

ENVIS Centre  
AVIAN ECOLOGY

# BUCEROS

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## BUCEROS

ENVIS Newsletter:  
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### ENVIS

ENVIS (Environmental Information System) is a network of subject specific centres located in various institutions throughout India. The focal point of the present 78 ENVIS centres in India is at the Ministry of Environment and Forests, New Delhi, which further serves as the Regional Service Centre (RCS) for INFOTERRA, the global information network of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to cater to environment information needs in the South Asian sub-region. The primary objective of all ENVIS centres is to collect, collate, store and disseminate environment related information to various user groups, including researchers, policy planners and decision makers.

The ENVIS Centre at the Bombay Natural History Society was set up in June 1996 to serve as a source of information on Avian Ecology and Inland Wetlands.

### ENVIS TEAM AT THE BNHS

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Cover: Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus*  
by Mr. Prasanna Parab

Cover design and Page layout: Divya Varier & Tejashree Nakashe, ENVIS, BNHS.

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# Public participation in conservation of birds

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### NATIONAL NEWS

## Public participation in bird ringing training workshop organized by the BNHS at Singhgad Valley, Pune



Photo: Divya Varier

A Bird Banding Training workshop was conducted by the BNHS, at Sinhgad valley of Pune, Maharashtra, from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The workshop was sponsored by Mr. B.G. Deshmukh, President, Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) from the Jayati Deshmukh Memorial Fund. The motive behind this workshop was to give a first-hand experience in handling and ringing birds, to BNHS staff, members and forest officials from the Pune region to create awareness among masses and involve them in bird ringing study.

An eight member team from BNHS led by Dr. S. Balachandran, Deputy Director, BNHS, was present at the banding venue from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The team members were Dr. P. Sathiyaselvam, Scientist, Bird Migration Studies, Mr. Sujit Narwade, Scientist-In-Charge, ENVIS Centre, Ms. Mirium Abraham, Conservation Officer, Ms. Divya Varier, Information Officer, ENVIS Centre, Mr. Vandan Jhaveri, Associate Programmes Officer, Programmes Department, Mr. Ali Hussain, Senior Bird Trapper and Mr. K. Sivamani, Field Assistant, BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, Point Calimere.

Ringing is an important tool in ornithological studies particularly in studying life histories, migration pattern and population dynamics of birds. Of the numerous techniques,

using mist nets is the most harmless way of trapping birds. Mist nets are hoisted on bamboo poles about 8-9 ft long. The bamboo poles are nailed along their lengths and the mist net is furled and stretched between two poles. Such arrangements are fixed at sites where birds can be caught in flight. Once a bird gets entangled in the net, it is freed carefully with a firm but sensitive grip called the Bander's grip, keeping in mind the safety of the bird.

Rings used are of negligible weight as compared to bird's body weight and the ring size varies according to the size of bird. There are nine different ring sizes currently being used, namely Z, A, AB, B, C, F, G, K and L arranged in the increasing order of size. Rings are mostly made of aluminum and are inscribed with a unique identification number and address of the nodal agency (in this case, Bombay Natural History Society).

Coloured plastic leg and neck bands are also used in large birds such as geese. The rings used are partially open and have to be carefully fitted onto the leg of the bird with help of pliers. The leg on which ring/ band is fitted also varies according to the year. The band is usually put on the left leg, if ringing is done during odd years (e.g. 2011, 2013 etc.), and on the right, if done during even years (2012, 2014, etc.).

Following is a brief summary of the activities carried out during the above mentioned workshop.

### First day

The BNHS team along with a local acquaintance made a brief survey of the Sinhagad valley surrounding the Sinhagad fort, Pune. The places where activity of birds was good and away from the predators' view were selected for installation of mist nets.

