

BHOJ WETLAND WINTER BIRD COUNT 2019-20

A Count Report

BWBC
2019-20

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BHOPAL BIRDS
Committed to save nature



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Organized By:
BHOPAL BIRDS CONSERVATION SOCIETY, BHOPAL

Collaboration :
REGIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, BHOPAL
(A Regional Centre of National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi)
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India
&
VNS NATURE SAVIOURS, BHOPAL
(A Nature Club of VNS Group of Institutions)



SARUS CRANE
Grus antigone
©Bhopal Birds

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Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and CPA for their kind support.

Also thanks to Dr. Sanjay Shukla, IFS, APCCF-IT, Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, Mrs. Kamalika Mohanta, IFS, Director, Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal, Mr. Ashok Kumar Jain, Asst. Director, Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal for their kind involvement to made it success .

Published By: Bhopal Birds Conservation Society

**Compiled & Designed By: Mohd. Khalique, Founder & CEO
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*Copies of this publication are available from
Bhopal Birds Conservation Society
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Through fears and flight I fly my flight ,No
walls for me, No vigil gates, No flags.

THE MIGRANT BIRD- Famida. Y. Basheer



FOREWORDS

Birds are so common in most habitats, we often overlook their ecological significance. Their ecological role are incredibly important and humans can benefit montarily through the many actions of birds. Birds contribute the four types of services recognized by the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment-provisioning, regulating, cultural, and supporting services. In this review, we concentrate primarily on supporting services, and to a lesser extent, provisioning and regulating services. As members of ecosystems, birds play many roles, including as predators, pollinators, scavengers, seed dispersers, seed predators, and ecosystem engineers.



Pest control, seed dispersal pollination and scavenging the carcase of animals come under regulating and supporting services. Eggs, meat, nests, feathers and fertiliser drawn from birds come under provisioning services. Whereas the cultural services cover recreational, artistic and religious role, bird watching, photography etc .Conserdering the ecological services of birds, we should make a drive to conserve the birds from various threats like habitat loss, hunting, poaching, captive tranporatation of birds etc. Awarednes programmes/ activities will be helpful in the field of bird conservation like bird watching, photography, identification of local birds, prapration of check list, lecture on different role of birds in ecosystem etc .

Wish you all the best for bird conservation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manoj Kumar Sharma'.

Dr. Manoj Kumar Sharma
Scientist-C & in-Charge,
Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhopal

Wetlands are a complete ecosystem which support huge biodiversity. They are integral part of environment. Many more species of plant and animals are dependant on it .They are vital for human survival by providing them various ecosystem services as fresh water supply , food ,building material, biodiversity , flood control, ground water recharge and mitigation of climate change.

A large number of bird species dependent on these wetlands .They spend their life cycles on them which provides habitat, food ,shelter, breeding and nesting ground. At least 12% of all globally threatened birds dependent on wetlands which are specially ponds and lakes.

Madhya Pradesh is very rich in avian diversity with existence of more than 450 birds species. Bhoj Wetland is the largest manmade lake of Asia situated in Bhopal the capital of Madhya Pradesh .It is the only Ramsar site of the state and also designated as IBA(Important Bird Area).It has been recorded about 250 birds species including more than 100 species of migratory birds.

Counting of birds is not only scientific study of birds but it is also a important tool of awareness and conservation of birds. It provides various information about bird diversity, population dynamics in response to environmental change ,The Bhoj Wetland Winter Bird Count 2019-20 is a citizen science initiative with combination of different streams of people as students ,corporates , local community, birders , govt. officials and researchers.

I Hope this count will help in develop understanding among people about our avian diversity and sensitize them for conservation of birds and our wetlands.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Rajgir'.

Dr. Sangeeta Rajgir
Founder & Member Secretary
Bhopal Birds Conservation Society,
Bhopal

“Joy of the journey cannot be found at the end of journey, it must be experienced during the journey”. VNS Nature Saviour started its journey towards conservation of biodiversity with the objective of germinating a sense of responsibility towards nature in the hearts and minds of budding professionals in the society. Here at VNS, we along with our students of various professional courses established Nature Club with this very objective in 2018. This ongoing journey of our Nature Club has been a wonderful learning for all of us. Although, VNS Group of Institutions, Bhopal is situated just next to Ramsar Site, Bhoj wetland, we were largely unaware of its importance in terms of conservation of biodiversity of central India. With active support and expertise sharing from Bhopal Birds Organization we started learning about migratory birds, their habitat and challenges in preserving their habitat for this annual migration. Our volunteers organized bird watching and identification activities, awareness campaigns in nearby villages. We provided artificial nests for bird nesting in college campus, identified trees for nesting, and ensured their optimum numbers for healthy biodiversity in college campus.

Now, equipped with fundamental scientific understanding of birds and their habitat, we along with Bhopal Birds and RMNH, conducted bird counts at Bhoj wetland. Around 150 species of migratory and terrestrial birds were identified and counted; many of these were seen for the first time by most of us.

I believe our journey will achieve its deserving goals but I never imagined that the way to our destination will be so enlightening. VNS Nature Saviour is reinforced to bring positive change in the outlook of the society towards biodiversity for conservation and passing it on to next generation in even better shape.



Dr. D.K. Swami

Dr. D.K. Swami,
Group Director,
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Common Kingfisher
Alcedo atthis
©Akshat Bhargava

1. INTRODUCTION



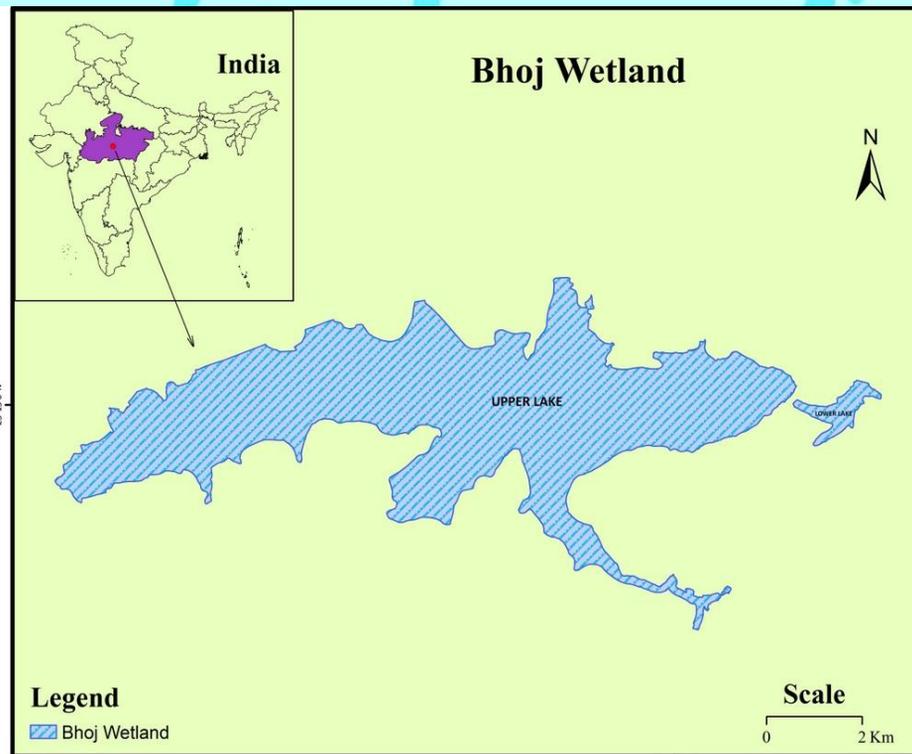
Brown-headed Gull
Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus ©Bhopal Birds



Ruddy Shelduck
Tadorna tadorna
©Bhopal Birds

The avian diversity of Bhoj Wetland is quite unique. But surprisingly no comprehensive bird count was done till date. This year Bhopal Birds Conservation Society, Bhopal in association with Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhopal (RMNH) and VNS Nature Saviours, VNS Group of Institutions conducted a comprehensive bird count with technical experts/scientists. This time, we aimed to explore a large section of Bhoj Wetland. This count covered avian diversity of Bhoj Wetland, Bhopal found in wetland as well as terrestrial area. Rare, Endangered and Threatened (RET) bird species, niche of the particular species, migratory birds population etc. also covered in this count.

