanthu Naayagi Amman temple — you might see more birds there.' Ram wanted to go, but I said we should head home as I didn't have enough time.

On the fourth day, I couldn't join due to work, but Ram, on his way to his evening classes, stopped by a pond along the way and observed a few birds. Since then, he's continued to regularly monitor the birds at that pond. Later, he recorded some of his sightings on the eBird platform — including notes about whether a bird was in its breeding season or juvenile stage. When Vijay Bharathi from the Vishnupuram Birders' Group reviewed it, he asked me — a bit anxiously — 'What is this exactly?' I told him honestly, 'I have nothing to do with that entry!' Ram then spoke directly with Vijay Bharathi, who advised that for now, such details should be avoided, and only added after fully learning how to identify them correctly. Following that, Ram made the necessary edits on the site.

This year, 2025 — from the Pongal bird count to the countryside bird surveys — we spent almost a month wandering around with this shared interest. And through it all, we **witnessed the distressing conditions of water bodies** (like the dried-up Athanur tank), the disappearance of tanks altogether (like Veeran tank), the **emotional impact of encountering dead birds**, and the beauty and grace of those we were lucky enough to

observe: **elegant flights, large flocks moving in unison, intense territorial disputes, glimpses of family life, and moments of deep connection** — all of it offered up as heartfelt experiences.

Another experience that allowed me to truly feel how the family structure is a natural system of safety. On one hand, if we take the idea of family as one of protection and peace, on the other hand, in contrast, the antics of the Racket-tailed Drongos — darting about swiftly and gracefully, often in a flurry of excitement — remain unforgettable. In nature, everything is openly visible. We only need to approach and engage with it with an open heart.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Thenur Lake. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Angeline Mano M

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation conducted a bird walk at **Thenur Lake** in **Perambalur**, Tamil Nadu. This was the **district's first ever bird walk** and 40 children from Payir Trust and a few local people participated. Children enjoyed watching several waterbirds and a couple of **sunbasking Oriental Darters** kept them thoroughly engaged.



***GBBC 2025 in Adaikkampatti Lake. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Angeline Mano M

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation conducted a bird walk at **Adaikkampatti Lake** in **Perambalur**, Tamil Nadu. Enthusiastic local people participated and an **Indian Spot-billed Duck with 11 chicks** was the highlight from the walk. The way the local people enjoyed watching birds with binoculars, particularly an old man, with so much happiness in their faces, was certainly an evergreen memory.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Nakkasalem Lake. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Angeline Mano M

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Having experienced the joy of birding in the two previous bird walks at Thenur and Adaikkampatti, **Vijay**, a local electrical shop owner, reached out to his friends and organized a bird walk at **Nakkasalem Lake, Perambalur**. This was a total surprise for us and we were happy to show them migratory birds such as **Brown Shrike and Wood Sandpipers**.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Thuraimangalam Lake. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Ganeshwar S V

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation conducted a bird walk at **Thuraimangalam Lake, Perambalur** in which 10 local people participated. They enjoyed watching **stilts, sandpipers, kingfishers, coots, cormorants, herons** and a pair of **Red Munia** too.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Vellanthangi Amman Lake. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Angeline Mano M

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation conducted a bird walk at **Vellanthangi Amman Lake**, Perambalur in which 8 local people participated. They enjoyed watching hundreds of Wood Sandpipers and a pair of **Greater Painted-Snipes**.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Payir Trust campus. Story by: Salem Ornithological Foundation***



Photo by: Angeline Mano M

**Name:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

Salem Ornithological Foundation conducted a campus bird walk at the **Payir Trust campus** for **35 students from four government schools** in the area. Early Bird posters and flashcards were used to help the students understand the birds better.

=====

**GBBC 2025 in Vridhachalam RF. Story by: Senthamizh Raja**



Indian Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* by [Munshi Abul Barakat / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Senthamizh Raja

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

We went on for a walk into the Vridhachalam RF near Neyveli TS. We observed keenly through the dense bushes & bamboo thickets. All of a sudden there appeared a white thread tied up with a stone flying down the branches. It played hide and seek with us. It was an **Indian Paradise FlyCatcher**. He was so energetic. He turned around his head left to right just like clicks.

=====

**GBBC 2025 in Anthiyur. Story by: Saranya**



Malabar Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros griseus* by [Bamby Randhawa / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Saranya

**State:**

Tamil Nadu

**Story:**

அன்புள்ள ஆசிரியருக்கு,

இந்த வாய்ப்பை தங்களுக்கு கடிதம் எழுதும் ஒன்றாக பயன்படுத்திக்  
கொள்கிறேன்.

பிப்ரவரி 14 முதல் 17 வரை இந்த வருட GBBC.

இது தான் எனக்கு முதல் முறை. ஆனால் GBBC யை தவற விட்டு  
விடுவோம் எனும் பயம் எனக்கு இருந்தது. ஏனெனில் 14ம் தேதி முதல் 16  
வரை தாவரவியல் வகுப்பு ஈரோடு அருகே அந்தியூர் மலைப்பகுதியில்



நித்யவனம் என்னுமிடத்தில் நடந்தது.

ஆனாலும் மூன்று நாட்களும் காலையும், மாலையும் பறவைகள் பார்க்க எங்கள் குழுவுடன் சென்றோம்

வகுப்பிற்கு வந்திருந்தவர்களும் எங்களுடன் இணைந்து கொண்டனர்.

அரிய பறவைகளான Verdict flycatcher, Asian fairy blue bird, Malabar Gray hornbill, Gray bellied cuckoo, Rufous babbler, Eastern red rumped swallow, Black hooded Oriole, White browed bulbul என பல பறவைகளை மூன்று நாளும் பார்த்தோம்.