### Second day

The team visited the offices of the Conservator of Forests and Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial), Pune and informed them about the workshop. Mr. Adkar, Assistant Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Pune division and Mr. B.P. Jadhav, Range Forest Officer, Sinhagad area, expressed their support for the programme and also promised attendance of staff of the forest department. The team acquired some of the equipment required for banding like bamboo poles for setting up mist nets, crowbar, nails, etc., from the locals. Bamboo poles were set up at the selected places.



Red-breasted Flycatcher (male) was one of the migrant species ringed during the workshop. (Inset) Rings of various sizes are available according to the size of the bird (Photo: Sujit Narwade)

### Third day

Mistnets were put up on the bamboo poles. Participants including BNHS members as well as other bird enthusiasts were present early in the morning. Copies of *Indian Bird Banding Manual*, authored by Dr. Balachandran, and BUCEROS newsletter of ENVIS Centre were distributed among the participants.

Twenty one birds belonging to ten species were ringed on the first day. Of the ringed birds, a male Asian Paradise Flycatcher was the centre of everyone's attention. The delicate bird with its white body, black, crested head and overwhelmingly long, white tail feathers was a beautiful sight indeed. Other birds ringed included the Red-breasted Flycatcher, Indian Robin, Oriental Magpie-robin, Red-vented Bulbul, Ashy Prinia, White-spotted Fantail, Olive-backed Pipit and Jungle Babbler. Each bird's morphology was studied for their age, reproductive stage and moult. Besides, lengths of their wing, tail, tarsus and bill were also noted in a datasheet. The ringed birds were then



Dr. Balachandran, demonstrating the technique of bird ringing explaining it to the forest guards (Photo: ENVIS library)



Participants at the bird banding workshop (Photo: ENVIS Library)

released near the place of capture. Dr. Balachandran gave a brief talk to the participants regarding the work done by him in satellite tracking of migratory birds in India. Dr. P. Sathiyaselvam, who completed his doctoral studies under the guidance of Dr. Balachandran, also shared interesting results of the work he conducted during his study.

### Fourth day

The second day of the workshop, being a public holiday, had a good turnout of people. News about the workshop in local newspapers also helped in bringing bird enthusiasts to the venue. Some new species like the Indian Blackbird, Yellow-throated Sparrow, Spotted Dove, Common Rosefinch, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher and Red-whiskered Bulbul were added to our ringed birds list.

Mr. Adkar, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Pune, visited the workshop and enjoyed the experience thoroughly. Citing wildlife conservation to be the need of the hour, he opined that all forest staff should be encouraged to attend such training workshops because of their proximity to the forests and they can very efficiently stay vigilant and protect wildlife. He explained that people's appreciation will only increase when they observe wildlife at such a close range.

### Fifth day

Besides previous participants, about 40 forest staff from various divisions of Pune district attended the last day of the workshop. It was an entirely new experience for all of them. After understanding the process of bird ringing, they were eager to help in their own way to the cause. They also looked forward to more of such training programmes

in the future. The last day of ringing had Grey-breasted Prinia, Indian Pond Heron and Rufous Treepie as new additions to the total species ringed.

A total of 75 birds belonging to 23 species were ringed during the three days of the workshop as given in Annexure 1.

### Annexure 1: List of bird species ringed during the Bird Banding Training workshop, Pune

No.	Common Name	Scientific Name	No of Birds ringed	Status*
I)	<b>Order: Ciconiiformes</b> <b>Family: Ardeidae</b> Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	1	R
II)	<b>Order: Columbiformes</b> <b>Family: Columbidae</b> Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	3	R
III)	<b>Order: Passeriformes (no. of species 21)</b> <b>Family: Motacillidae</b> Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1	M
	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	2	M
	<b>Family: Pycnonotidae</b> Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	19	R
	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	1	R
	<b>Family: Laniidae</b> 'Rufous-backed' Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	3	R
	<b>Family: Muscicapidae (no. of species 12)</b> Asian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Tersiphone paradise</i>	3	M
	White-spotted Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albogularis</i>	7	R
	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus</i>	3	M
	Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	3	R
	Indian Black Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i>	3	R
	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	3	M
	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>	1	R
	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i>	6	R
	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>	6	R
	Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>	2	R
	Blyth's Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	1	M
	Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus</i> spp.	1	M
	<b>Family: Fringillidae</b> Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	1	M
	<b>Family: Passeridae</b> Yellow-throated Sparrow	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>	3	R
	<b>Family: Sturnidae</b> Brahminy Starling	<i>Temenuchus pagodarum</i>	1	R
	<b>Family: Corvidae</b> Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	1	R