2.SITE DISCRPTION



The Upper lake is very rich in biodiversity, particularly resident and migratory birds, macrophytes, phytoplankton, zooplankton, both natural and cultured fish species, insects, reptiles and amphibians.

Bhoj Wetland comprises two contiguous man-made reservoirs, the "Upper Lake" and the "Lower Lake". The Upper Lake was created by Raja Bhoj in the 11th century by the construction of an earthen dam across the Kolans river, and the Lower Lake was constructed nearly 200 years ago, largely from the overflow of water from the Upper Lake. Both the lakes are urban waterbodies, located in the fast growing city of Bhopal, the state capital of Madhya Pradesh

Bhoj Wetland was designated as a Ramsar site in November 2002. Total Area of the wetland is 31Km². The Upper Lake is surrounded by Van Vihar National Park on the south, human settlements on the east and north, agriculture fields on the west. The Lower Lake is surrounded by human settlements on all sides. The Upper Lake is a major source of potable water for Bhopal.

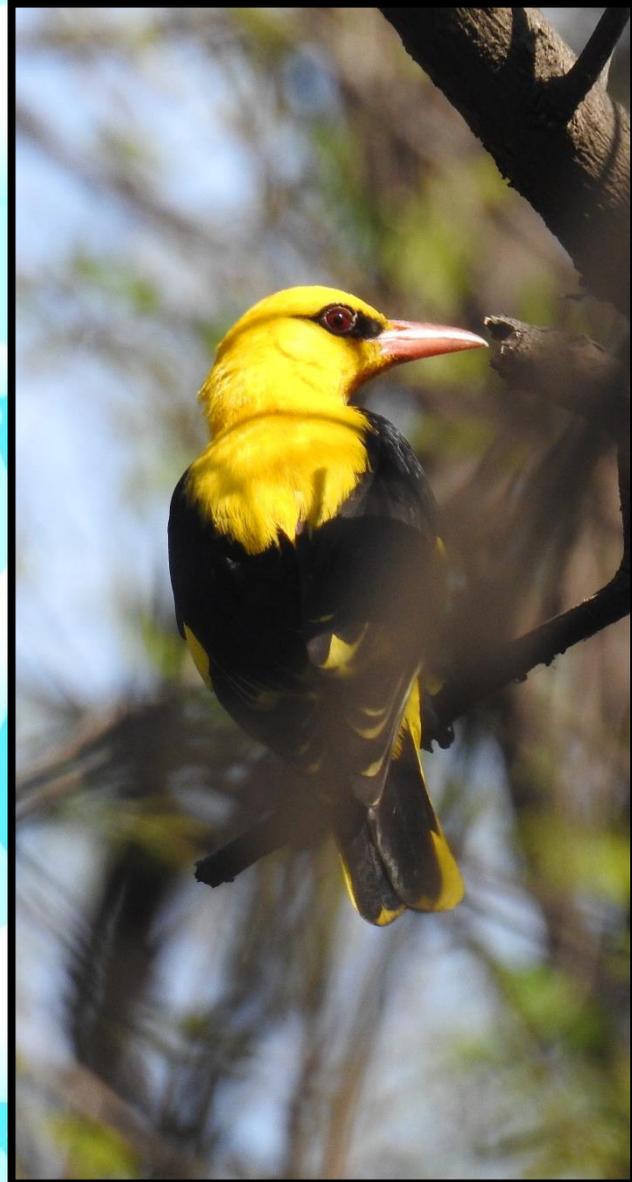


Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*
©Bhopal Birds

A management action plan has been implemented since 1995, with financial support from the Government of Japan. As part of this management plan, to follow up the impact on birds, 18-month study was undertaken in 2000-01, which helped in documenting the avifauna of the site. During this study, more than 20,000 waterbirds (A4iii criteria) were recorded. A belt of deciduous forest, with cliffs and steep contours towards the south eastern boundary comprises Van Vihar National Park. The greater part of the long western and southwestern peripheries of the site is covered with a mix of semidesert and secondary scrub, semi-arid grassland, arable land, improved pasture land, and perennial crop cultivation and forestry plantation.

3. AIM & OBJECTIVES

1. To know the estimated winter birds population in Bhoj Wetland , Bhopal .
2. To Know the RET species found in the site
3. To prepare a complete checklist of the site
4. This information was used to determine the likely risk of impact on birds and local bird conservation from the proposed development of the bhopal city, and to recommend precautionary measures , compensation of habitats or mitigation to prevent harm on birds , if necessary.



Indian Golden Oriole *Oriolus kundoo*
©Bhopal Birds



4.METHODOLOGY

Count was conducted in optimal weather conditions (Dry , with little/ Moderate wind) and during the peak migratory season (December & February). The duration of count was approximately four hours.

Count was undertaken on the 8th December, 2019 and 2nd February, 2020 within 4 hours of dawn when territorial behavior is usually at its peak.

Total of 20 Kms. distance is covered by foot and vehicle . All birds seen or heard were recorded on a plan along with any significant behavior.



Wolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*
©Aksaht Bhargava

5.CENSUS DESIGN

The count was conducted in a participatory manner with observers drawn from among the expertise of birdwatchers across the country. Total 225 people from 5 states were selected for both count and took part.

The survey was designed to cover all parts of Bhoj Wetland (Upper & Lower Lake).Count across the area was ensured by dividing the entire area into 5 Zones. Participants were divided into 5 teams Each team had a experienced resource parsons.

