

Birds at KFRI Campus, Thrissur, Kerala, India

Birds are fascinating creatures of nature and perform a variety of ecological roles like pollination, scavenging, pest control, and seed dispersal. Avifauna is one among the most studied groups of vertebrates and also is considered as an indicator species of ecosystem (Blair 1999). The Indian subcontinent has 1,340 bird species (Praveen et al. 2017) of which 1,263 bird species are in India (Praveen et al. 2016) and 500 bird species in Kerala (Praveen 2015). The campus of Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) is located in central Kerala at Peechi (10.530°N & 76.346°E), about 20km east of Thrissur City, adjacent to Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary with average elevation of about 100m. KFRI campus lies within an area of 28ha reserve forest with a butterfly garden, medicinal garden, arboretum, palmetum, and is rich in avifaunal diversity. Studies conducted in Thrissur District by Jayson & Sivaperuman (2005) recorded 313 taxa of birds of which 103 taxa were recorded from the Peechi area (Santharam 2005) and 94 taxa from KFRI campus (Jayson et al. 2000). In this paper we document the birds recorded from June 2016 to September 2018. We observed birds alone in a team using Bushnell binocular (10 x 50) and spotting scope (10 x 45x) and birds were identified using calls and physical features with the help of standard field guides and reference books (Ali & Ripley 1987; Grimmet et al. 2011; Sashikumar et al. 2001;

Induchoodan 2017). Observations were made from 06.00–10.00 h and 16.00–17.00 h, twice every month.

A total of 78 species of birds belonging to 14 orders and 33 families are reported from Kerala Forest Research Institute campus (Table 1). In this study order Passeriformes was dominant with 18 families followed by Coraciiformes and Piciformes with two families and rest of the 11 orders with single family in each. Of all the families, Muscicapidae and Accipitridae dominated the list with five species each. Birds were classified into Common (sighted during the entire field visit), Uncommon (sighted in specific habitat on a few visits), and Occasional (sighted in suitable habitat once or twice).

As per IUCN (2018), 77 taxa of birds recorded from the campus were found to be under the Least Concern category and one taxa was under Not Evaluated category. KFRI campus is a breeding-cum-roosting area for many species, breeding of Crested Hawk-eagle *Nisaetus cirrhatus* in the campus was a remarkable observation. Praveen (2015) reported 500 species in 88 families and 22 orders from Kerala. Thus KFRI campus accounts for 15.6% species, 37.5% families, and 63.64% orders of birds of Kerala. Ten species fall under the Schedule I, one species in Schedule II, 63 species

Table 1. Checklist of birds at KFRI Campus, Peechi, Thrissur.

	Common name	Scientific name	Jayson et al. (2000)	Present study	Status
Phasianidae					
1	Red Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i> Gmelin, JF, 1789	P	P	C
2	Grey Junglefowl	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i> Temminck, 1813	P	P	U
3	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
4	Grey Francolin	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i> Gmelin, JF, 1789	P	A	
5	Jungle Bush Quail	<i>Perdicula asiatica</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
Columbidae					
6	Blue Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> Gmelin, JF, 1789	P	P	C
7	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i> Scopoli, 1786	P	P	C
8	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	U
9	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
10	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> Frivaldszky, 1838	P	A	
Caprimulgidae					
11	Grey Nightjar (Jungle Nightjar)	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
12	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
Apodidae					
13	Indian House Swift (Little Swift)	<i>Apus affinis</i> Gray, 1830	P	P	U
14	Indian Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i> Jerdon, 1840	A	P	U
15	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasienensis</i> Gray, JE, 1829	P	P	U
16	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarpis melba</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Cuculidae					
17	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i> Stephens, 1815	P	P	C
18	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
19	Common Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i> Vahl, 1797	P	P	U
20	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i> Gould, 1838	P	P	O
21	Pied Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i> Boddaert, 1783	P	A	
22	Banded Bay Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sonneratii</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
Rallidae					
23	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i> Pennant, 1769	P	P	C
Ardeidae					
24	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i> Sykes, 1832	A	P	C
Charadriidae					
25	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i> Boddaert, 1783	P	P	C
Accipitridae					
26	Oriental Honey Buzzard (Crested Honey Buzzard)	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> Temminck, 1821	A	P	O