White cheeked barbet, Fairy blue bird பறவைகளின் புகைப்படங்கள் கிடைத்தது எனக்கு.

Pied bushchat அறையின் அருகே கூடு கட்டுவதை 1 மணி நேரம் போல பார்த்துக் கொண்டே இருந்தேன்.

எனக்கு குழுவாக இணைந்து பறவைகள் பார்க்கச் செல்வது அரிதாகத்தான் நிகழ்கிறது. எனவே ஆர்வமாக சென்றேன். உறங்கும் என் மகனை கணவரிடம் விட்டுவிட்டு சென்று கொண்டே இருந்தேன்.

இன்னும் இன்னும் பறவைகள் பார்த்தலில் இருக்கும் அத்தனை அறிதல்களையும் எனக்குள் சேமித்துக் கொள்ள விரும்பினேன்.

ஆசிரியர் உடன் செல்லும் பயணங்கள் எப்போதும் நினைவில் நிறைந்து இருப்பவை.

Ebird checklist அங்கே செய்ய முடியாது. வீட்டிற்கு வந்து ஒவ்வொரு பறவையாக நினைவில் எடுத்து விரித்து பின் checklist செய்தேன்.

17ம் தேதி திண்டுக்கல், வேடசந்தூர் அருகில் உள்ள அணைக்கட்டிற்கு சென்றோம். இதுவரை இல்லாத அளவில் 52 பறவைகளை அன்று பதிவு செய்தோம். சிலவற்றின் புகைப்படங்களும் எடுத்தோம்.

மொத்தத்தில் GBBC 2025 மறக்க முடியாத நினைவுகளுடன், பல அரிய பறவைகளுடன் என் சேமிப்பில் என்றும் இருக்கும்

**Dear Teacher,**

I'm taking this opportunity to write to you in the form of a letter.

From February 14 to 17 was this year's GBBC.



This was **my very first time participating**. But I was afraid I might miss it altogether because from the 14th to 16th, I was attending a botany class near Erode, in the hill region of **Anthiyur**, at a place called **Nithyavanam**. Still, each morning and evening over those three days, we went birdwatching with our group. Those who had come for the class joined us in the sightings too.

We saw many birds over the three days, including rare ones like the **Verditer Flycatcher**, **Asian Fairy Bluebird**, **Malabar Grey Hornbill**, **Grey-bellied Cuckoo**, **Rufous Babbler**, **Eastern Red-rumped Swallow**, **Black-hooded Oriole**, and **White-browed Bulbul**.

I was lucky enough to get photos of the **White-cheeked Barbet** and the **Fairy Bluebird**. I even spent about an hour just watching a **Pied Bushchat** **build its nest near** our room.

It's rare for me to get the chance to go birding with a group, so I went eagerly. I left my sleeping child in my husband's care and set off.

I wanted to carry within me all the little discoveries and learnings that came from observing the birds.

Journeys with you, Teacher, are always filled with memories that stay close to the heart.

I wasn't able to submit the eBird checklist from the site itself — so once I got home, I recalled each bird one by one and filled it in afterward.

On the 17th, we went to a dam near **Vedasandur** in Dindigul. That day, we recorded **52 species** — more than ever before. We managed to capture photos of a few of them as well.

Overall, **GBBC 2025** will remain a cherished memory — filled with rare bird sightings and moments I'll always keep in my personal collection.

=====

## ***GBBC 2025 on a campus in Telangana. Story by: L GAJANAND***



Photo by: Rishi Palguna

**Name:**

L GAJANAND

**State:**

Telangana

**Story:**

The Global Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was an exciting and memorable event for all of us. Our bird walk took place on 16th February 2025, from 6:30 AM to 8:30 AM, covering different sections of our campus. A total of **15 students** participated, each bringing their enthusiasm and curiosity for birding.

The excitement for this bird walk was so high that, in all our anticipation, we forgot to issue binoculars from the storeroom! However, that didn't stop us. Some of us were proficient in identifying bird calls, and Merlin Bird ID became our savior. While we didn't rely entirely on it, it provided a helpful hand in identifying tricky calls and verifying species.

Birding Experience and Highlights

To cover more ground, we divided ourselves into **three groups**, each exploring different parts of the campus:

- My group covered the **core campus area**, including the football ground, sports areas, college garden, and butterfly garden. Here, we had one of the most thrilling moments of the walk—spotting **two owls**. They were perched together, swift in movement, making it hard for us to identify the exact species before they flew away. However, it was a special sighting for all of us.

Another remarkable encounter was with **an Indian Grey Hornbill**, which left my group excited and eager to explore further.

- The second group covered **the arboretum** and surrounding green spaces, while
- The third group explored the **Forest Research Centre (FRC)** and nearby wooded areas.

In total, our groups recorded **53 species**, with some unidentified calls and fleeting sightings that left us intrigued. The walk was not just about recording birds; it was a fun and engaging activity that **strengthened our teamwork, observation skills, and love for birding**.

This GBBC was special because it reinforced how **birdwatching doesn't necessarily require high-end equipment**—a keen eye, an attentive ear, and teamwork can make it just as enjoyable. The thrill of searching, identifying, and discussing our sightings made this bird count truly memorable.

We look forward to organizing more bird walks, both on and off campus, to continue exploring and learning about the avian diversity around us!

Spotting two swift-moving owls in the butterfly garden was an exhilarating moment! Though we couldn't identify them fully, the thrill of the unexpected sighting and our group's excitement made it the highlight of our GBBC experience.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in the English and Foreign Languages University. Story by:  
Shivani Kadam***



**Name:**

Shivani Kadam

**State:**

Telangana

**Story:**

Treepie Nature Club is based in the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. We birded on our campus throughout CBC as well as GBBC. **Six new volunteers** joined **seven of us regulars** during this event. My most pleasurable experience was being able to **bring together people from various ages and walks of life**. One of the PhD scholars who had been birding on the campus alone for three years before the Nature Club was founded got to bird with the others for the first time during this year's CBC.