\* Key: R - Resident M - Migrant

### Acknowledgment

First and foremost, we would like to thank Mr. B.G. Deshmukh, President, BNHS for initiating the idea of a bird banding workshop in Pune district and the Jayati Deshmukh Memorial Fund for providing monetary assistance for conducting this workshop.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Forest Department (Wildlife) and Territory division, Pune, for supporting BNHS throughout the banding workshop. Our special thanks to Mr. Adkar, Assitant Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Pune for encouraging the Forest staff to attend the workshop. We would also like to thank Mr. Rahul Rao, Foliage Outdoors, who helped us while surveying the Valley for sites suitable for trapping birds. Lastly we would like to thank all those who participated in the workshop.

## Workshop on Conservation of critically endangered Great Indian Bustard *Ardeotis nigriceps* through involvement of local people at Solapur, Maharashtra

Sujit Narwade, Divya Varier, Sagar Satpute and Tejashree Nakashe



Photo: Dr. Devrukhkar

### Introduction and background

The flagship species of Indian grasslands – Great Indian Bustard (GIB) has been recently uplisted from endangered to critically endangered category because of its rapidly declining population and habitat loss (BirdLife International 2011, Dutta *et al*, 2010). This species can be saved from extinction only with support and participation of the local people. For ages, the people residing in bustard habitat have co-existed with the birds and there are clear signs of revival of this sustainable relationship. In Maharashtra Great Indian Bustard was recorded from various parts such as Nanded, Aurangabad, Ahmednagar and Pune. Nannaj, Mardi, Akolekati, Vadala and adjoining area are the only places in Maharashtra where the population of GIB has been found continuously over the last three decades.

A rapid status survey of the GIB in Wardha, Chandrapur, Warora and Yeotmal districts of Vidarbha regions was undertaken in September 1975, pursuant to the directive from Government of India for occurrence of bustards, to assess the habitat of GIB in Maharashtra and to recommend improvisation measures for the study of ecology of some endangered species of wildlife and their habitats carried out by BNHS with support of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1979, State Government of Maharashtra declared 7818.47 sq. km. area as Bustard Sanctuary, under Section 18 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The area is spread across three talukas each of

Ahmednagar (Newasa, Shrigonda and Karjat) and Solapur (Mohol, Karmala and Madha). Part of North Solapur was included afterwards. Successful increase in bustard population has been attributed to effective protection by Forest Department. Bustard population increased from 8-10 (1981) to 20-22 (1983) due to effective habitat protection by Forest Department. Areas under Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and Employee Guarantee Scheme (EGS) were found suitable for GIB conservation.

Study carried out by Dr. A.R. Rahmani, Project Coordinator ENVIS Centre and Director, BNHS in 1981-84, 1991-94 and 2003-04 suggested that instead of having a large unmanageable area, the Sanctuary can be divided into guarded walled grassland plots of 100 ha each and provided with strict vigilance. The existing plots of core area at Nannaj and adjoining areas constitute 636 ha, with intervening private land, some revenue land and village roads. If 434 ha land is purchased by the Forest Department near core area only, a compact block of nearly 1070 ha would be available for bustard protection. And remaining areas can be managed as buffer zone where all the activities such as traditional farming can be allowed.

The Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary, Nannaj, Maharashtra has been declared as an Important Bird Area (IBA) in 2004 because of holding the considerable population of this



Great Indian Bustard is regularly seen at Nannaj Bustard area where a residential project "Dreamland" was planned. Top: Bustards seen in 2007. Above: Bustards seen in 2010 (Photo: Nature Conservation Circle, Solapur)

endangered bird. An illegal construction activity observed near core area of Nannaj bustard area lead to a ban on sale deed activities in entire area under Sanctuary in year 2007. The area under Sanctuary covers hundreds of villages and many cities in more than 8400 sq km of land including both, private as well as government undertakings.

In the meeting of 2007, Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife has again suggested central government to realign the area under Sanctuary excluding villages and private areas for better management. Mumbai High Court put a ban on all the real estate and land acquisition activities in Solapur city as well as the surrounding villages of the bustard Sanctuary till the realignment of the Sanctuary area. It was initially decided by National Board for Wildlife to keep 347 sq km area under protection but later on changed to 1222 sq km.

This pending decision affected the functioning of revenue, irrigation, town planning, land selling and overall administration process of Solapur district. Even local leaders were helpless on conservation issues as they did not wish to go against the villagers and lead to negative awareness about the GIB conservation. It was found that sometimes developmental activities were given green signal

by the forest department while sometime it was stopped in between as local people as well as concerned authorities from Sanctuary area were unaware about the exact area to be retained under the proposed rationalization of boundaries.

Many local people now think that the development of Solapur is affected by policies introduced for GIB conservation and unstable stand of the concerned authorities for development of canals and four lane national highway. For land acquisition people are either reluctant to give their land or demanding high compensation on basis of proposed developmental projects such as National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) project at Fatatewadi and airport at Boramani, Solapur district.

Rate of conversion of grassland into croplands has been significantly increased in last couple of years. Value of non agricultural land in Solapur has been boosted due to real estate development. People were not willing to provide the information about GIB due to rumours such as government is going to relocate many villages to increase the area of the Sanctuary.

The current manpower at forest department of Maharashtra is inadequate to monitor the movement and behavior of the bustards, as most of the time is spent in carrying out administrative work. For example - they have to face people for compensation cases of hunting sheep and goats by wolves as well as crop-raiding by blackbucks. In non protected areas the bustard conservation problems are more difficult. The increase in agricultural area, urbanization, mining, growth of villages, changes in agricultural practices, increase in irrigation facilities, etc. are playing crucial role in local extinction of GIB.



Mr. Sujit Narwade, Scientist-In-Charge, ENVIS Centre, welcoming Shri A.K. Adkar, ACF, Wildlife (Pune) division and Dr. Jagdish Patil, District Collector, Solapur (Photo: ENVIS Library)

An alarm was raised by the ENVIS Centre in 2008 and urgent need to involve local people in GIB conservation was discussed (Narwade & Fartade, 2008). Based on the reports from local volunteers, decline in GIB population was observed by ENVIS staff which was also informed to Forest Department of Maharashtra in August 2010. In a recent census carried out by the Forest Department in September 2010 only nine bustards were counted.

### Organization of a workshop

Therefore ENVIS Centre of BNHS took the initiative of organizing a workshop on GIB conservation with the support of Indian Bird Conservation Network (IBCN) and the Forest Department (Wildlife), Pune, in Solapur on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011, where various issues regarding GIB conservation were discussed from various angles. The workshop included an interactive session on the expectations of local people in context of bustard conservation, which was arranged under the guidance of Dr. Jagdish Patil, District Collector, Solapur. More than 70 participants including forest department staff, birdwatchers, lawyers, students and teachers from Solapur, Akkalkot, Barshi, Mohol and North Solapur talukas as well as villagers from Nannaj, Mardi and Narotewadi were present at the workshop.