	Common name	Scientific name	Jayson et al. (2000)	Present study	Status
Accipitridae					
27	Changeable Hawk Eagle (Crested Hawk Eagle)	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i> Gmelin, 1788	A	P	C
28	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i> Gmelin, 1789	P	P	U
29	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i> Boddaert, 1783	P	P	C
30	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i> Latham, 1790	P	P	U
31	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i> Boddaert, 1783	P	A	
32	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Tytonidae					
33	Common Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i> Scopoli, 1769	P	A	
Strigidae					
34	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i> Tickell, 1833	A	P	C
35	Mottled Wood Owl	<i>Strix ocellata</i> Lesson, 1839	A	P	C
36	Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i> Gmelin, 1788	A	P	O
37	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i> Temminck, 1821	P	A	
Bucerotidae					
38	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i> Scopoli, 1786	P	P	U
39	Malabar Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros griseus</i> Latham, 1790	A	P	U
Upupidae					
40	Common Hoopoe (Eurasian Hoopoe)	<i>Upupa epops</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Picidae					
41	Heart-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Hemicircus canente</i> Lesson, 1832	P	P	U
42	Common Golden-backed Woodpecker (Common Flameback)	<i>Dinopium javanense</i> Ljungh, 1797	A	P	C
43	Lesser Golden-backed Woodpecker (Black-rumped Flameback)	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
44	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i> Vieillot, 1818	P	A	
45	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i> Latham, 1801	P	A	
46	Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos moluccensis</i> Vigors, 1832	P	A	
Ramphastidae					
47	White-cheeked Barbet	<i>Psilopogon viridis</i> Boddaert, 1783	P	P	C
48	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i> Müller, 1776	P	P	C
Meropidae					
49	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i> Linnaeus, 1767	P	P	C
50	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i> Latham, 1801	P	A	
51	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i> Vieillot, 1817	P	A	

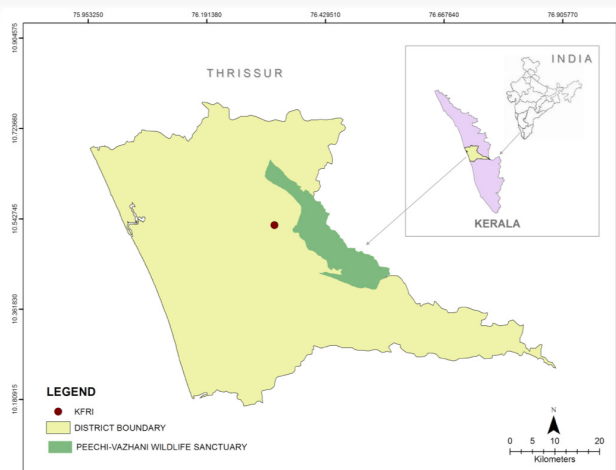
	Common name	Scientific name	Jayson et al. (2000)	Present study	Status
Coraciidae					
52	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Alcedinidae					
53	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
54	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
55	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
56	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Psittaculidae					
57	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
58	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula kramera</i> Scopoli, 1769	P	P	C
59	Vernal Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus vernalis</i> Sparrman, 1787	P	P	U
60	Malabar Parakeet	<i>Psittacula columboides</i> Vigors, 1830	P	A	
Pittidae					
61	Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	O
Campephagidae					
62	Scarlet Minivet (Orange Minivet)	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i> Forster, JR, 1781	P	P	U
Oriolidae					
63	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
64	Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i> Sykes, 1832	P	P	U
65	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i> Linnaeus, 1766	A	P	C
Artamidae					
66	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i> Vieillot, 1817	P	A	
Vangidae					
67	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i> Sykes, 1832	A	P	O
68	Large Woodshrike (Malabar Woodshrike)	<i>Tephrodornis virgatus</i> Raffles, 1822	A	P	O
Aegithinidae					
69	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
Dicruridae					
70	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i> Vieillot, 1817	P	P	U
71	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i> Vieillot, 1817	A	P	C
72	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i> Linnaeus, 1766	A	P	C
73	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i> Vieillot, 1817	P	A	
74	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Corvidae					
75	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i> Latham, 1790	P	P	C
76	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i> Vieillot, 1817	P	P	C
77	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i> Wagler, 1827	P	P	C

	Common name	Scientific name	Jayson et al. (2000)	Present study	Status
Monarchidae					
78	Indian Paradise-flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradise</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	U
Dicaeidae					
79	Thick-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum agile</i> Tickell, 1833	P	A	
80	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i> Latham, 1790	P	A	
Nectariniidae					
81	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
82	Crimson-backed Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma minima</i> Sykes, 1832	A	P	U
83	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i> Latham, 1790	P	P	C
84	Loten's Sunbird (Long-billed Sunbird)	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
Irenidae					
85	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i> Latham, 1790	A	P	O
86	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i> Temminck, 1829	A	P	C
87	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i> Blyth, 1844	P	P	U
Ploceidae					
88	Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i> Horsfield, 1821	P	A	
89	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	A	
Estrildidae					
90	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	A	P	U
Passeridae					
91	Yellow-throated Sparrow (Chestnutshouldered Petronia)	<i>Gymnoris xanthocollis</i> Burton, 1838	P	A	
Motacillidae					
92	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i> Tunstall, 1771	P	A	
93	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i> Gmelin, JF, 1789	P	A	
94	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	
Paridae					
95	Cinereous Tit (Indian Great Tit)	<i>Parus cinereus</i> Vieillot, 1818	P	A	
Alaudidae					
96	Rufous-tailed Lark	<i>Ammomanes phoenicura</i> Franklin, 1831	P	A	
Cisticolidae					
97	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthoto mussutorius</i> Pennant, 1769	P	P	C
Acrocephalidae					
98	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i> Blyth, 1849	P	P	C
99	Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i> Hemprich & Ehrenberg, 1833	P	P	C
Hirundinidae					
100	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i> Laxmann, 1769	P	A	
101	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	A	