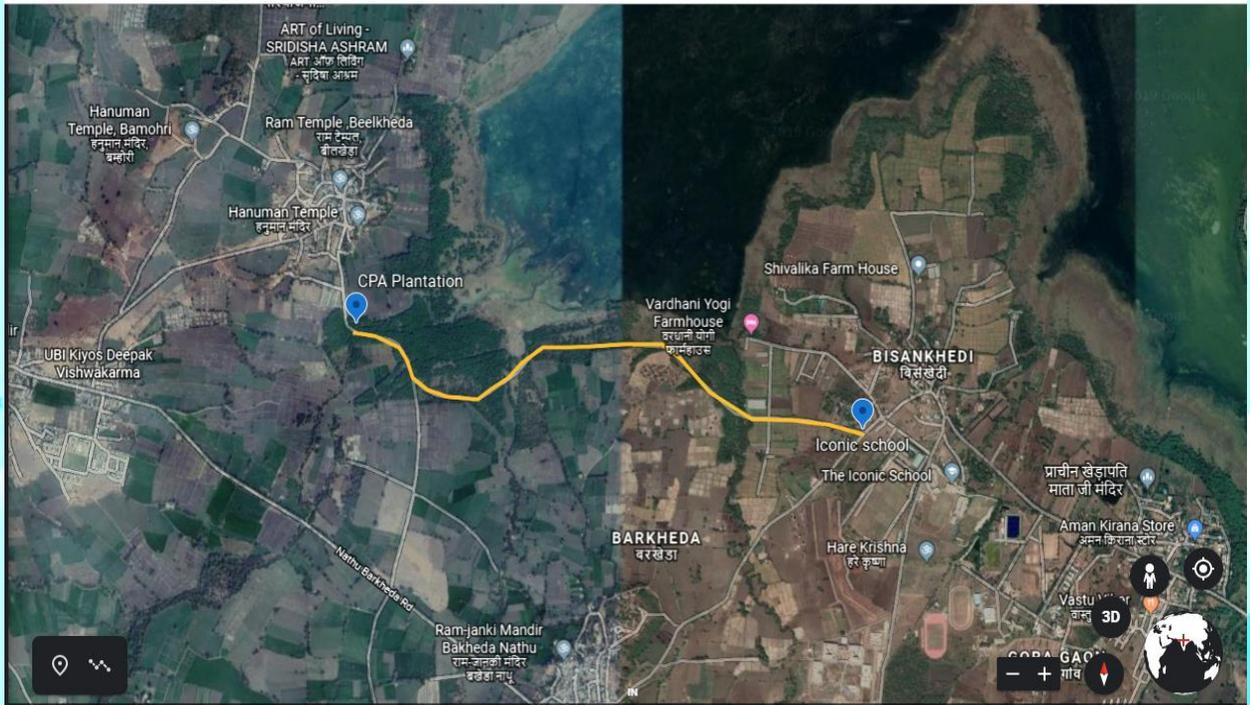
Pre workshop on count techniques and identification of avian species is organized for selected participants on 7th December,2019 and 20-22 January ,2020.