### Participation of local people

In his welcome address, Sujit Narwade, Scientist in-Charge, ENVIS Centre at BNHS, highlighted the need for further participation of local people in GIB conservation. According to him the bustards have been surviving for generations because of support from local people. However, in the current situation the bird needs collective efforts from every Solapurkar. According to local villagers such as Shri Patil from Mardi village, GIB is a very rare bird and unlike Blackbuck, is not harmful to farmers. Villagers regretted the protests made by them in the past against

GIB Sanctuary under negative influence. Another villager from Nannaj, Mr. Tatyka Kade, who has lost land to the GIB Sanctuary, requested the people to treat GIB as their child and said that if locals are unable to protect the bird, it would be shameful.

### Rationalization of Sanctuary boundaries

The vast expanse of the existing GIB Sanctuary in Solapur district, spanning several talukas has been a very controversial issue for long. According to Shri R K Adkar, Assistant Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Pune issues like rationalization of boundaries of protected areas need involvement of people and considerable time. The Forest Department (Wildlife), Pune is also in favor of reducing the Sanctuary area for its better management. The final decision is yet to come from the Supreme Court, which may come in near future. Participants expressed their concern over the pending decision of rationalization of boundaries of the Sanctuary, because of which locals are facing problems in sale deed activities, as there is confusion over exactly how much area will remain in the proposed Sanctuary boundary. Developmental work such as construction of canals and road widening of national highways has been stalled, affecting livelihood of villagers.

Dr. Jagdish Patil, District Collector, Solapur also said that the issue of reducing the Sanctuary area was misinterpreted. He made a proposal of giving comparatively good land in the benefited zone of Ujani dam of Solapur to those, whose lands may be acquired. Based on his administrative experience he urged the participants to think that government represents them and without their participation GIB Conservation Programme will not become sustainable. He emphasized on the fact that man has encroached the bustard's area and hence it is his responsibility to provide them an alternative habitat. It is also important to reserve a part of the land for bustard



Representatives of farmers from Mardi (left) and Nannaj (right) areas of Solapur explaining their views at the GIB workshop (Photo: ENVIS Library)



Dr. Jagdish Patil, District Collector, Solapur, a staunch supporter of the idea of community conservation, addressing the workshop participants (Photo: ENVIS Library)



conservation. Another issue that needs to be solved while rationalizing the Sanctuary boundary is that making NA (Non Agriculture) clearance possible to private lands in the vicinity in order to create livelihoods where required.

### Involvement of others

All stakeholders in the region need to be involved. Raju Kasambe, Project Manager, IBA-IBCN Programme of BNHS, highlighted the work of Important Bird Area (IBA) Programme and Indian Bird Conservation Network (IBCN) in networking bird lovers. Bhagavat Mhaske, one of the forest staff based in Nannaj, shared his experience of GIB conservation over the past 25 years. Mr. Balasaheb Lambture, a student representative, expressed the need for a series of workshops to be conducted at regular intervals. Educationists also expressed their support to bustard conservation. Dr. M.M. Fartade, Principal, Shri Shivaji College, Barshi and Dr. V. Metan, Orthopedist and an active Rotarian, Solapur, pledged their support for bustard conservation and to carry forward this message. According to Dr. R.B. Chincholkar, HoD, Mass Communication & Journalism department, Solapur University, the media should be involved in a way that is useful for all, from children to senior citizens. He discussed the importance and scope of media in the mission of conservation. Dr. Pramod Patil of GIB foundation, Pune emphasized on how modifications in farming practices such as use of organic fertilizers, traditional cropping patterns etc. and proper habitat management can help in bustard conservation.

