Rising Population of Bronze Winged Jacana in Naregal Wetland of Haveri District

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Introduction

It is strongly believed that good knowledge leads to better conservation decisions and actions on the ground [1]. There is still a huge gap in our knowledge of the world’s water birds. This is highlighted in four important publications on Water bird population estimates by the Wetlands International. Many water bird populations are poorly known and for many more, knowledge of the population trends is lacking [2]. The Fourth edition Water bird Population Estimates (Wetlands International 2006) has detailed information on water birds. The Fourth Edition also gives crucial information necessary for the conservation of species, or population of a species. It also includes (a) Where individuals live (geographical distribution) (b) How many individuals exist (population estimates) and (c) Whether numbers are increasing, stable or decreasing (population trend).

The fourth edition also provides updated information on 878 species recognized by Wetlands International as water birds. This publication has contributed to wetland conservation policy at the international level by providing the authoritative basis of Criterion 6 of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, under which any site that regularly holds 1% or more of a water bird population qualifies as a Ramsar or IBA site under the Convention. This aspect also prompted me to make the observations for the presence of Bronze Winged Jacana at the wetlands in and around Haveri. As part of Minor Research Project entitled “A survey of birds in and around Haveri” sanctioned to KLE Society’s Gudleppa Hallikeri College Haveri, surveying the lakes of Haveri for the bird species is under progress since January 2014.

Study area: Naregal wetland (Figure 1)

Naregal, a large village in Haveri district had population of 1340 in 1881, which increased to 5196 in 2011 census. It is referred as Nareyalgol in inscriptions. Naregal is 20 km North East of Hangal and 19 km from Haveri. Haveri and Hangal are connected to some major towns of Karnataka state. Haveri is the nearest railhead. Naregal Village is in Bommanalli Hobli of Hanagal taluka. Registered Number of wetland is 324/2006-07. Catchment area is 5.88 sq km with water spread area of 115.74 hectare. It is artificially built for irrigation purpose.

Bronze Winged Jacana (Metopidius indicus) (Plate 1)

It is the only member of the genus Metopidius. The jacanas are a group of waders in the family Charadriidae, which are identifiable by their huge feet and claws which enable them to walk on floating vegetation in the shallow lakes that are their preferred habitat. They are found worldwide within the tropical zone. The Bronze Winged Jacana breeds in India and Southeast Asia. The Bronze Winged Jacana population recorded during the months of January to April from 2006 to 2013 and May to August of 2014 at Naregal tank is given in Table 1. Interestingly, it is not found in the neighbouring lake of Heggere.

Table 2 gives the Bronze Winged Jacanas observed in a few wetlands by ornithologists like Tawa reservoir of Hoshangabad district [3], Ponds and Lakes of Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary [4], Wetland habitats like Brahma Sarovar, Bohar Saidan Crocodile Sanctuary, National Fish Breeding Centre, Jyotisar, paddy fields and village ponds situated around Kurukshetra [5], Bhitarakani Mangarove ecosystem [6], Pench Tiger Reserve [7], Kundavada Lake [8], Aaneekere Man made wetland [9], Fifteen lakes in Greater Bangalore Metropolitan City [10], Puttanhalli Tank [11], Sakhya Sagar and Madhav Lakes [12],...
Lake in Central India for feeding, resting and roosting is due to the abundance of food such as macrophytes, macrobenthic organisms and fishes [19]. Accessibility to food resources and availability of exposed mudflats and shorelines of lakes provides an ideal location as a stopover site to the ducks and waders. During December, Naregal tank becomes dry and water is restricted to small pockets in the middle of the tank. This exposed mudflat may be one of the reasons for increase in the number of Bronze Winged Jacanas year after year.

Many reports which we observe are related to checklist of birds in different wetlands. But researchers need to find out birds occurrence status year after year. Such studies aim at providing the basic information of the avifauna for further studies related to biodiversity.

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