

A NOTE ON ISOSPORA INFECTION IN A SOUTHERN REDWHISKERED BULBUL (*Pycnonotus jocosus fuscicaudatus*)

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The Southern Redwhiskered Bulbuls are perky garden and shrubby haunting birds found in moist deciduous and evergreen biotopes of the low country, both near and away from human habitations. Though a resident of Kerala, it ranges down the western side of peninsular India, Western Madhya Pradesh and South to Kanyakumari. The species in several races is found practically throughout India.

The authors had the opportunity to find an adult bird of the above species in a nest along with young ones in the gardens of Veterinary college hospital. The adult bird appeared dull and showed ruffled feathers. The nest was kept under careful observation and was examined when the bird flew off with the young ones. The droppings in the nest was found to be diarrhoeic and mixed with mucus. Hence it was collected and on microscopical examination, oocysts of coccidia could be detected in very large numbers.

The sample was centrifuged and kept in 2.5% potassium dichromate solution for sporulation of oocysts. The morphological details of both sporulated and nonsporulated oocysts were studied under oil immersion of a microscope. The oocysts were neraly spherical, double walled and measured 19.92 to 23.8 x 18.9 to 23.76 μ m in size and contained two sporocysts each with four sporozoites. Micropyle, polar cap and oocyst residum were absent. Majority of the oocysts had a single polar granule but some had two polar granules. The sporocysts had a plug like stieda body and measured 13.8 to

15.1 x 8.0 to 8.98 μ m Sporocyst residuum as scattered granules was present and the sporozoites were elongate with a refractile globule at either end.

A perusal of the available literature did not reveal the occurrence of isosporan coccidia in Southern Redwhiskered Bulbul. Occurrence of *Isospora pycnonotae* and *I. pycnonotusi* were reported in Redwhiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) by Mandal (1971) and Bhatia *et al.* (1973) respectively. The specimens in the present study is closest to *I. pycnonotusi* in measurements and characters.

Hence, we report the occurrence of *I. pycnonotusi* in Southern Redwhiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus fuscicaudatus*) in Kerala. The sick nature of the adult bird and the diarrhoeic and mucous containing droppings might be due to the infection.

References

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Mandal, A.K. (1971). Studies on some aspects of avian coccidia (Protozoa, Sporozoa) Part IV, Occurrence and distribution of coccidial parasites in Indian birds. *Rec. Zool. Sur. India*, 63 (1-4): 23-37.

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the area to Bhavani river. They also damage trees and other vegetation in the campus and affect banana and other crops in nearby farms.

18. Gaur (*Bos gaurus*): Small parties and solitary individuals stray into the area from Kaslar valley on the western side of the forest.

19. Sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*): The sloth bears rarely escape into the area from plantations and shola forests located in Mamaram area. They do not stay here.

Besides these animals three species of bats viz., the flying fox (*Pteropus giganteus*), short nosed fruit bat (*Cynopterus sphinx*) and Indian pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus coromandra*) are found here. The silk cotton trees in the campus are largely pollinated by bats mainly by *P. giganteus*. The rodent fauna include Indian mole rat (*Bandicota bengalensis*), bandicoot rat (*Bandicota indica*), house rat (*Rattus rattus*), Indian gerbille (*Tatera indica*), metad (*Millardia meltda*) and field mouse (*Mus booduga*).

The three striped squirrel (*Funambulus palmarum*) is the only squirrel inhabiting the area. The flying squirrels which inhabit the evergreen forests of Mamaram area and Longwood shola

up on the hills are absent here.

The Forest College and Research Institute campus and associated forest area form a vital part of the corridor for elephants and chital within the Nilgiri biosphere. The expansion of human activities, laying of trench on the western side of the campus, increased traffic vehichlar on Mettupalayam - Kotagiri road pose serious threat to these animals particularly elephants. The man-elephant conflict is on the increase on the eastern and south eastern side of the forest where the crop raids are a common affair.

Reference

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