

## A checklist of birds from Kondakarla Ava, a freshwater lake in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Birds have been the focus of interest as they are indicators of water quality and as parameters of restoration success and regional biodiversity. There are several factors that affect wetland bird communities. Hilden (1965) listed five factors as proximate ones which were involved in habitat selection: landscape, terrain, nest, song, and other sites (other animals and food). A few studies on diversity and abundance of aquatic birds also support the fact that there is a decreasing trend in avian population in our country's various water bodies (Azous & Horner 2001; Kumar & Gupta 2009).

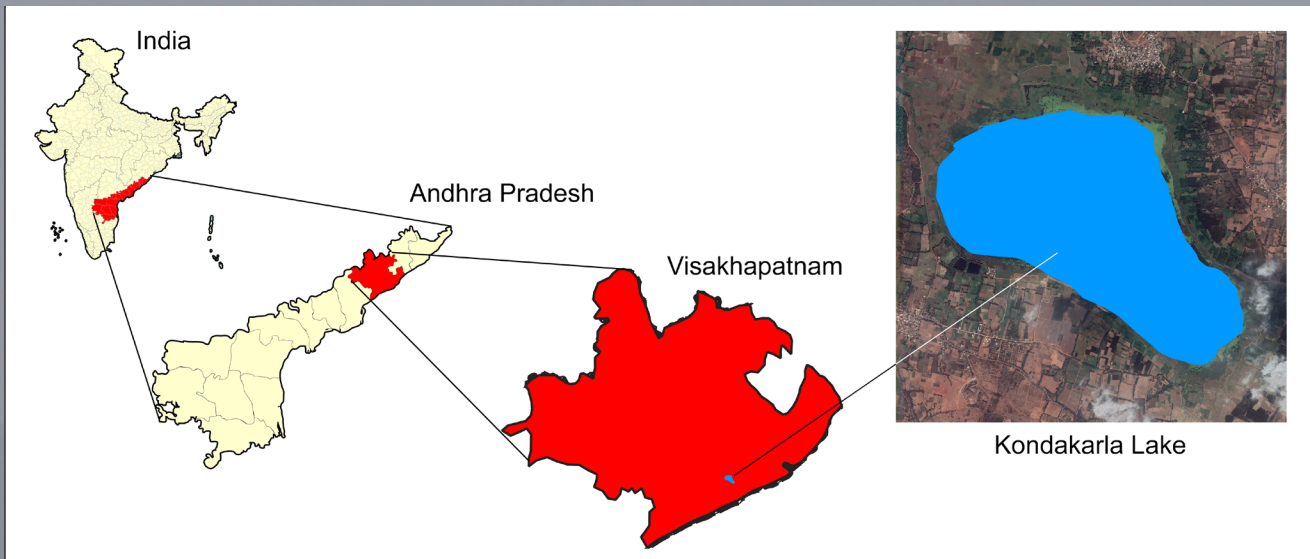
The objective of this study was to prepare an updated list of birds of the Kondakarla Ava freshwater lake situated in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh; this paper focuses purely on avian diversity since they form one of the base for conservation studies and management projects.

The Kondakarla Ava, a freshwater lake (17.60083N & 82.99805E), is one of its kind and is the second largest freshwater lake in Andhra Pradesh next to the Kolleru Lake. This lake has formed a unique ecosystem providing livelihood options to thousands of households. It is named after the village Kondakarla abutting the lake.

Kondakarla Ava is part of the Sarada riverine system and is classified as a perennial eutrophic shallow fresh water lentic body. It receives water from the Sarada River and Anakapalli Ava through Krishnam-Raju Channel. With a rectilinear polygon shape originally, the water spread of this lake is 753.93ha and the water storage capacity is up to 0.18 TMC (at full tank level). For about seven months in a year, the lake receives rainfall from both Southwest monsoon and Northeast monsoon (Avg. 1069mm). Annually around 0.86 TMC of water flows from the lake. Through a human made outlet that is connected to irrigation channels, water is supplied to eight villages. Agriculture is the dominant land use seen in this area whereas fishing is limited only to the surrounding villages of the water body. Being a freshwater lake, this place is famous for the number of migratory birds that arrive here each year.