We had the pleasure of starting the CBC off with a visit from **wildlife photographer Mr. Kaushik**, who gave us an insight into his experiences with bird photography.



The most memorable event, however, was during one of the first trails on 14th February; so many volunteers gathered, standing in the middle of the road looking at a pair of spotted doves that the security guards came to enquire about what was happening, and in turn, they ended up joining us in watching Black Kites and Little Swifts.

This CBC was full of beautiful experiences: Indian Peafowl spotted on the campus for the first time, the Spotted Owlet near the Admin block came out for a second to say hello to the new volunteers before disappearing quickly, as well as the Indian Pond Heron coming to greet the turtles in the Heritage well in the blistering heat of noon.

Sadly, we also noted the decline of the Asian green bee-eater population as their hunting grounds were levelled to make a volleyball court and kabaddi ground.

However, we hope to see them and many more birds again during the next Campus Bird Count.

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in Tripura. Story by: Ujjal Kishor De***



Photo by: Ujjal Kishor De

**Name:**

Ujjal Kishor De

**State:**

Tripura

**Story:**

We birded in our college with our teacher. We started at 6 am in the morning. It was a great adventure for us. On 14th Feb, midnight when GBBC started I went birding. It's 22nd Feb today and we are going to bird in a park.

**Birding is meditation.**

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Uttar Pradesh. Story By: Lakshay Tyagi***



Black-winged Kite (Black-shouldered Kite) *Elanus caeruleus* by [Albin Jacob / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

Lakshay Tyagi

**State:**

Uttar Pradesh

## Story:

### The Silent Hunter: A Black-Winged Kite Encounter

The February air was crisp, tinged with the scent of dry leaves and the faint musk of damp earth. It was the second day of the Great Backyard Bird Count, and I had taken my usual post at the edge of an open field, binoculars in one hand, eBird app in the other.

Birdwatching had always been an act of patience, of attuning yourself to the subtle shifts in the landscape. The raucous calls of parakeets and the rhythmic tapping of a distant woodpecker had set the tone for the morning. But something felt different today—an unsettling hush that settled over the field like an unseen presence.

And then, I saw it.

A flash of white against the blue-gray sky. At first, it seemed almost ghostly, a trick of the light. But as I focused my binoculars, the elegant form of a Black-winged Kite materialized, hovering with unnatural stillness. Its pale body gleamed, wings tipped in midnight black, crimson eyes scanning the ground below with a predator's precision.

For a long moment, it hung in the air, suspended by the sheer force of instinct and purpose. Then, with a sudden flick of its wings, it dropped. The descent was silent, swift—a perfect display of nature's ruthless efficiency. The grass quivered as the bird struck, talons sinking into unseen prey.

A brief struggle. Then stillness.

I exhaled, realizing I had been holding my breath. The kite lifted again, a lifeless vole dangling from its grip. It perched atop a bare *Bombax ceiba* branch, adjusting its hold before sinking its beak into the warm flesh.

There was no malice in the act, only necessity.

I recorded the sighting in ebird app, hands slightly unsteady. The Great Backyard Bird Count was meant to be a celebration of avian life, yet here I was, witnessing the raw and unfiltered reality of it. A reminder that beauty and brutality often shared the same feathered form.

As the sun climbed higher, the Black-winged Kite finished its meal, preened its wings, and took flight once more, disappearing into the horizon.

I remained rooted in place, my world somehow both smaller and larger than it had been a moment ago.

"In the stillness of the count, there comes a moment—a flash of wings, a piercing call, a hunter's descent—that etches itself into memory, reminding us that every bird carries a story worth witnessing."

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Uttar Pradesh. Story by: Mohsina Khan***



Photo by: Mohsina Khan

**Name:**

Mohsina Khan

**State:**

Uttar Pradesh

## Story:

Integral University, Lucknow successfully hosted the Campus Bird Count (CBC-2025) under the aegis of Dean Students' Welfare Prof. M. A. Khalid. The event was successfully led by Ms Mohsina Khan and Mr Anas Mirza Baig serving as co-coordinators. The event was held in two phases on February 15th and 16th. As everyone is aware, the Campus Bird Count is a part of the larger Great Backyard Bird Count, a concerted effort to identify the diversity of birds on Indian university campuses. As the first online citizen science project, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a joint effort by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in the United States. It collects data on bird populations in almost real-time, advances scientific knowledge, and raises public awareness of the value of birds and their ecological role.

We were able to observe more than 40 different bird species during the campus bird count. Faculty and students from the various departments and universities enthusiastically participated in the Campus Bird Count-2025. Two of our three university campuses were chosen, and that is where the bird walk was held.

It was heartening to see the participants of the walk display such curiosity and enthusiasm for learning about birds and their importance in our environment. They not only appreciated the effort but also showed a keen interest in understanding more about the birds and their habitats. Some participants were particularly fascinated by the origins of the bird names and the history behind their scientific classifications. It was inspiring to witness their eagerness to learn and discover new facts about the birds they encountered during the walk. I felt privileged to have had the opportunity to conduct the campus bird count again this year.

The event concluded on a high note by distributing the certificates to all participants in recognition of their active and enthusiastic involvement.

This event successfully raised awareness about avian biodiversity and instilled a sense of responsibility among the participants to conserve it. I would also like to extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to everyone who worked tirelessly to make this event a resounding success. I look forward to next year's CBC, hoping to replicate this year's success.