	Common name	Scientific name	Jayson et al. (2000)	Present study	Status
	Pycnonotidae				
102	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
103	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
	Zosteropidae				
104	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i> Temminck, 1824	P	A	
	Leiothrichidae				
105	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i> Dumont, 1823	P	P	C
106	Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides affinis</i> Jerdon, 1845	P	P	C
	Sittidae				
107	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i> Swainson, 1820	P	A	
	Sturnidae				
108	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	P	C
109	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i> Wagler, 1827	P	P	C
110	Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i> Linnaeus, 1758	A	P	U
	Muscicapidae				
111	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i> Linnaeus, 1758	P	P	C
112	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscica padaurica</i> Raffles, 1822	A	P	C
113	Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscica pamuttui</i> Layard, EL, 1854	A	P	U
114	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i> Blyth, 1843	A	P	U
115	Malabar Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus horsfieldii</i> Vigors, 1831	A	P	C
116	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	A	
117	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i> Linnaeus, 1766	P	A	
	Turdidae				
118	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Geokichla citrina</i> Latham, 1790	A	P	C
119	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus</i> Jerdon, 1839	A	P	O

under Schedule IV, and one species under the Schedule V category of the Wildlife (Protection) Act; 10 species fall under the Appendix II of CITES. Two endemic species Malabar Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros griseus* and Crimson-backed Sunbird *Leptocoma minima* to Western Ghats was also recorded from the campus. Earlier studies conducted in KFRI campus (Jayson et al. 2000) recorded 94 taxa of birds belonging to 13 orders and 35 families. While comparing with the past

data, 41 taxa of birds reported earlier were not found during the present study and 23 taxa of birds are newly reported. This may be due to the habitat fragmentation between the Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary and the KFRI campus due to urbanization. Nearness to the Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary had a great influence in the avifaunal diversity of the campus. Also, the floristic diversity of the campus itself has changed slightly due to the small scale construction activities as



KFRI Campus at Peechi, Thrissur, Kerala.

well as the establishment of peculiar plots for conservation like arboretum, palmetum, butterfly garden, forest nursery, among other things. Even though KFRI campus is a small area and located amid human habitations, the high species diversity in the campus could be due to the presence of different type of habitats.

References

Ali, S. & S.D. Ripley (1987). Compact Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Oxford University Press, Delhi, India, 737p.

Blair, R.B. (1999). Birds and Butterflies; surrogate taxa for assessing biodiversity? *Ecological Application* 9: 164-70.

Grimmet, R., C. Inskipp & T. Inskipp (2011). *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. Oxford University Press, India, 528pp.

Induchoodan, K.K. (2017). Keralathile Pakshikal. Kerala Sahithya Akademi, Thrissur, Kerala, 578pp.

Jayson, E.A. & C. Sivaperuman (2005). Avifauna of Thrissur District, Kerala, India. *Zoos' Print Journal* 20(2): 1774-1783. <https://doi.org/10.11609/JoTT.PJ.1231.1774-83>

Jayson, E.A., K.K. Ramachandran & C. Sivaperuman (2000). Avifauna of KFRI campus. *Evergreen* 44: 19-20.

Praveen, J. (2015). A checklist of birds of Kerala, India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 7(13): 7983-8009. <https://doi.org/10.11609/jott.2001.7.13.7983-8009>

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

Praveen, J., R. Jayapal, T. Inskipp, D. Warakagoda, P.M. Thompson, R.C. Anderson & A. Pittie (2017). Birds of the Indian subcontinent: Species not recorded from India. *Indian BIRDS* 13(4): 93-101.

Santharam, V. (2005). Birds seen on a short trip to Peechi, Kerala, India. *Indian Birds* 1(2): 32-33.

Sashikumar, C., J. Praveen, M.J. Palot & P.O. Nameer (2011). Birds of Kerala: status and distribution. 1st Ed. DC Books, Kottayam, Kerala, 835pp.

P. Greeshma¹, Riju P. Nair², E.A. Jayson³ & P.M. Nishad⁴

¹⁻³ Wildlife Department, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi, Thrissur, Kerala 680653, India.

⁴ Mar Athanasios College for Advanced Studies, Thiruvalla, Pathanamthitta, Kerala 689101, India. Emails: ¹greeshmap@kfri.res.in (corresponding author), ²rijupnair2009@gmail.com, ³jjayson.58@gmail.com, ⁴nishadpalakkathodica@gmail.com

Citation: Greeshma, P., R.P. Nair, E.A. Jayson & P.M. Nishad (2020). Birds at KFRI Campus, Thrissur, Kerala, India. *Bird-o-soar* #49, In: *Zoo's Print* 35(6): 22-28.