Habitat and birds found in Kondakarla Ava Lake, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.





**Figure 1. Location of Kondakarla Ava freshwater lake in Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh (Courtesy: Google Earth; The above map is indicative and is not to scale).**

Bird count was done over a period of three years from January 2017 to February 2020. Observations were made during early morning between 06.00 to 10.30 h. and in the evening from 1530 to 18.30 h. However, timings were adjusted sometimes depending upon bird activity. Opportunistic counts done during other times of the day were also taken into consideration. Regular surveys were done by walking on fixed routes around the lake and also using the palmyrah boats inside the water body.

Birds were recorded following imaginary grid method and line transect method as outlined by Ali & Ripley (1983) and Ali (1996). Sightings and calls were both recorded. Observations were made using binoculars and photography was done using Nikon D5000 and D3300 wherever possible for future reference purposes. Scientific names and taxonomic classification of birds is after Praveen et al. (2016).

A total of 123 species of birds belonging to 45 families of 17 orders represent the avian diversity at the Kondakarla Ava Lake (see Table 1).

Among the 123 species recorded here, the Common Pochard is listed as Vulnerable and Painted Stork, Oriental Darter, and Alexandrine Parakeet are Near Threatened (BirdLife International 2017). According to the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and IUCN's Red List, a species is listed in Schedule I & IV and included in the Red List



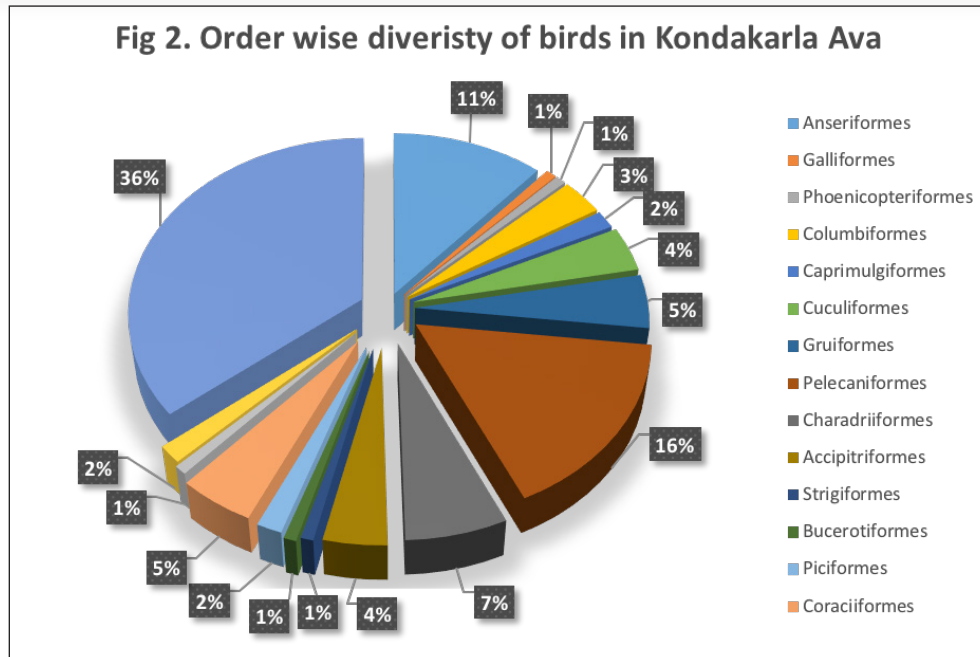


Figure 2. Order wise diversity of birds in Kondakarla Ava.

categories, respectively, depending upon its population status, rate of decline, and range sizes. The supporting vegetation along the lake fringes supports Passeriformes which forms the highest order of birds found here with 43 species forming 36% of the total species diversity (Figure 2).