During the walk, I shared a particularly insightful quote from Sir David Attenborough with the participants, which beautifully captures the universal appeal of birds: 'Everyone likes birds. What wild creatures are more accessible to our eyes and ears, as close to us and everyone in the world, as universal as a bird?'

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand: Story by: Saurabh Chandra***



Photo by: Omansh Thakur

**Name:**

Saurabh Chandra

**State:**

Uttarakhand

**Story:**

Participating in the Campus Bird Count 2025 at FRI, Dehradun was an unforgettable experience. Over four days (14-17 Feb), we recorded 179 bird species, making our campus the 2nd highest-ranked campus in India.

The most memorable sightings for me were the Himalayan Rubythroat, Scaly Thrush, Bonelli's Eagle and Wallcreeper. Watching the Wallcreeper effortlessly scale vertical surfaces was a fascinating moment.

Birding with a passionate group of experts and enthusiasts made the experience even more

enjoyable. Contributing to citizen science and conservation efforts through this event was truly fulfilling.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Story by: Jagdish Singh Negi***



Photo by Alok

**Name:**

Jagdish Singh Negi

**State:**

Uttarakhand

## Story:

### जंगल का स्कूल

15 फरवरी को मुक्तेश्वर के हिमालयन फर, ओक और बुरांस के जंगल में पक्षियों को देखा और दिखाया। उस ट्रेल का नाम राता फोरेस्ट ट्रेल है, मैं इस रोमांचक सफर का लीड गाइड था मेहमान कम थे, लेकिन हमको मिले जंगल के बीच स्कूल के बच्चे।

हरे-भरे जंगल के बीच बच्चों को पक्षियों के बारे में बात करते समय जहां एक छोटे पक्षियों का झुण्ड पहुंचा जिसमें वार्बलर, ट्री क्रीपर, टीट, नटहच शामिल थे—कैसे उनके रंग, उनके गीत और कैसे उनका पहचान करे, बच्चों ने ध्यान से सुना और नजदीक में पहुंचे पक्षियों को पहचान की कोशिश की और जो भी पक्षी वह भविष्य में देखे अपने पैंपलेट में चित्रों के साथ मिला कर देखें और समझे यह उनको बताया बच्चों को यह नई जानकारी लगा—जंगल सिर्फ पेड़ नहीं, जीवों का संसार हैं, मुझे लगता है यह सफर उनके लिए किताबों से कहीं ज्यादा सीख देने वाला होगा साथ ही मैंने अपना संपर्क नंबर और कुछ उत्तराखंड पक्षी पैंपलेट, उनको दिया जो वह अपने प्रधान आचार्य को दे और भविष्य में उनके स्कूल के साथ कार्यक्रम करने की योजना पर भी बात किया। यह पक्षियों का झुण्ड बहुत नजदीक था, जो बच्चों का अपनी ओर आकर्षित कर रहा था।

### The Forest School

On February 15th, I observed birds in the forests of Mukteshwar, amidst the Himalayan fir, oak, and rhododendron trees. The trail is called the *Rata Forest Trail*. I was the lead guide on this exciting journey. There were only a few guests, but we came across school children right in the middle of the forest.

While talking to the children about birds in the lush green forest, a small flock of birds arrived — including warblers, treecreepers, tits, and nuthatches. We spoke about their colors, their songs, and how to identify them. The children listened attentively and tried to identify the birds that had come close. I told them to match and understand the birds they see in the future using the illustrations in the bird pocket guides.

For the children, this was new information — that the forest isn't just about trees, but a world full of living beings. I believe this experience will teach them far more than any textbook. I also gave them my contact number and some pocket guides on *Birds of Uttarakhand*, which they could give to their headteacher. We also discussed the possibility of organizing a future program with their school.

The flock of birds had come quite close — naturally attracting the attention of the children.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Story by: Suraj Rana***



Photo by: Aditya

**Name:**

Suraj Rana

**State:**

Uttarakhand

**Story:**

I am Suraj Rana from Mussoorie. I am a bird watcher and nature lover too. I participated in GBBC and saw a lot of birds. I saw and identified many beautiful birds. This GBBC count was very important for us. There were 4 of us who participated in this GBBC from Mussoorie. We saw birds in Benog Wildlife Sanctuary of Mussoorie as well as in nearby villages including Dudhli, Danda Village, Cloud End Estate. GBBC was special for me because I also saw some new birds for this season.



=====

***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Photo by: Dr. Vivek Sarkar***



Photo by: Dr. Vivek Sarkar

**Name:**

Dr. Vivek Sarkar

**State:**

Uttarakhand

**Story:**

We did Birding at Wildlife Institute of India (WII). It's a big institute with many different habitats such as main office, faculty residential, non-teaching residential, Nature trails including a lake, wet swampy grasslands, streams, dry grassland with open scrub forest, and a larger Sal forest patch. We had more than 80 participants for GBBC 2025. We divided ourselves in four teams and we divided the campus in 4 parts. Each day a team visited one of the four parts of the campus. In this way every teams get to cover the entire institute campus in four days. These assigned groups start the bird count at 6.30 in the morning which goes on till 10.00 am and then during the lunch hours for the working days of these four days. On the weekends, the birding starts at the same time and continues for the whole



day, including the owl-watch after dark. This is a standard protocol that was plotted by the faculty in-charges of GBBC in the initial years and we are following the same since I joined WII in 2015.

