

## Yellow-throated Sparrow feeding on Mahua flowers in Madhya Pradesh

Yellow-throated Sparrow *Gymnoris xanthocollis* is widespread inhabitant in Indian sub-continent (Ali & Ripley 1987). Globally, it is known to be from western, southern, and southeastern Asia (Summers-Smith 2020).

On 13 April 2025, I came across an interesting observation of the species at Halali dam area (23.495° N, 77.549° E), Raisen District, Madhya Pradesh. The location is on the bank of the Halai Dam, on the trijunction of Bhopal, Raisen, and Vidisha districts with dry deciduous forests. At 0715 h, about six sparrows were noted chirruping on a Mahua tree *Madhuca longifolia* (L.) J.F. Macbr. (Sapotaceae).

They were feeding on the flowers by nectar sipping, plucking the petals and carrying the petals to nearby perch and feeding on it. Next four hours, the presence of sparrows was noted. Other species such as Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* and Plum-headed Parakeet



Yellow-throated Sparrow feeding on Mahua flower. © Sachin Ranade.

*Psittacula cyanocephala* also visited but spent relatively less time. The parakeets got attracted to Jarul *Lagerstroemia speciosa* (L.) Pers. and started feeding on the fruits.

The Mahua flowers are rich in sugars, essential amino acids and oils (Heuze et al 2017). As February to May, the summer season is breeding season for the species, the flowers provide essential nutrients in abundance.

Similar observations had been noted by Bharos (1992) describing the method of the flower consumption. Santharam (1996) enlisted a few examples of flower-consumption by birds and mentioned rightfully that very few records are available. This note provides additional record as well as the photographic record of flower consumption by the Yellow-throated Sparrow.

#### References

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#### Sachin Ranade

VCBC, Rani, Belguri, Assam, India.  
Email [s.ranade@bnhs.org](mailto:s.ranade@bnhs.org)

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