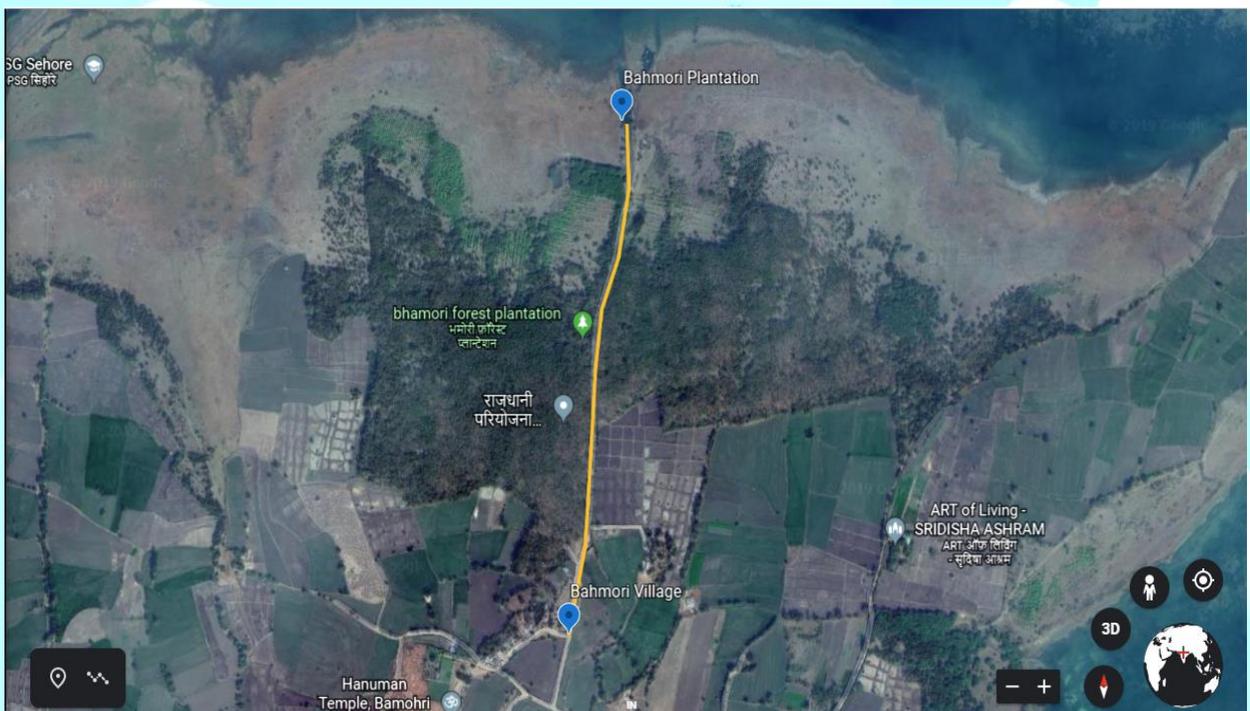


Pied Bushchat
Saxicola caprata
©Akshat Bhargava

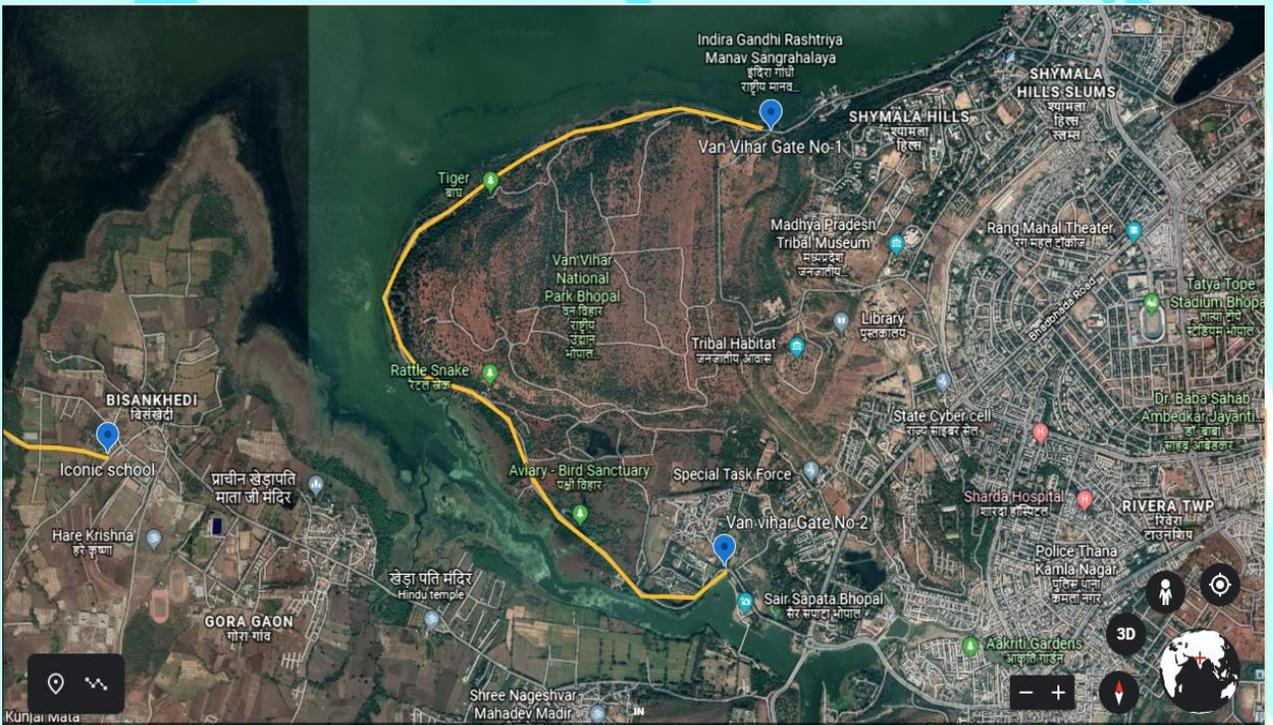
6.CENSUS ROUTES



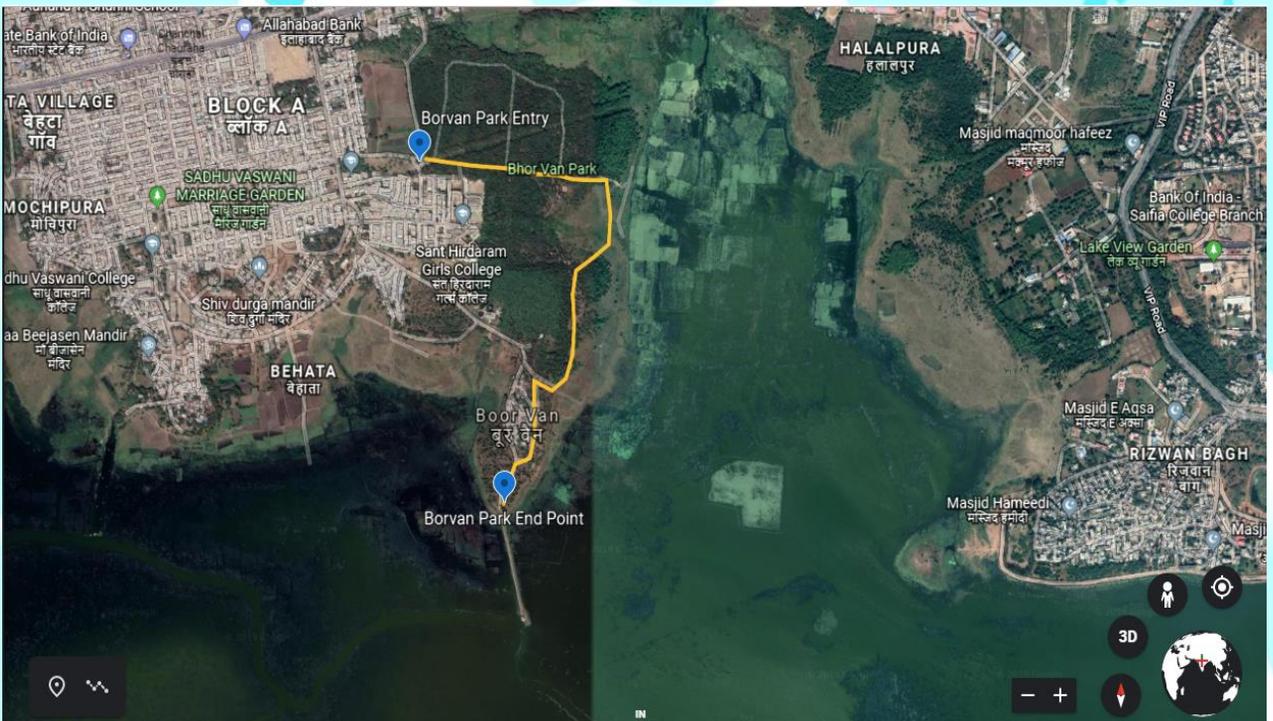
Route No.1 – Iconic School to CPA plantation



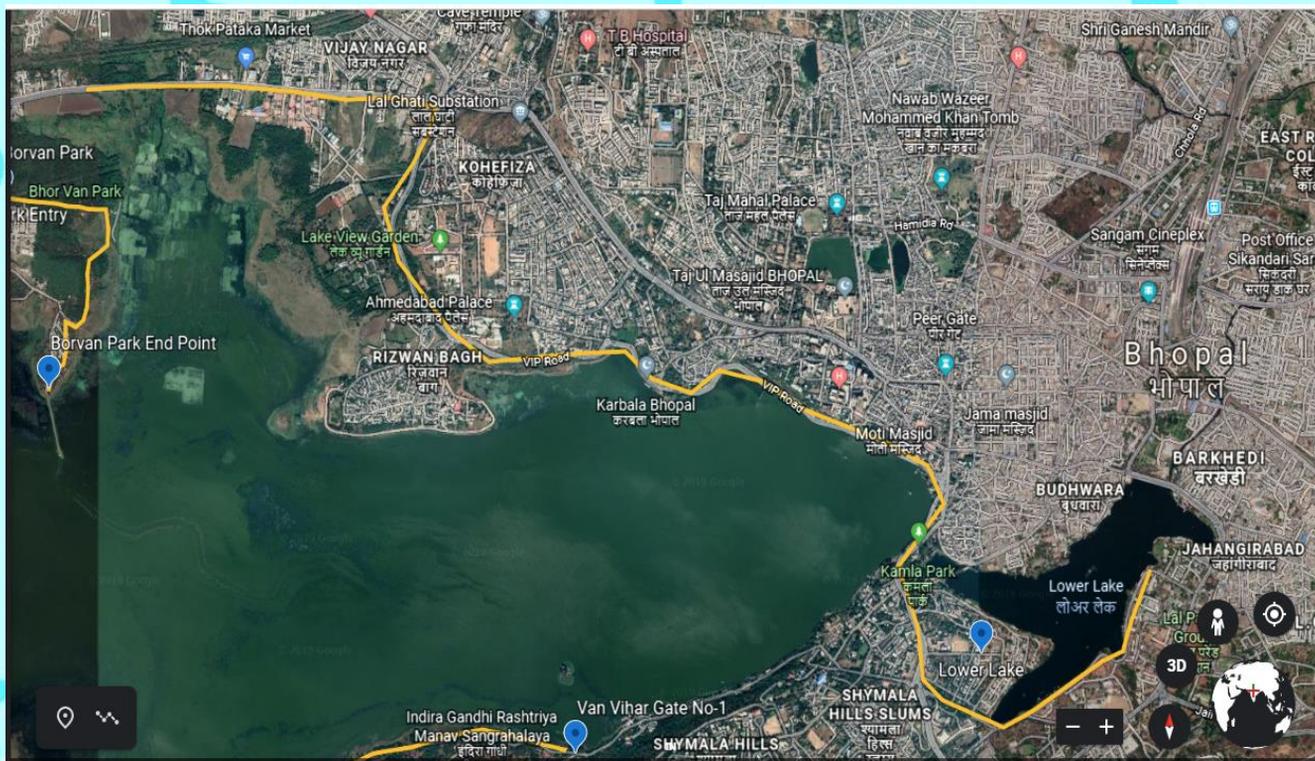
Route No.2 – Bhamori Village to Bhamori Plantation