This year's most memorable part was the Aerial Drama in the Wilderness that we witnessed on the first day of GBBC, 2025. Walking the WII nature trail with some of our friends and colleagues, we stepped into an unfolding story—one that could have been scripted by the wild itself. As we moved, two woodcocks erupted from the undergrowth, their camouflage betrayed by the rustling leaves. A silent observer—Shikra—descended and perched right above them, scanning the ground with an intent gaze. Before the woodcocks could settle, another raptor entered the frame. A Besra, lurking nearby, had spotted its chance. In a heartbeat, it dove. The woodcock took flight, a streak of feathers against the canopy. The Shikra followed, and then, as if choreographed, the Besra joined the pursuit. For a fleeting moment, the small opening above the stream held a three-tiered chase—woodcock in a desperate escape, Shikra in cold pursuit, and Besra hot on their trail. A perfect, wild spectacle.

GBBC is not only a global phenomenon that inspired many birders to collect data in a systematic way for many years, it also generated interest about bird watching among many young people who were not exposed to the amazing world of birds earlier. I happen to be one such person. It broadens my understanding of not only the birds but also the natural history of many associated prey species of these birds. I started birding through 2016 GBBC and as I am a person who predominantly worked on entomofauna, it broadened my understanding of the ecological roles of insects. I do birding regularly now and it is a stress buster for me.

The vast mosaic of habitats around Wildlife Institute of India (WII) are replaced mostly by houses over time. Birds, once widespread, now rely on habitats protected inside WII, one of these last urban refuges where GBBC 2025 was conducted. They are reminders of what once was and what still remains.

=====

## ***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand . Story by: Riya Jain***



Photo by: Riya Jain

### **Name:**

Riya Jain

### **State:**

Uttarakhand

### **Story:**

On the morning of Saturday 15 February 2025 four of us went for the Great Backyard Bird Count of Asan Conservation Reserve. Let me introduce you to Asan Conservation Reserve, its a m

anmade type of wetland, and was declared as a Conservation Reserve in the year 2005 under section 36A of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. It was declared a protected Ramsar site in the year 2020.

Asan Barrage is a permanent freshwater wetland, conservation reserve, and only Ramsar site in Uttarakhand State which is situated at the confluence of the Eastern Yamuna Canal and the Asan River in the Doon Valley. According to Birdlife International, its Important Bird Area (IBAs) Site criteria are A1, A4i3.

My most memorable sightings were of Pallas's Fish Eagle Juvenile, an endangered species and Ferruginous duck a near threatened species at the periphery of Asan Reserve, which is one of the nesting site of Pallas's Fish Eagle here in Uttarakhand.

I do solo and group birding and prefer group birding because it gives me the opportunity to enhance my knowledge about birds. I started birding seriously after participating in the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, Campus Bird Count 2023, from then I became an active birder, observing the birds around me curiously. The CBC gave me exposure to birding and pursued it as an eco-friendly hobby which connected me to mother nature as well as enhanced my knowledge about biodiversity which surrounds me.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Story by: Nitin Kumar Raghav***



Photo By: Nitin Kumar Raghav

**Name:**

Nitin Kumar Raghav

**State:**

Uttarakhand

## Story:

This year's Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) in the city of Dehradun, Uttarakhand was as exciting as ever as walks on all four days of GBBC were organised at different hotspots of the city by the local citizen science group (Doon Nature Walks) with support from Titli Trust and Bird Count India. In Dehradun, the local community of birdwatchers is strong and quite active and we generally go birdwatching at least once every month. Moreover, we can boast of being in the guidance of some of the stalwarts of the field who slowly and gently are nurturing the love for nature into the younger generation of the city while trying to make an impact at state and national level.

One of the couple of walks that I participated in was on the last day of the GBBC and it was on the very popular trail of Shikhar Falls, in the northernmost part of the city. The trail falls in the Rispanna river catchment area and while passing through a couple of villages leads into a lush forest from where you can keep hiking up north to the Queen of Hills i.e. Mussoorie. Early in the morning, we had an unforgettable start to our walk when we saw a female common rosyfinch perched on a tree but the most memorable sighting, for the whole group, was observing two flocks of great cormorants flying overhead in the typical V formation. A little ahead, another beautiful sight was the dogfight between an Eurasian Kestrel and a pair of buzzards. At the end of the trail and to our surprise, when we were about to start the backward hike, two mountain bulbuls came to say goodbye to the group.

The ten of us, some seasoned and some newbies to the flock, were guided by two of the finest birdwatchers and storytellers of the community. The group of a dozen enjoyed it so much that all the cameras became literally useless as everyone was enjoying the pure joy of “watching” the birds, directly or with binoculars: field guides being used on field, field notes being written on field, simple easy interactive pace of participants, smiles and laughter were a sight to cherish forever. My first GBBC was in 2024 and that would always occupy a special place in my heart because that really helped me learn the nuances of birdwatching but this year's GBBC became special to me because of the walk-leaders and the participants. We had a lot of diversity in the people whom we touched this year: from kids to senior citizens, from homemakers to people on regular jobs, from social workers to wildlife biologist and from amateurs to experts. Together, we tried to make a difference in each other's lives through our common love for birds and nature. The birdwatching community in the city is growing steadily and we believe in the right direction.

**The captivating flock of great cormorants gave us an early treat for our efforts!**

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Story by: Tulsi Singh***



Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* by [Subhadra Devi / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

**State:**

TULSI SINGH

Uttarakhand

I have been birdwatching for the last six months. When I registered for GBBC/CBC, I was excited to observe new birds in our area, especially since we had participated in the Asian Waterbird Census just a month earlier. I mostly go birding in nearby places. I live in the Terai region, which is covered with lush green trees and a river—making it one of the birding hotspots of Ramnagar.

On the first day, I started birding on my school campus and observed around 37 species of birds—their sounds, colors, flight patterns, and behaviors. Then on 16 February, my partner and I went birding in a nearby village called Haathidangar, which has water bodies like canals and planted forests. This area is rich in bird species and wild animals. I love birding and observing their behavior. That day, we recorded over 47 species in that area.