According to Mr. Pratik Talwad from Barshi, representative of a local NGO and other volunteers, it is important to develop good communication network of all bustard lovers of the area. Some local field assistants such as Mr. Sarang Mhamane and Mr. Shivkumar More shared their experiences of assisting researchers working on Wolf, Fox and Blackbuck projects being carried out at GIB Sanctuary, Solapur. Mr. Pankaj Chindarkar reported sighting of GIB in Mangalvedha area which does not come under GIB Sanctuary and emphasized on importance of non protected areas in GIB conservation. Advocate I.B. Patil from Mardi, Adv. Shekhar Tonpe from Nannaj and Adv. Vinod Survase from Solapur informed about how the issue of getting NA (Non Agriculture) clearance due to rationalization of Sanctuary area is affecting real estate business of Solapur. They requested the concerned authorities to resolve the issue urgently without any delay. Mr. Saurabh Deshpande, a student of law, discussed legal aspects of GIB conservation that included understanding details of the Sections and Acts under which GIB has been protected. He explained how hunting has been defined under Section 2 and sub-clause 16 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972,

and discussed Sections 18-34 that carry details about the declaration of protected areas.

### Concluding remarks

Finally all participants of the workshop demanded urgent action be taken on rationalization of boundary of GIB Sanctuary in consultation with the local people as they are the actual stakeholders. A demand for lifting the ban on sale deed activities and NA clearance from all non protected areas as soon as possible, was made. Developmental activities shall get clearance on priority basis as it affects the livelihood of the local people. To ensure that these demands are met, continuous dialogue and follow-up was deemed necessary between all local bustard lovers, villagers and Forest Department as well as research institutes such as BNHS.



The board suggests sighting of GIB to be a glimmer of hope for the remaining grassland habitat at Nannaj Bustard area, Solapur (Photo: ENVIS Library)

### Acknowledgment

We would like to thank Indian Bird Conservation Network (IBCN) for providing financial support to this workshop. Our sincere thanks to the staff of the Forest Department, Solapur for providing logistics required for the workshop. Our special thanks to Mr. M.K. Rao, Conservator of Forests, and Mr. R.K. Adkar, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Wildlife, Pune and Dr. Jagdish Patil, District Collector, Solapur, for their encouraging support.

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### Local forest logging stopped – Mutulanganga IBA in Zambia

Commercial logging in Mutulanganga Important Bird Area (an IBA) in Zambia has been stopped through community pressure with the help of the *Zambian Ornithological Society* (BirdLife Partner). Mutulanganga Important Bird Area (IBA) is a Local Forest Reserve in Southern Zambia that has a sizeable area of mopane woodland. Mopane is a very hard wood and grows on soils which few other trees will tolerate – namely clay, or in the shallow sand that covers clay. When mopane woodland is felled, mopane scrub will succeed it. The root system remains intact, but there is the risk of grasses and fire taking over. Normally mopane woodland does not burn as the grass cover is discontinuous, but after felling this can change. The forest protects the headwaters of the Mutulanganga, Bendele, and Lusitu rivers that flow into the Zambezi River and in so doing acts as protection from the severe impacts of flash floods and gully erosion on the agriculture land and surrounding villages.

Mutulanganga IBA is one of the areas in which the *Zambian Ornithological Society* (ZOS) is working, and was selected as an IBA on the basis of holding many Globally Threatened Species and Biome-restricted Species. It is also an important area for the *Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia* (WECSZ) as the Mutulanganga Forest helps to protect the Namoomba Elephant Corridor, thus providing sanctuary and foraging areas for the regional elephant population and other large mammals such as hippos. The forest is also a significant area of biological diversity which is important to keep intact for Zambia's future generations.

In April 2010 the Fly Dragon Wood and Lumber Company, was awarded a timber logging concession in Mutulanganga IBA on condition that the Environmental Project Brief (EPB) was approved. The Project Brief named the target species as Mopane with the goal of harvesting 40 trees per day. At full operation the project expected to create "10 or more" jobs in the community. The company submitted an EPB to the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ) and ZOS immediately lodged an objection. ZOS also sought help from WECSZ and other environmental NGOs to support the objection to the timber logging. Due to this pressure ECZ called for the Fly Dragon Wood and Lumber Company to do a full Environmental Impact Assessment on the area.