Route No.3 – Van Vihar National Park National Park Gate No.2 to Gate No.1

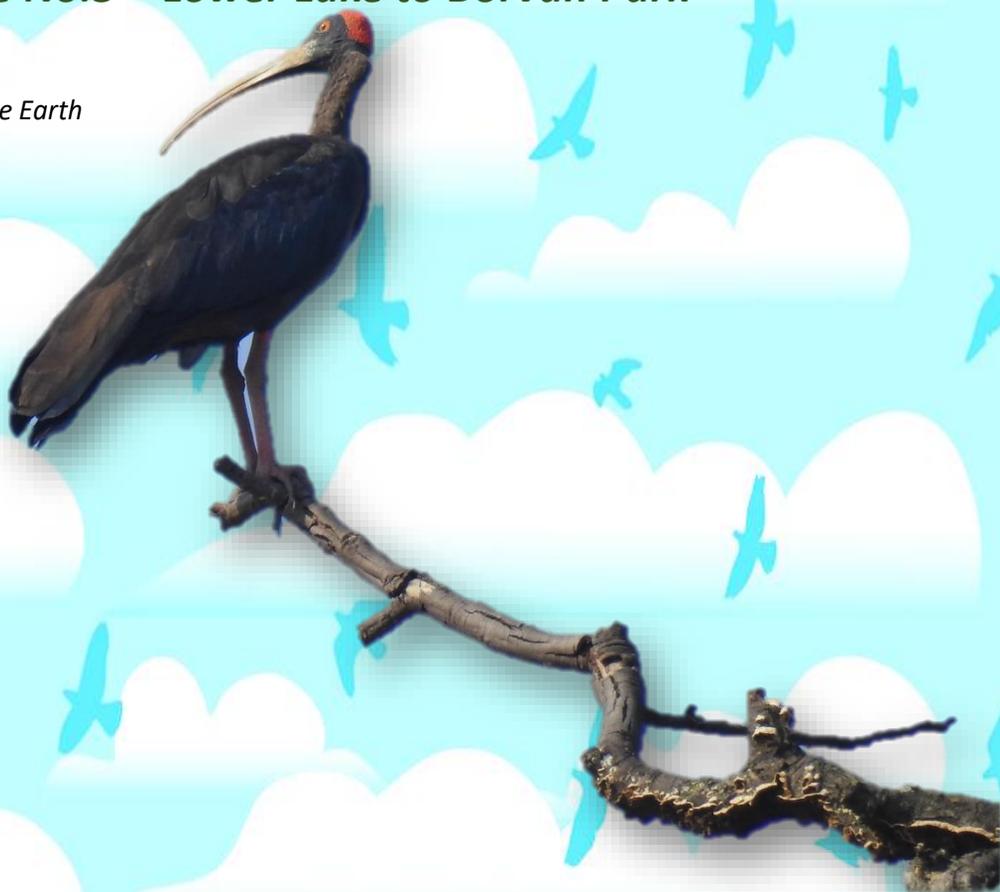


Route No.4 – Borvan Park, Sant Hirdaram Nagar



Route No.5 – Lower Lake to Borvan Park

Images captured by Google Earth



7.SUMMARY OF CENSUS

Sr. no	Name of Species	Scientific Name	BWBC 8 th December 2019	BWBC 2 nd February 2020
1	Babbler Common	<i>Turdoides caudatus</i>	-	✓
2	Babbler Large Grey	<i>Turdoides malcolmi</i> or <i>Argya malcolmi</i>	✓	✓
3	Babbler Jungle	<i>Turdoides striata</i>	✓	✓
4	Barbet Coppersmith	<i>Xantholaema haemacephala</i> or <i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>	✓	✓
5	Bee-eater Little Green	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓	✓
6	Bittern Black	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>	-	✓
7	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	✓	-
8	Bulbul Red-vented	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	✓	✓
9	Bunting Black-headed	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	✓	-
10	Bunting Red-headed	<i>Emberiza bruniceps</i>	✓	-
11	Buzzard Oriental Honey -	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	-	✓
12	Chat Common Stone	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>	✓	✓
13	Chat Pied bush	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>	✓	✓
14	Chat Brown Rock/Indian Chat	<i>Cercomela Fusca</i>	✓	-
15	Chiffchaff Siberian	<i>Phylloscopus [collybita] tristis</i>	✓	✓



16	Cisticola Zitting	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	✓	-
17	Coot Eurasian	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓	✓
18	Cormorant Great	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓	✓
19	Cormorant Little	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	✓	✓
20	Crane Sarus	<i>Antigone antigone</i>	✓	✓
21	Crow House	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓	✓
22	Crow Large-billed	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	✓	✓
23	Cuckoo Indian	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>	✓	-
24	Darter Oriental	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>	-	✓
25	Dove Spotted	<i>Spilopelia suratensis</i>	✓	✓
26	Dove Eurasian Collared	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓
27	Dove Laughing	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
28	Dove Oriental turtle	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	✓	-
29	Dove Red Collared (Red Turtle Dove)	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>	-	✓
30	Drongo White-bellied	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	-	✓
31	Drongo Black	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓



Wolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*
©Aksaht Bhargava

32	Duck Ruddy Shelduck (Brahminy Duck)	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	✓	✓
33	Duck Ferruginous	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	-	✓
34	Duck Indian Spot-billed	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>	✓	✓
35	Duck Knob-billed (Comb)	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>	-	✓
36	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	-	✓
37	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	-	✓
38	Duck Lesser Whistling-	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	✓	✓
39	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	-	✓
40	Eagle Greater spotted	<i>Clanga clanga</i>	-	✓
41	Egret Cattle	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓
42	Egret Great	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓	✓
43	Egret Intermediate	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	✓	✓
44	Egret Little	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓
45	Fantail White-browed	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	-	✓
46	Flamingo Greater	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	✓	-
47	Flycatcher Asian Brown	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i> (<i>daurica</i>)	✓	-



Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*
©Aksaht Bhargava

48	Flycatcher Red-breasted	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	✓	-
49	Flycatcher Taiga (Red throated Flycatcher)	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	✓	-
50	Flycatcher Tickell's Blue	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>	-	✓
51	Flycatcher Ultramarine	<i>Ficedula superciliaris</i>	-	✓
52	Flycatcher Verditer	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>	✓	-
53	Francolin Grey	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i>	✓	✓
54	Goose Greylag	<i>Anser anser</i>	-	✓
55	Gull Black-headed	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	✓	-
56	Harrier Eurasian Marsh	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓	✓
57	Heron Black-crowned Night	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓	-
58	Heron Grey	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓
59	Heron Indian Pond	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓	✓
60	Heron Purple	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓	✓
61	Hoopoe Common	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓	✓
62	Hornbill Indian Grey	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>	✓	-
63	Ibis Black headed	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	✓	✓
64	Ibis Glossy	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	✓	✓
65	Ibis Indian Black (Red-naped Ibis)	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	-	✓
66	Iora Common	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	✓	✓
67	Jacana Bronze-winged	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>	✓	✓
68	Jacana Pheasant-tailed	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	✓	✓
69	Kestrel Common	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	-	✓
70	Kingfisher Common	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓	✓
71	Kingfisher Pied	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	✓	-

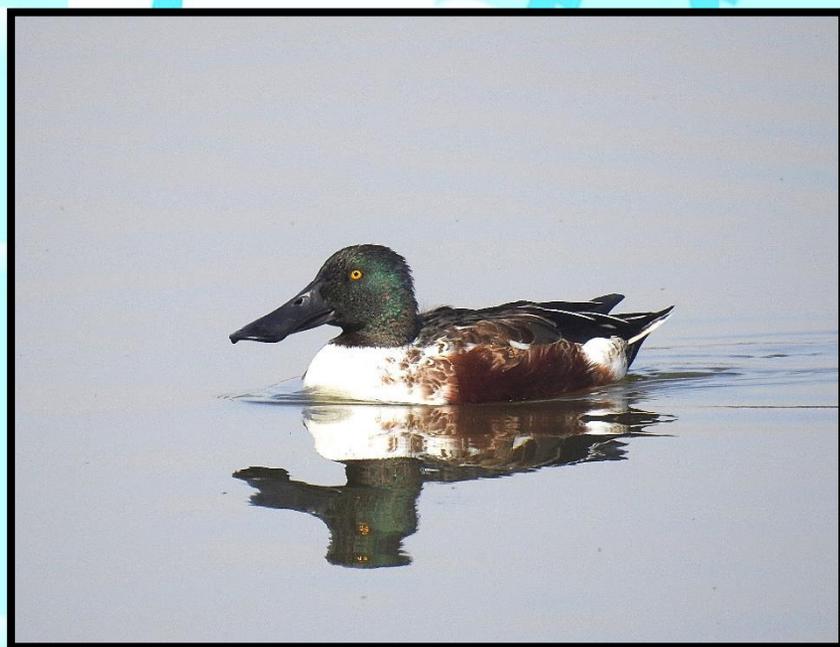
72	Kingfisher White-throated (White Breasted Kingfisher)	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	✓	✓
73	Kite Black	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓
74	Kite Black-winged (Black Shouldered Kite)	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	✓	-
75	Koel Asian	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>	-	✓
76	Lapwing Red-wattled	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓	✓
77	Lapwing Yellow-wattled	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>	-	✓
78	Lark Ashy-crowned Sparrow-	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>	✓	-
79	Lark Rufous-tailed	<i>Ammomanes phoenicura</i>	✓	✓
80	Martin Dusky Crag-	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>	-	✓
81	Martin Plain	<i>Riparia pauldicola</i>	✓	-
82	Minivet Small	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>	✓	✓
83	Monarch Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	✓	✓
84	Moorhen Common	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓	✓
85	Munia (Red Avadavat)	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	✓	-
86	Munia Black-headed	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	-	✓
87	Munia Silverbill Indian	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>	✓	✓
88	Myna Common	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	-
89	Oriole Indian Golden	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i>	✓	✓
90	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	-	✓