In the midst of a busy life, whenever I go birdwatching, I feel relaxed and stress-free. I love gazing at the greenery and observing the behavior of different birds. For the past six months, I have been birdwatching regularly—sometimes alone, and sometimes with my six-year-old daughter. When I miss a birding session due to some reason, my day feels incomplete.

One of my most memorable sightings happened one evening after a long 3-km walk. I sat near a waterbody where many deer, nilgai, and jackals come to rest and cool off. It's a hub for waterbirds, migratory species, and terrestrial animals, with a mix of sounds from warblers, Indian Peafowl,, Plum-headed Parakeets, vultures, Black Kites, wagtails, sandpipers, waterhens, barbets, hornbills, and more. Suddenly, a Pied Kingfisher appeared over the water. It flipped its wings to locate prey and then dived into the water to catch a fish. Watching it flap and dive, with its striking plumage and motion, was truly captivating. I could spend hours watching such bird activities. It was one of my most memorable sightings.

This GBBC helped me study the flora and fauna in nearby areas and inspired other children and local residents to observe and appreciate the biodiversity around us. I feel blessed that my family has lived in this area for the past 20 years—and now, I have the opportunity to observe and understand the ecology of our surroundings.

**Nature makes you physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially healthy. Spend some time in the lap of nature, and you'll truly understand its importance.**

=====



***GBBC 2025 in Uttarakhand. Story by: Babloo Farswan***



Photo by: Babloo Farswan

**Name:**

Babloo Farswan

**State:**

Uttarakhand

**Story:**

**Hungry Wings: When Eagles Steal Vultures' Lunch**

In a region where extracurricular activities aren't the first priority in a resource-strapped rural school located amidst farms and village grazing lands, 32 students and 2 teachers (including the principal) from **Ashram Tribal School** encountered nature education up close this February. With barely any resources for learning beyond textbooks, this bird walk brought nature's classroom to their doorstep.

Nature educators Raj Koranga and Babloo Farswan from A Trust for India's Nature guided the eager group through the school's surroundings, with bird identification pamphlets shared among small groups of 4-5 students. The residential school, typically isolated from outside expertise, buzzed with excitement as students formed these small teams to explore within a kilometer of their campus.

"Cheel, Cheel!" came the chorus of some excited voices, while others disputed and went "Gidh, Gidh" as students spotted a massive bird hunched over what appeared to be sheep remains. But this wasn't just any raptor—it was the endangered Steppe Eagle, a winter migrant to Uttarakhand.

"Eagles are thieves of the sky, stealing what they can when hunting fails," explained Babloo, as students crowded around the few pairs of binoculars so that everyone could get a chance to examine the bird.

The opportunistic scavenger became an instant teaching moment. Koranga and Farswan explained how these magnificent birds are increasingly found on garbage dumps across Uttarakhand during winter months when natural prey grows scarce. Students learned to distinguish between the Hindi terms "Cheel or garud" (eagles, buzzards and kites), "Baaz" (hawks, falcons), and "Gidh" (vultures)—categories often confused in everyday conversation.

Taking turns with the binoculars, students and principal alike witnessed this unexpected sighting that transformed quiet children into attentive nature observers. Local knowledge flowed freely as students shared traditional bird names while educators added scientific context.

The bird walk, organized by A Trust for India's Nature and supported by the Nature Science Initiative and Bird Count India, demonstrated that valuable learning happens even where resources are scarce—what matters is curiosity and opportunity.

=====



***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Preanka Roy***



Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* by Preanka Roy

**Name:**

Preanka Roy

**State:**

West Bengal

**Story:**

It was a foggy morning at the Baruipur marshes, on the outskirts of Kolkata. Our group of 18 birding enthusiasts comprised women of different ages and professions. We arrived by 6:30 am and despite

the poor visibility kept our spirits high and marched on. A day earlier some other birders had struck gold in Baruipur - they had spotted the spotted crane! This sparked our curiosity and the bunch of us gathered around the “sacred” pond at the sighting had been

recorded. We could hear the grey headed swamp hen in the distance and a clamorous reed warbler next to us but the much sought lifer was no where in sight. A few of us almost gave up and we were about to walk away when the Showstopper arrived! There it was! The cameras went click click for the brief 20 seconds when we saw the spotted crane in the dense fog. Phew! A few hours later more of our friends gathered around the same spot (this time with the sun out) hopin

g for a second glimpse. But no luck! "Look! Look!", my fellow-birder exclaimed with a broad smile on her face. And I scrambled for my camera and quickly positioned it following her pointed finger. Sure enough! The little brown head and bright orange eyes peeped from the marshy pond. It was a beautiful Little grebe! Well such is the joy of watching birds, specially with friends. You never know what surprises are in store until you arrive on the field and get birding!

**Rise before the sun and keep birding till the day is done!**

=====

***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Sayani Dey***



Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*. Photo by: Dr. Pabitra Saha

**Name:**

Sayani Dey

**State:**

West Bengal

**Story:**

We went birding in the backyard area of P.R. Thakur Government College.

One of the most memorable sightings was seeing a Eurasian Hoopoe, a sunbird, and Indian White-eye. We were birding beside a paddy field and a pond, when suddenly, we spotted a Eurasian Hoopoe perched on a bare tree. Later, near a tree by the pond, we saw a Pied Kingfisher and a Blue-throated Barbet.

Our group enjoyed the activity of finding birds and learning about the ones we didn't know before. Thanks to our professor, we also got to learn the names of many previously unknown birds. It was a lovely day of discovery and shared excitement.

