

in Collaboration with Kerala Forest Research Institute, and Kerala Forest Department.

Sarcogyps calvus: Reported in Anon. (1993) Birds of Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary: A survey report. Nature Education Society, Trichur (NEST) in Collaboration with Kerala Forest Research Institute, and Kerala Forest Department.

Esacus recurvirostris: This species is reported from Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary, not from the KAU campus.

Circus aeruginosus*, *Himantopus himantopus*, *Sterna acuticauda*, *Motacilla cinerea* and *Ficedula parva: Many thanks for pointing out the errors in the status of these species.



NOTE

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ANALYSIS OF NESTING MATERIAL IN BIRD NEST BOXES

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Seven wooden nest boxes for birds each of 20x22x25cm dimensions with an opening of 5.6cm diameter were installed on 30 October 2001 on different trees in Punjab Agricultural University Campus, Ludhiana (30°56'N & 70°52'E). The study aimed to understand the acceptance and adoption of wooden nest boxes by birds. Only one of the nest box installed on the Indian Coral tree *Erythrina indica* was occupied by Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* and Spotted Owllet *Athene brama* at different durations over a period of two years. The nest box was emptied out first on 25 May 2002 and again on 31 March 2003 to examine and weigh the nesting materials gathered by Common Myna and Spotted Owllet after their respective periods of nest box occupation.

The nesting material in the nest box collected by Common Myna could be divided into three types: plant components, synthetic matter and bird feathers. Plant material was the predominant component, as it constituted 310g in weight out of 350g of total nesting material. Plant matter was in the form of small to large-sized dry leaves, grass blades, twigs and seed pods. Dry leaves were identified and were found to be that of *Eucalyptus* sp., *Melia azaderach* and *Callistemon* sp., while the seed pods were of *Albizia* sp. A small quantity of crushed unidentified plant material was also observed. The synthetic material collected from nest box was 36g. It consisted of polythene pieces, paper, plastic, and toffee wrappers. The bird feathers in the nest were of its own. Ali and Ripley (1983) had reported that the Common Myna's nest is a collection of twigs, roots, paper and rubbish in a hole, which is similar to what was

found in the nest during this study.

This nest box was emptied out the second time after nine months occupation by Spotted Owllet and its contents were noted down. Two types of components, animal matter and soil/compost were found in the collected material. Animal matter comprised of animal remains like integuments, shell, wings, limbs, bones etc. The insect remains belonged to the orders Coleoptera, Odonata and Lepidoptera. Other remains were of molluscs (*Lymnaea acuminata*), and of a lizard *Hemidactylus* sp. Live animals included *Camponotus* sp. (Hymenoptera; 8 individuals), *Callosobruchus maculatus* (Coleoptera; 10 individuals) and unidentified spider (Class Arachnida; 6 individuals). Soil/compost (190g in weight) collected from the wooden nest box was dry, dark brown and finely granular with no trace of live worms, parasites or nematodes. The presence of soil/compost in the nest box could not be attributed to the regurgitated pellets, hence it remains to be verified. Kumar (1985), and Jadhav and Parasharya (2003) had not reported any soil/compost in the nest during their study on Spotted Owllets. Ali (1996) had stated that nesting related material of Spotted Owllet consisted of untidy pads of tow or fibres.

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