The mysterious and rather uncommon Pink-headed Duck was recorded from this lake by Abdulali (1945), which gives a sorrowful picture of how rich the resources and diversity was a century or so back, and the lack of management over the years. Successful breeding of huge number of Pheasant-tailed Jacanas have been observed here by the authors. There have also been records of Tufted Duck, Comb Duck, Black-headed Ibis in this lake from various previous records (Lakshmi 2001; ENVIS 2016), but they do not frequent the lake every year anymore.

The family wise richness of birds in Kondakarla Ava lake shows Anatidae (ducks, goose) having the highest species count here with 14 species (Figure 3).

The lake is home to several winter migrants such as Common Pochard, Red-crested Pochard, Common Teal, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Eurasian Wigeon and Eurasian Marsh Harrier. Local migrants including Sandpipers, Ibises, Pipits, and Starlings are also spotted here. Winter migrants have three main criteria for habitat selection- 1. Availability of food, 2. Availability of space and 3. Protection from predators.

Kondakarla Ava lake is a hotspot favouring all three requirements thus hosting thousands of birds every year. Once known as a paradise for migratory birds, recent observations by the authors reveal lesser count of birds in the lake. The decreased avian count in this

**Table 1. Checklist of birds found in Kondakarla Ava freshwater lake, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**

	Common name	Scientific name	IUCN status	Schedule (WPA, 1972)
<b>I. Anseriformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Anatidae</b>			
1	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	VU	IV
2	Common Teal*	<i>Anas crecca</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
3	Cotton Teal	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
4	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
5	Fulvous Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i> (Vieillot, 1816)	LC	I
6	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
7	Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i> J.R. Forster, 1781	LC	IV
8	Comb Duck*	<i>Sarkidiornis melonotos</i> (Pennant, 1769)	LC	IV
9	Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i> (Horsfield, 1821)	LC	IV
10	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
11	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
12	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i> (Pallas, 1733)	LC	IV
13	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i> (Pallas, 1764)	LC	IV
14	Tufted Duck*	<i>Aythya fuligula</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>II. Galliformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Phasianidae</b>			
15	Grey Francolin	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
<b>III. Phoenicopteriformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Podicipedidae</b>			
16	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> (Pallas, 1764)	LC	IV
<b>IV. Columbiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Columbidae</b>			
17	Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> (Frisvaldszky, 1838)	LC	IV
18	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
19	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> J.F. Gmelin, 1789	LC	IV
20	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i> (Scopoli, 1786)	LC	IV
<b>V. Caprimulgiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Apodidae</b>			
21	Asian Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i> (J.E. Gray, 1829)	LC	IV
22	Indian House Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i> (J.E. Gray, 1830)	LC	IV
<b>VI. Cuculiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Cuculidae</b>			
23	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
24	Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i> (Vahl, 1797)	LC	IV
25	Grey bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i> (Vahl, 1797)	LC	IV
26	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i> (Stephens, 1815)	LC	IV
27	Pied Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	IV
<b>VII. Gruiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Rallidae</b>			
28	Baillon's Crake	<i>Zapornia pusilla</i> (Pallas, 1776)	LC	IV
29	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
30	Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
31	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
32	Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Zapornia fusca</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV

	Common name	Scientific name	IUCN status	Schedule (WPA, 1972)
33	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i> (Pennant, 1769)	LC	IV
<b>VIII. Pelecaniformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Ciconiidae</b>			
34	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	IV
35	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i> (Pennant, 1769)	NT	IV
<b>b</b>	<b>Ardeidae</b>			
36	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
37	Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
38	Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
39	Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i> (Latham, 1790)	LC	IV
40	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
41	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
42	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
43	Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i> (Sykes, 1832)	LC	IV
44	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i> Wagler, 1829	LC	IV
45	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
46	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i> Linnaeus, 1766	LC	IV
47	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>c</b>	<b>Threskiornithidae</b>			
48	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
49	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i> (Temminck, 1824)	LC	IV
<b>d</b>	<b>Phalacrocoracidae</b>			
50	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
51	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i> Stephens, 1826	LC	IV
52	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i> (Vieillot, 1817)	LC	IV
<b>e</b>	<b>Anhingidae</b>			
53	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i> Pennant, 1769	NT	IV
<b>IX. Charadriiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Recurvirostridae</b>			
54	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>b</b>	<b>Charadriidae</b>			
55	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	IV
56	Yellow wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	IV
<b>c</b>	<b>Jacanidae</b>			
57	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i> (Latham, 1790)	LC	IV
58	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i> (Scopoli, 1786)	LC	IV
<b>d</b>	<b>Scolopacidae</b>			
59	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
60	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
61	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
<b>X. Accipitriformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Accipitridae</b>			
62	Black kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	I
63	Black winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i> (Desfontaines, 1789)	LC	I
64	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i> (Boddaert, 1783)	LC	I
65	Eurasian Marsh-Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	I
66	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i> (J. F. Gmelin, 1788)	LC	I