=====

***CBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: MD.Wasim Akram***



Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* by [Vyom Vyas / Macaulay Library](#)

**Name:**

MD.WASIM AKRAM

**State:**

West Bengal

**Story:**

On the morning of February 15, 2025, I set out for birding in the school campus area of Mohammadia High Madrasa( gov school). The familiar surroundings took on a new charm



as I listened to the early calls of birds welcoming the sunrise. With my binoculars in hand and a notebook ready, I was eager to document the avian wonders around me.

Morning started with a delightful sighting of a pair of Indian Spot-billed Ducks, crow flying overhead, their wings cutting gracefully through the crisp air. Moving further, I noticed a group of Red-vented Bulbuls chirping excitedly from the branches of a mango tree, their black crests making them easy to recognize.

The most memorable moment came when I spotted an Indian Paradise Flycatcher perched elegantly on a low-hanging branch. Its long, white tail feathers swayed gently in the breeze, making it look almost magical. For a few moments, it sat still, as if posing for the perfect picture, before darting away into the canopy.

This year's CBC was special because I shared the experience with fellow students and bird enthusiasts. We exchanged knowledge, helped each other identify species, and celebrated each new sighting with excitement. The joy of learning together made the event even more meaningful.

Through CBC 2025, I realized that birding is not just about counting birds—it's about understanding their role in our ecosystem. Every sighting, every call heard, adds to the bigger picture of conservation. As I submitted my checklist, I felt a deep sense of fulfillment, knowing that my small effort contributed to a larger cause.

Birds are storytellers of nature, and through this experience, I had the privilege of listening to them.

*"As the Indian Paradise Flycatcher danced through the branches, its long tail trailing like a ribbon in the wind, I felt the true magic of birding—every sighting a fleeting yet unforgettable connection to nature's beauty." – MD. Wasim Akram*

=====

***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Abhishek Karak***

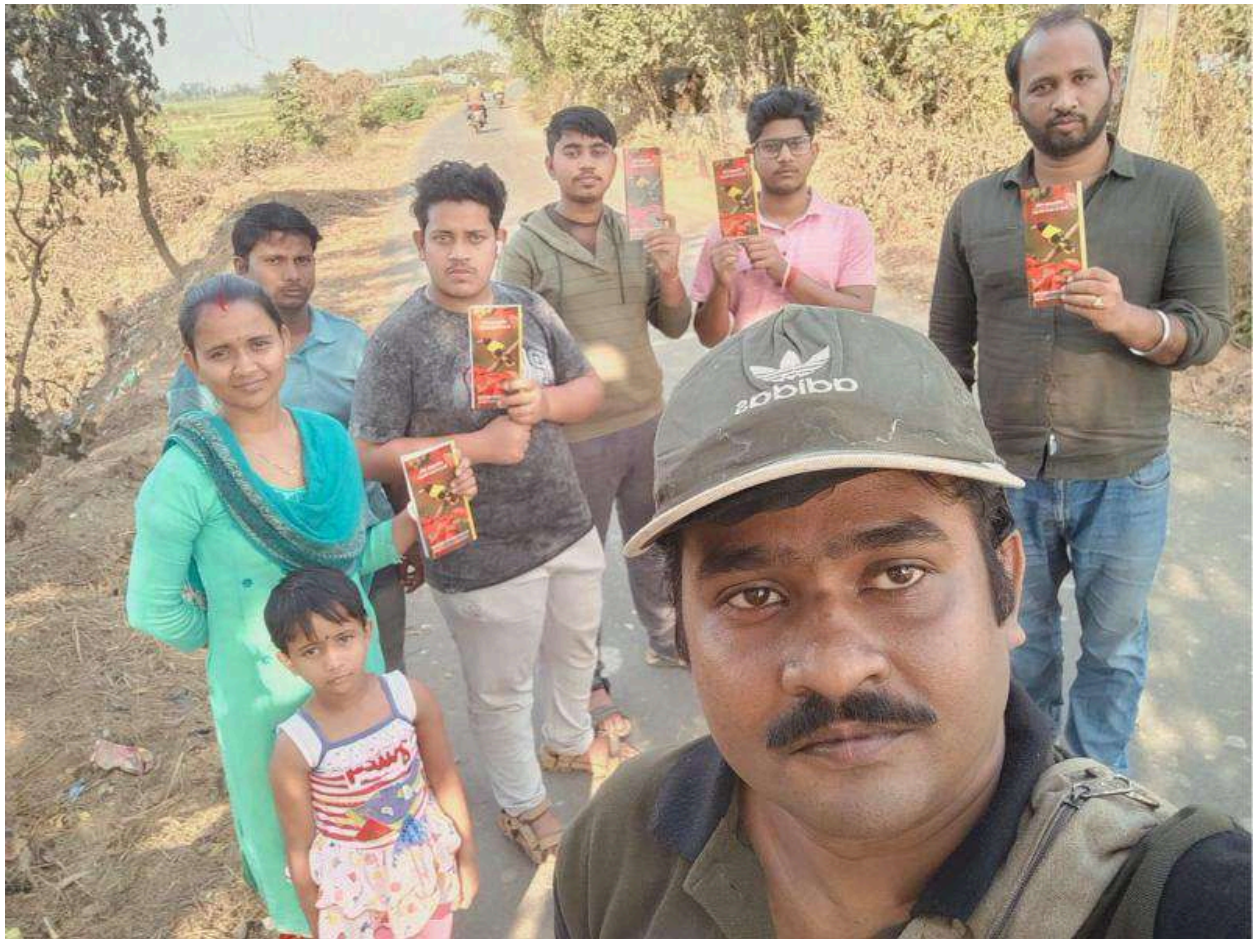


Photo by: Abhishek Karak

**Name:**

Abhishek Karak

**State:**

West Bengal

**Story:**

We selected a stretch of road that's usually quite busy and runs through a local residential area. Honestly, we didn't expect to see more than one or two species. At first, we spotted an Asian Openbill and assumed that might be the only bird we'd find.