The Tonga people, who lived in this area, were trans-located to make way for Lake Kariba. ZOS has been implementing a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project to promote community based eco-tourism and biodiversity

conservation. The project aims at improving the livelihoods of the people living in the area by initiating small scale funding for fishing and farming projects and developing the craft industry in the area through an organized marketing system.



The mopane woodland of Mutulanganga IBA of Zambia  
(Photo source: [www.wattledcrane.com](http://www.wattledcrane.com))

The project is financing the construction of an eco-tourism camp site which will be able to fund the community for future developments. Subsequent to the rejection of the EPB, BirdLife Africa arranged funding for ZOS for some Advocacy work and a Cost Benefit Study. ZOS arranged for Mike Bingham, one of Zambia's top ecologists, to do an initial survey of the biodiversity in the area. ZOS has also been working with the local community to help them understand the long term effects of logging in the forest.

A full EIA was duly submitted by the logging company and in December 2010 it came up for review. Once again ZOS and WECSZ together with other environmentally minded organizations and NGOs submitted full objections to the project. Now the EIA has been rejected by the Environmental Council and the Fly Dragon Wood and Lumber Company has been stopped from logging in the Mutulanganga Forest and adjacent area.

**For more details:** <http://www.birdlife.org/community/2011/01/local-forest-logging-stopped-mutulanganga-iba-in-zambia/>

## Villagers check fall in adjutant stork population

An endangered Greater Adjutant Stork *Leptoptilos dubius* has found a green ambassador in popular actress Prastuti Parashar who will be interacting with local villagers and school children at Dadara on its remarkable conservation endeavour through community participation.

Dadara has been witness to a unique saga of villagers stepping in to prevent the downward slide of the Greater Adjutant Stork (*hargila* in Assamese) population. The habitat of the bird is now sacrosanct at Dadara, and apart from this, the local community's commitment is reflected in the efforts of the weavers who are busy spreading the message of conservation through the wonderful stork motifs on the traditional *gamosa* – a household item across the state.

Near about 800 Greater Adjutant Storks are left on the planet, which need people's support to survive. According to Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, awareness on the need to protect this unique bird is definitely growing with community participation. As the storks build their nesting colonies on trees grown on private land, the threat to their existence becomes greater and conservation efforts need active cooperation from the communities. Aaranyak started the conservation initiative at Dadara in 2009 with the objective of eliciting people's cooperation in protecting the nesting colonies of the birds spread over numerous treetops in the area.

The Aaranyak initiative is supported by the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP), UK. The CLP is a partnership of four organisations – Birdlife International, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Fauna and Flora International – working to promote the development of future biodiversity conservation leaders. Due to a sustained awareness campaign, the villagers at Dadara now take pride in the reality that their place is one of the last few bastions on the planet where this bird is thriving. They are aware that Dadara is an important spot on the map of global distribution of the Greater Adjutant Stork.



Greater Adjutant Stork *Leptoptilos dubius*  
(Photo: Clement Francis)

**For more details:** <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=mar0611/city05>



## USER FORUM

### Dear Readers,

You are welcome to contribute articles, photographs pertaining to avian ecology, in our subsequent newsletters. To strengthen our databases we would like to request you to send us literature which is not available on our website. Any queries related to avian ecology can be sent via email or post. Suggestions and feedback regarding our website and newsletter are welcome.

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### **BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Founded in 1883 for the study of natural history, the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) is now one of the premier research and conservation organisations in the country. The Society publishes a journal, the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, devoted to natural history and also has a popular publication, Hornbill, for the layman. It has also published a number of books on wildlife and nature. Its library has a large collection of books and scientific journals on wildlife and the environment. The Society's invaluable collection of bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian and insect specimens has been recognised as a National Heritage Collection.

Membership of the Society is open to individuals and institutions within India and abroad. For more details, please write to:

Membership Officer,  
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Hornbill House,  
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