	Common name	Scientific name	IUCN status	Schedule (WPA, 1972)
<b>XI. Strigiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Strigidae</b>			
67	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i> (Temminick, 1821)	LC	I
<b>XII. Buceriformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Upupidae</b>			
68	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
<b>XIII. Piciformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Picidae</b>			
69	Lesser Golden-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>b</b>	<b>Ramphastidae</b>			
70	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i> (Statius Muller, 1776)	LC	IV
<b>XIV. Coraciiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Meropidae</b>			
71	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i> Linnaeus, 1767	LC	IV
72	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i> Latham, 1801	LC	IV
<b>b</b>	<b>Coraciidae</b>			
73	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>c</b>	<b>Alcedinidae</b>			
74	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
75	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
76	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>XV. Falconiformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Falconidae</b>			
77	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i> Tunstall, 1771	LC	I
<b>XVI. Psittaciformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Psittaculidae</b>			
78	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	NT	IV
79	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i> (Scopoli, 1769)	LC	IV
<b>XVII. Passeriformes</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>Oriolidae</b>			
80	Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i> Sykes, 1832	LC	IV
81	Black hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>b</b>	<b>Artamidae</b>			
82	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i> Vieillot, 1817	LC	IV
<b>c</b>	<b>Dicruridae</b>			
83	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i> Vieillot, 1817	LC	IV
84	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i> Vieillot, 1817	LC	IV
85	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caeruleus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>d</b>	<b>Laniidae</b>			
86	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
87	Bay backed Shrike	<i>Lanius vittatus</i> Valenciennes, 1826	LC	IV
<b>e</b>	<b>Corvidae</b>			
88	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i> Vieillot, 1817	LC	V
89	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i> Wagler, 1827	LC	IV
90	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i> (Latham, 1790)	LC	IV
<b>f</b>	<b>Nectariniidae</b>			
91	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i> (Latham, 1790)	LC	IV

	Common name	Scientific name	IUCN status	Schedule (WPA, 1972)
92	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
<b>g</b>	<b>Ploceidae</b>			
93	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
94	Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i> (Horsfield, 1821)	LC	IV
<b>h</b>	<b>Estrildidae</b>			
95	Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
96	Black-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
<b>i</b>	<b>Passeridae</b>			
97	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>j</b>	<b>Motacillidae</b>			
98	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i> Tunstall, 1771	LC	IV
99	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i> Vieillot, 1818	LC	IV
100	Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i> Vieillot, 1818	LC	IV
101	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i> (Taczanowski, 1876)	LC	IV
102	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
103	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i> J.F. Gmelin, 1789	LC	IV
<b>k</b>	<b>Alaudidae</b>			
104	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i> (Scopoli, 1786)	LC	IV
105	Jerdon's Bushlark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i> Blyth, 1845	LC	IV
<b>i</b>	<b>Cisticolidae</b>			
106	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i> Sykes, 1832	LC	IV
107	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i> (Pennant, 1769)	LC	IV
108	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i> Sykes, 1832	LC	IV
<b>m</b>	<b>Acrocephalidae</b>			
109	Booted Warbler	<i>Iduna caligata</i> (M.H.C. Lichtenstein, 1823)	LC	IV
110	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i> Blyth, 1849	LC	IV
111	Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i> (Hemprich & Ehrenberg, 1833)	LC	IV
<b>n</b>	<b>Hirundinidae</b>			
112	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> Linnaeus, 1758	LC	IV
113	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i> Leach, 1818	LC	IV
<b>o</b>	<b>Pycnonotidae</b>			
114	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
115	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
<b>p</b>	<b>Sylviidae</b>			
116	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
<b>q</b>	<b>Leiothrichidae</b>			
117	Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides affinis</i> (Jerdon, 1845)	LC	IV
118	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i> (Dumont, 1823)	LC	IV
<b>r</b>	<b>Sturidae</b>			
119	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	LC	IV
120	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i> (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)	LC	IV
121	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV
122	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i> (Wagler, 1827)	LC	IV
<b>s</b>	<b>Muscicapidae</b>			
123	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)	LC	IV