Black-headed Bunting
Emberiza melanocephala ©Bhopal birds

91	Owlet Spotted	<i>Athene brama</i>	✓	-
92	Parakeet Rose-ringed	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	✓	✓
93	Parakeet Plum-headed	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	-	✓
94	Peafowl Indian	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	✓	✓
95	Pigeon Rock	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	
96	Pipit Paddyfield	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	✓	✓
97	Pipit Tree	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	✓	-
98	Plover Little Ringed	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	-	✓
99	Pochard Red-crested	<i>Netta rufina</i>	-	✓
100	Pochard Common	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	-	✓
101	Prinia Grey-breasted	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>	✓	✓
102	Prinia Plain	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	✓	-
103	Prinia Ashy	<i>Prinia socialis</i>	✓	✓
104	Redstart Black	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	✓	✓
105	Robin Indian or Indian Black	<i>Copsychus fulicatus</i>	✓	✓
106	Robin Oriental Magpie-	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	✓	✓
107	Roller Indian	<i>Coracias b. benghalensis</i>	✓	✓
108	Sandpiper Green	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	✓	-
109	Sandpiper Marsh	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	✓	✓
110	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	✓	✓
111	Shrike Bay-backed	<i>Lanius vittatus</i>	✓	✓
112	Snipe Common	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	✓	-
113	Sparrow House	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓
114	Sparrow Yellow-throated (Chestnut Shouldered Petronia)	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>	✓	✓
115	Starling Asian Pied (Pied Myna)	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	-	✓
116	Starling Brahminy (Brahminy Myna)	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>	✓	✓

117	Stilt Black-winged	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	✓	✓
118	Stint Little	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	-	✓
119	Stork Open-Billed or Asian-Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	✓	✓
120	Stork Painted	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>	✓	✓
121	Stork, Asian Woollyneck Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	✓	✓
122	Sunbird Purple	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	✓	✓
123	Swallow Barn	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓
124	Swallow Wire-tailed	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	-	✓
125	Swamphen Purple / Purple Moorhen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	✓	-
126	Alpine swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	-	✓
127	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	✓	✓
128	Swift, Asian Palm	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	✓	-
129	Tailorbird Common	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	✓	✓
130	Teal Common	<i>Anas crecca</i>	-	✓
131	Teal cotton or Cotton Pygmy-Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	-	✓
132	Tern Little	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	✓	-
133	Tern River	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>	✓	✓
134	Treepie Rufous	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	✓	-



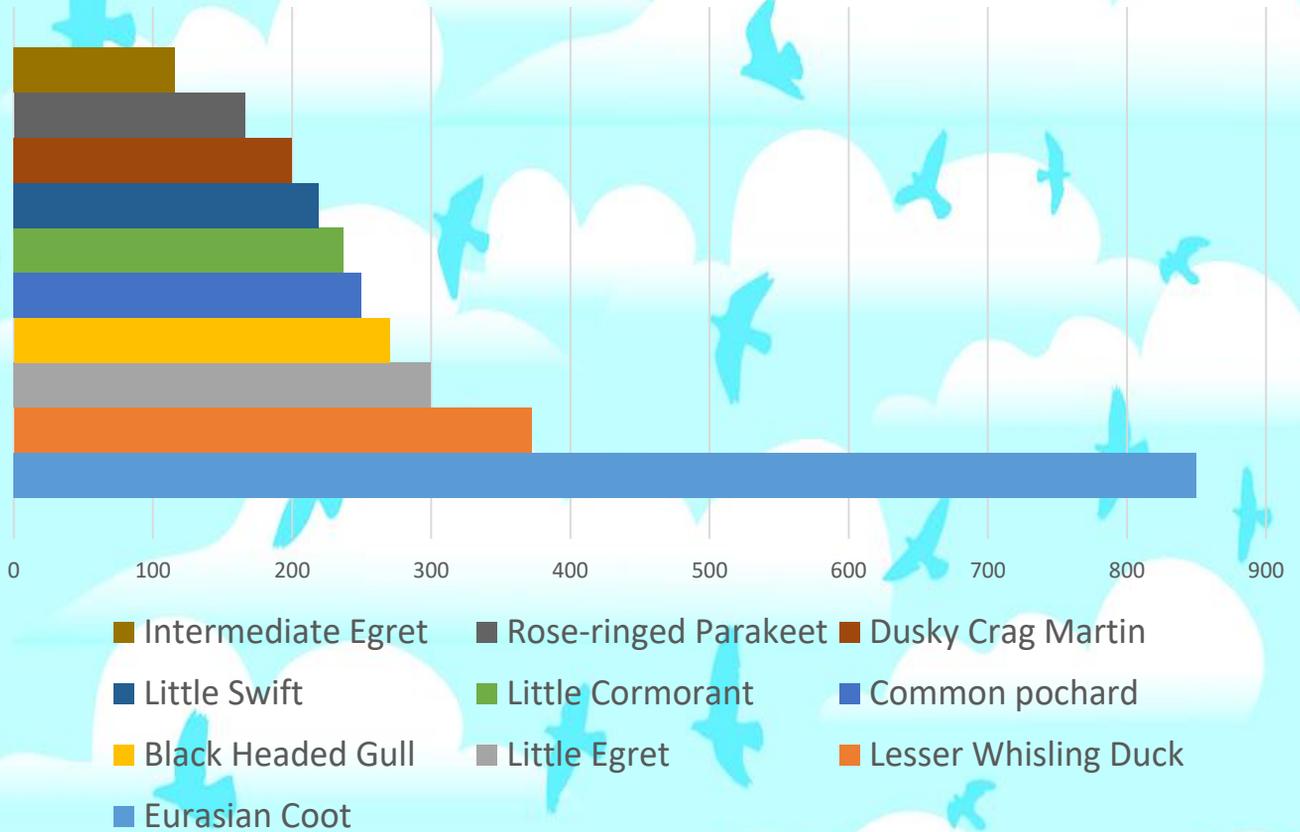
Northern Shoveler
Anas clypeata
 ©Bhopal Birds