But miraculously, over just 1 km, we recorded 18 species, including some truly beautiful birds like the Black-hooded Oriole and Blue-throated Barbet—both of which were first-time sightings for the people with me.



This GBBC reminded us that nature always has gifts to offer, as long as we have the humility to receive them.

=====

***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Goutami Saha***



Photo by: Abhishek Karak

**Name:**

Goutami Saha

**State:**

West Bengal

We went birding on the campus of an ITI college, along with some of the students. The environment was quite noisy, so our expectations were low.

We decided to focus on just one Shimul tree—and that's when the miracle began. One after another, 10 different species of birds appeared on that very tree.

It was a beautiful reminder that if you trust nature with a pure heart, it always has something unexpected to offer.

Eyes to the trees, hearts in the skies.

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Sandip Das***



Photo by Soumya Aon

**Name:**

Sandip Das

**State:**

West Bengal

**Story:**

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) event from February 14th to 17th, 2025, concluded successfully in West Bengal! This marks the third consecutive time we have recorded the highest number of species in the country.

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a fantastic event for eBird enthusiasts, not only



for tracking species counts but also for introducing new birding hotspots and engaging young bird lovers from across all districts. A significant effort has been made to bring everyone together. On behalf of the Birdwatchers' Society of West Bengal, Mr. Santanu Manna (GBBC coordinator for West Bengal) and Dr. Kanad Baidya (eBird reviewer) have played a major role in reaching out to participants and providing participation certificates to everyone involved in this event. We successfully managed to get participants from every district.

We encourage birders to submit complete checklists, photos, and sound recordings. Most birders now understand the importance of recording bird calls and try to add them to the checklist whenever possible.

We have successfully conducted multiple bird walks in collaboration with the Birdwatchers' Society at various locations, including Baruipur, Ganguly Bagan, Fulbari, Central Park, Botanical Garden, Rabindra Sarobar, and Diara. Additionally, several independent bird walks organized by fellow eBirders have also taken place. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and we have thoroughly enjoyed interacting with new bird enthusiasts and guiding them in their journey.

#### Key Fact Statement of GBBC 2025 (West Bengal)

In the latest gathering, we had an impressive turnout of over 200 participants. Our collective effort resulted in the completion of 2,401 checklists, demonstrating a noteworthy increase from last year's total of 2,223. We also recorded a diverse array of 563 species, surpassing last year's record of 543. Furthermore, our work spanned across 23 districts, highlighting the broad impact of our efforts.

In the district-wise species counting leaderboard, Darjeeling led with 259 species, followed by Birbhum and South 24 Parganas, which recorded 227 and 218 species, respectively. Mr Bahrudin Sk leads with 345 species, followed by Mr Saikat Das with 223 species, and Mr Shuvendu Das with 209 species. In the submission of the checklist, Mr Shuvendu Das led with 116 complete checklists, followed by both Souvick Mukherjee and Santanu Manna, each submitted 112 checklists.

The top three remarkable species spotted during the GBBC 2025 in West Bengal were the Ibisbill (spotted at Jhalong of North Bengal), Spotted Crack (spotted at Baruipur of South 24 PGS), and Common Starling (spotted at Malda). The report has been published in TOI.

Happy to share a feedback on GBBC bird walk from an active eBirder Mr. Prasenjit Bhattacharjee:

**\*\*The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) 2025: Bird Walk on February 16, 2025, at Diara Wetland, Hooghly District\*\***

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual citizen science project that invites individuals worldwide to contribute data on bird populations. This year, the bird walk at Diara Wetland was led by birdwatcher and eBird reviewer Mr. Sandip Das, along with volunteers Soumya Aon, Sankha Misra, and me, showcasing community collaboration in ecological monitoring.

The rich habitats of Diara Wetland make it an ideal location for observing bird diversity. Participants compiled checklists detailing species identification and behavioral notes, contributing to a broader understanding of migration patterns and population trends. Recent shifts in avian populations, driven by habitat loss and climate change, highlight the importance of GBBC data in tracking these changes and inspiring conservation efforts. The wetland, alongside its forest area, enhances our understanding of species interactions and habitat preferences.

Mr. Sandip Das's expertise and experience as state level reviewer of eBird ensures that data collection meets high quality standards, exemplifying the strength of citizen science in achieving meaningful goals.

In summary, the GBBC 2025 event at Diara Wetland contributes significantly to global bird monitoring, enriching research and conservation efforts. Analyzing the data gathered will provide valuable insights into local bird populations and their responses to environmental challenges.

Trip report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/336722>

=====

### ***GBBC 2025 in West Bengal. Story by: Anayah Ahmed***

**Name:**

Anayah Ahmed

**State:**

West Bengal

## Story:

I went for a birdwatching walk on the second day of GBBC, and while we were walking, it suddenly turned foggy—like, really foggy!

I saw: Plain Prinia, Jungle Babbler, Brown Shrike (also called butcher bird), Zitting Cisticola, a damselfly, a handmaiden moth, Bronze-winged Jacana, Spotted Dove, heard a Eurasian Moorhen call, Paddyfield Pipit, and so on.

I saw *lots and lots* of birds, but the coolest thing I saw was spider webs covered in dew—they looked just like jewelry!

The spider webs sparkling with dew in the fog, and all the invisible chirping of so many birds... It was like *magic*!



Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus* Photo by: [Shantanu Majumdar / Macaulay Library](#)

=====