

A Record of Peculiar Food Finding Habit of Black Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* (Bechstein) in Urban Areas

Rakesh Soud¹ and Kripaljyoti Mazumdar²

Black Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*, is a widely distributed species being recorded throughout the Indian union including Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with three races on size differences (Ali, 1996). Within this range it inhabits in open country, forest areas as well as in human habitats including urban areas. In forested areas they live on natural insect prey. The species is also highly beneficial to agricultural land as it destroys vast quantities of pest insects. The species is chiefly diurnal feeder. Besides its natural habitat, both the authors had observed some differences in the feeding habits of the species in different urban habitats of the region. This small notes deals with a particular observation on the peculiar food habit of the species in the urban area of Guwahati at Assam.

Black Drongo is common in urban ecosystem of the state capital Guwahati surrounded by natural vegetation especially near the human settlements. The species is commonly seen in open areas with extensive vegetation or attending on grazing cattle looking for insects. The species is often seen in perching on telegraph wires. Apart from natural habitat, they also show some deflection in feeding sites in the urban areas. In urban area even the species was observed to feed on the night as the insects were attracted by house lights, street lamps etc.

One evening on 2nd July 2010, at around 20:15 hours, we had the opportunity to observe the bird with a remarkable food finding habit at the IIT Guwahati campus. The species was observed at a remarkable height of 16 feet from the ground in a street light post, and searching for insect. The lamp easily attracts the insects and this help the bird to feed easily on them. This shows a remarkable alternative feeding habit of the species on easy prey. It may be due to the adaption of the species with the rapid changing of landscape pattern affecting the ecology of the species.

This alternation of feeding behaviour is a remarkable event in the ethology of the particular species.

Reference

Ali, S. (1996). *The Book of Indian Birds*. 12th revised edition. Mumbai: Bombay Natural History Society. 354pp.

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to their respective supervisors Dr. A.J. Saikia of IIT Guwahati and Prof. A. Gupta of Assam (Central) University for their continuous encouragements.

¹Dept. of HSS, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. Amingaon, North Guwahati-39, Assam.

²G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development, North East Unit, Itanagar -791113, Arunachal Pradesh

Email: ¹assam_rhino@rediffmail.com (corresponding author)

Rectal prolapse in an Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo*)

K. Senthilkumar^{1*}, S. Sadasivam² & M.G. Jayathangaraj³

Introduction

Rectal prolapse is the condition in which the entire rectal wall glides backwards from the perirectal tissue to form a large protrusion as described by O' Connor, (1998). Rectal prolapse is encountered most frequently in young, heavily parasitized animals that receive a low protein diet and a lack of vitamins and fluids, with a high fibre content. It may also occur in association with constipation, neoplasm, foreign bodies and lacerations in the rectum as reported by Arachibald *et al.* (1979). The incidence of rectal prolapse in lioness was reported by Khan *et al.* (1975); McMurphy (1960); Woodford (1973). This report is about the occurrence of the rectal prolapse in lion (*Panthera leo*) in Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP), Vandalur, Chennai.

Case History

A 15 years old male Asiatic Lion, a resident of the Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, AAZP appeared to be constipated for two days. Tenesmus was noticed continuously on the third day during defecation and finally resulted in rectal prolapse.

Clinical Examination

On clinical examination, the prolapsed mass was found to be the caudal portion of the rectum, which had everted through the anus for about 10cm. The mucous membrane was slightly oedematous and there were several small shallow laceration. The condition was differentiated from an intussusception by the insertion of a blunt probe between the prolapsed mass and the anal sphincter. Faecal examination revealed no evidence of parasitism. The prolapsed rectum was observed to be gradually increasing in size with signs of pain. The animal became restless, frequently lying down and getting up leading to mild bleeding in the rectal mucus membrane.

Operative Procedure

The lion was sedated using Ketamine hydrochloride (3mg/kg) and Xylazine hydrochloride (1mg/kg) intramuscularly using blowpipe and sedation was achieved in 4 minutes. The hind limb was secured well with rope. In view of the relatively healthy condition of the prolapsed mass it was decided to attempt reduction. The prolapsed mass and the surrounding area were thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned with normal saline, antiseptic solution and a local anaesthetic gel was applied externally over the prolapsed mass. The hindquarter of the lion was raised using straw bag to facilitate the reduction. The prolapsed mass was pushed manually inside the rectum and purse string suture was applied around the anus with absorbable catgut No 3/0 in order to prevent the recurrence. Venugopalan (1999) reported that repeated aversion of