135	Vulture Egyptian	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	-	✓
136	Wagtail Citrine	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	✓	✓
137	Wagtail White	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	-	✓
138	Wagtail White-browed (Large Pied Wagtail)	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>	✓	✓
139	Wagtail Grey	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	-	✓
140	Wagtail Yellow	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	✓	-
141	Warbler Blyth's Reed	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	✓	✓
142	Warbler Booted	<i>Iduna caligata</i>	✓	✓
143	Warbler Greenish	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	✓	✓
144	Warbler Sykes's	<i>Lduna rama</i>	✓	✓
145	Waterhen White-breasted	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	✓	✓
146	Weaver Baya (Indian Weaver)	<i>Ploceus p. philippinus</i>	✓	✓
147	White-eye, Oriental	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	✓	✓
148	Whitethroat Lesser	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	✓	✓
149	Wigeon Eurasian	<i>Anas penelope</i>	-	✓
150	Woodshrike Common	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>	✓	-
151	Wryneck Eurasian	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	✓	-



Flock of Birds
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Top Ten Species (As per total of both Count)



Sighting of Migratory Waterfowls (8th December,2019)

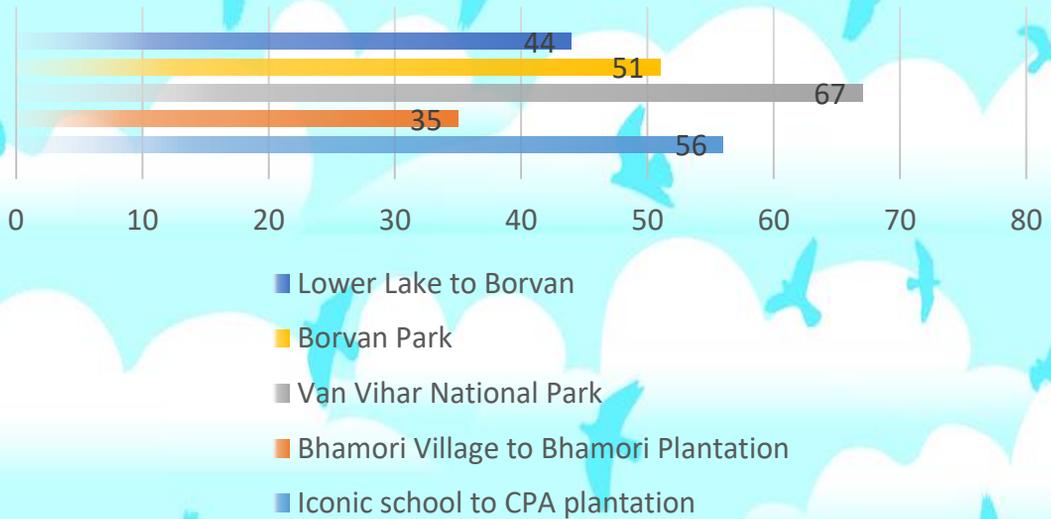


Sighting of Migratory Waterfowls (2nd February, 2020)