\*Taken from previous records, but not sighted during the current study period.





Egrets in Kondakarla Ava Lake. ©VNR.



Grey-headed Swamphen. ©VB.



Common Moorhen. ©VB.



Spotted Dove. ©VB.



Richard's Pipit. ©VB.



Plain Prinia. ©VB.



Pheasant-tailed Jacana. ©VB.





**Black-winged Stilt.** ©VNR.



**Great White Egret.** ©VNR.



**White-throated Kingfisher.** ©VB.



**Red-wattled Lapwing.** ©VB.



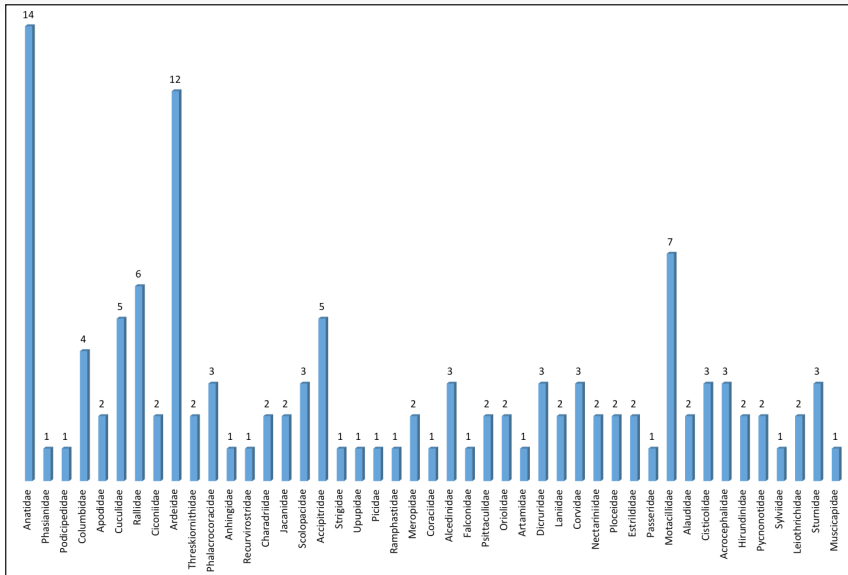
**Little Grebe.** ©VB.



**Eurasian Collared Dove.** ©VB.

study is supported by previous work and observations too (Lakshmi 2001; ENVIS 2016). With the tremendous pressure from different sectors of developmental forces, the lake is now at the verge of losing its suitability for the migrants. This study reveals the lake harbouring an almost equal number of water birds, terrestrial birds and water dependant

birds. The lake can be divided into different habitat types like open waters, deep shallow lake bed area, wet borders of channels, drains, & lake fringes, and marginal areas. The multiple micro habitats present within the lake have stabilized over years forming what can be seen now as the perfect habitat for different requirements of birds, mammals,



**Figure 3.** Number of species in each family in Kondakarla Ava.

reptiles, and other living organisms too.

### Conclusion

Avian diversity in an ecosystem designs the fate of the same. With Kondakarla Ava harbouring over 100 different species of birds, it plays an important role in giving shelter to the feathered friends and thus to the occupants of the entire trophic tree here.

This paper concludes the importance of this place in terms of its avian diversity, thus making it clear why there is an urgent need to take steps towards its conservation and prevention from further deterioration.

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