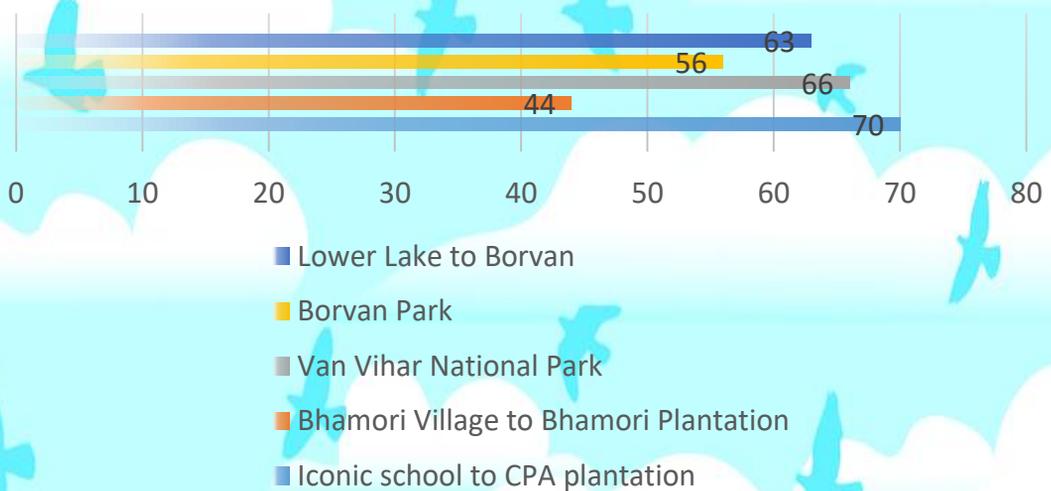


Number of birds species per Route

NUMBER OF BIRDS PER ROUTE 8TH DECEMBER , 2019

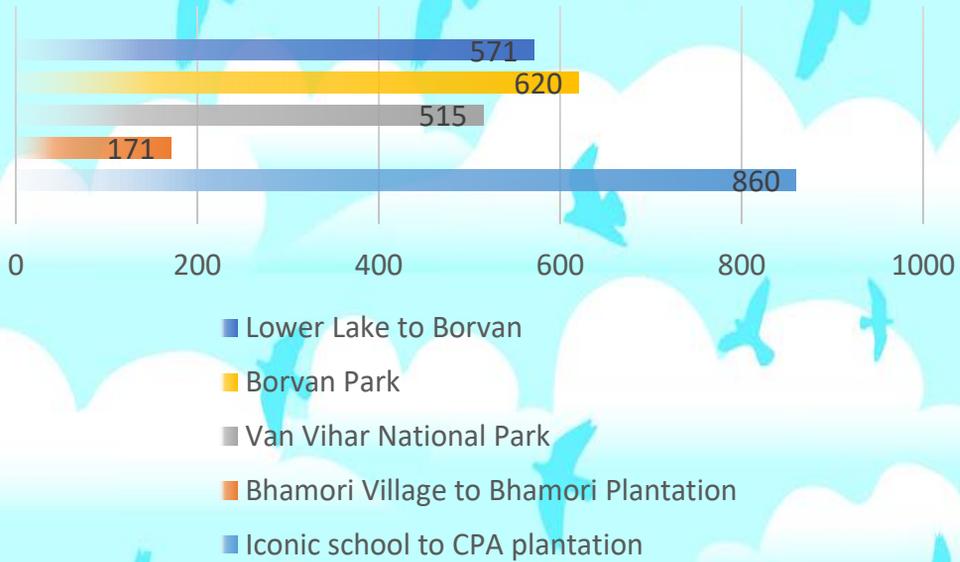


NUMBER OF BIRDS PER ROUTE 2ND FEBRUARY , 2020

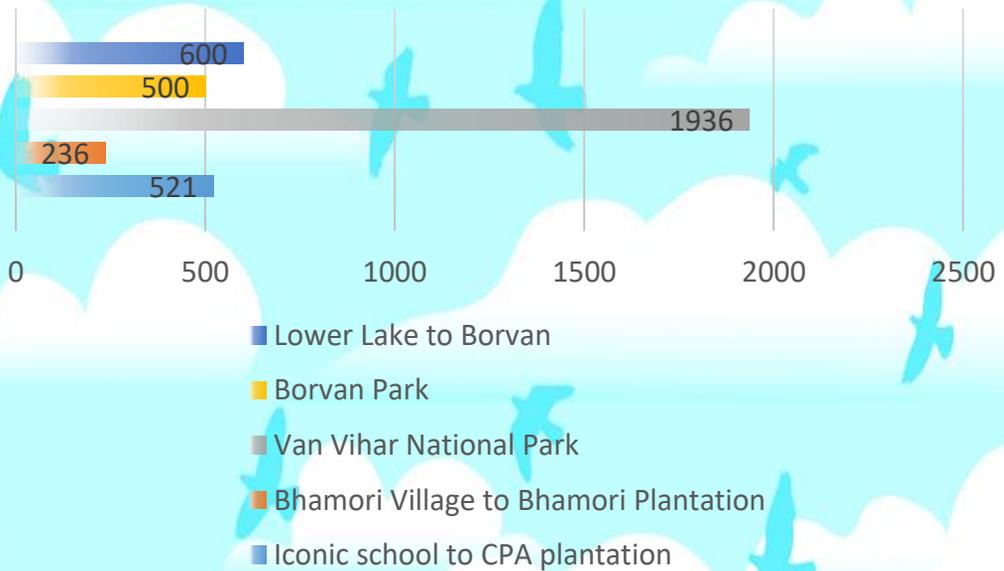


Population of birds species per Route

POPULATION OF BIRDS PER ROUTE 8TH DECEMBER, 2019



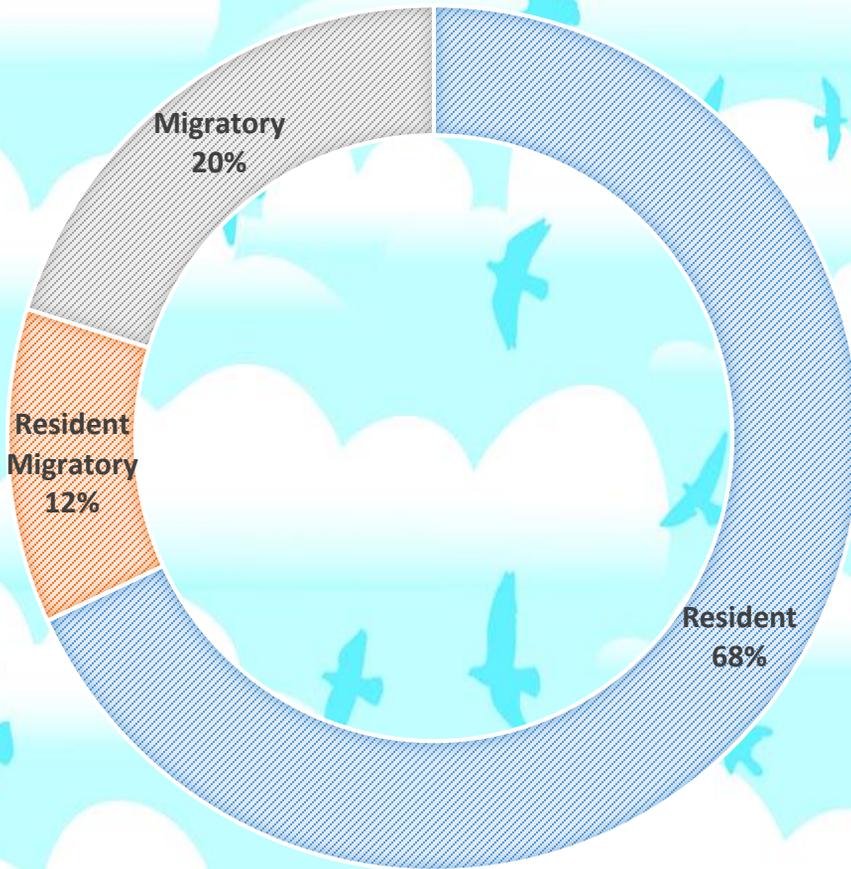
POPULATION OF BIRDS PER ROUTE 2ND FEBRAURY, 2019



Status wise percentage of Birds Species

8TH DECEMBER ,2019

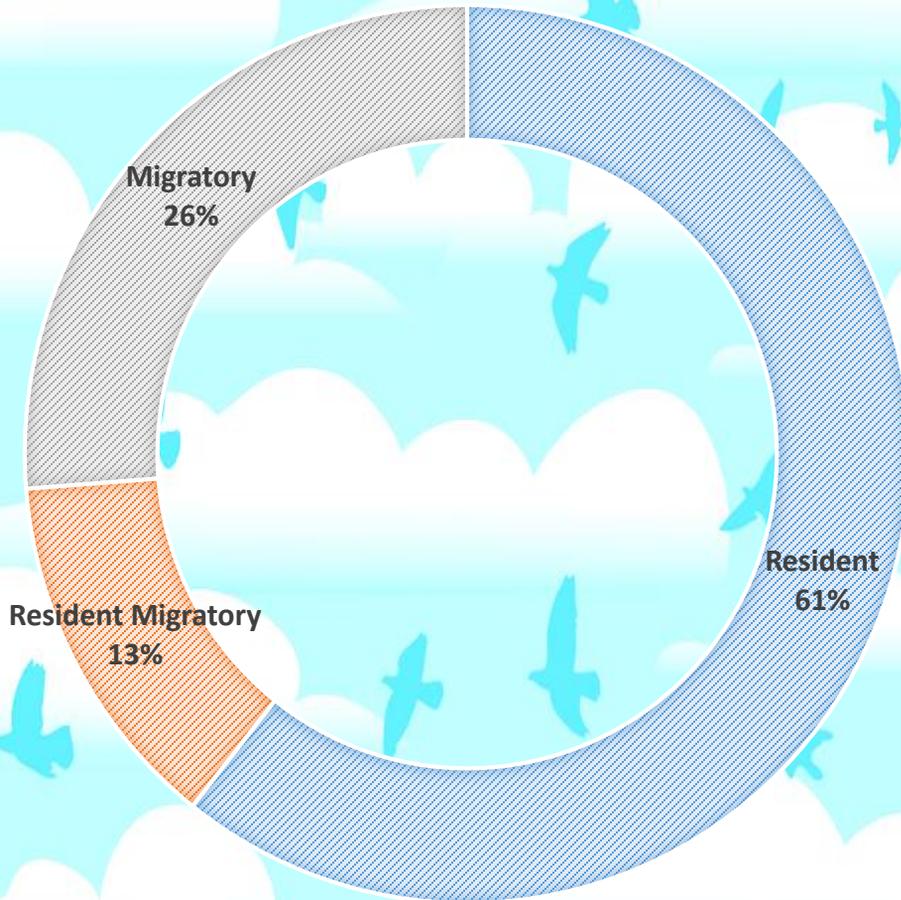
■ Resident ■ Resident Migratory ■ Migratory



Status wise percentage of Birds Species

2ND FEBRUARY, 2020

■ Resident ■ Resident Migratory ■ Migratory



Threatened Species Recorded

1.	Endangered	Egyptian Vulture
2.	Vulnerable	Common Pochard Sarus Crane Asian Wollyneck Stork Greater Spotted Eagle
3.	Near Threatened	Ferruginous Duck Painted Stork Black -headed Ibis Oriental Darter River Tern

* As per IUCN Category



Sarus Crane
Grus antigone
©Bhopal Birds

8. RARE SIGHTING



©Bhopal Birds

Common Name: Black Bittern

Scientific Name: *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

Range:

Found from the Indian subcontinent to southern China, Southeast Asia and northern Australia with some northern population wintering in Southeast Asia



Identification: Male has black upperparts, whitish throat, whitish breast with dense dark streaks, and yellow neck-patch. Female resembles male but has darker brown upperparts and more rufescent breast-streaks. Juvenile resemble female but feathers of the crown and upperside have narrow rufous fringes, giving a scaly appearance.

Sighting: Van Vihar National Park

Date: 2nd February, 2020



Bhopal Birds Conservation Society

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