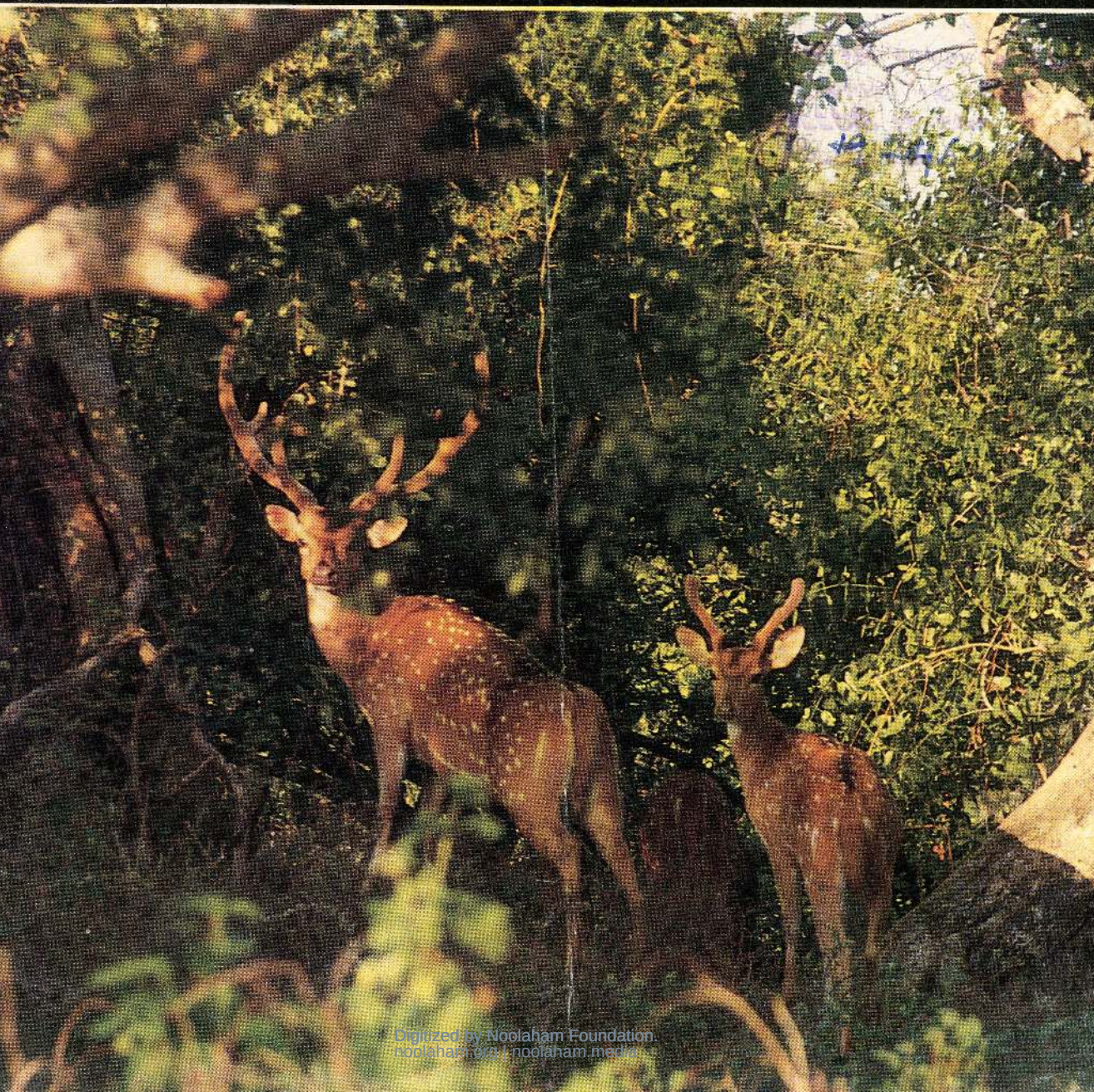


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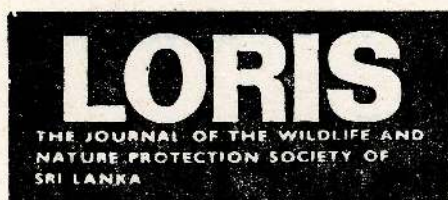


THE JOURNAL OF THE WILDLIFE AND
NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

VOL. XVII!! NO. 4, DEC. 1989



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VOL. XVIII NO. 4, DEC. 1989

Hon. Editor
SIRANCEE GUNAWARDANA

Front Cover Photograph
DEER
LAL ANTHONIS

Back Cover Photograph
WHITE FOXTAIL ORCHID
PRASANTHA JAYASEKERA

The Editor invites literary contributions not only from members of the Society but also from the general public interested in wildlife natural history and conservation. Manuscripts should be typed with double spacing. Photographs should be black-and-white glossy prints. Drawings should be in Indian ink.

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Incorporated by Act No. 29 of 1968

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EDITORIAL

Today there is a greater realisation of the importance of ecosystems and the need to protect not only plants and animals, but the environment which sustains biotic communities and abiotic systems such as the biosphere. Nature protection has to envelope the inter-relationships within an ecosystem whether they are riverine habitats, wet forests, grasslands, mangroves, sea shores or dry zone habitats. Woodpeckers making nesting holes and insects which thrive on barks of trees, the lotuses in our ponds, rhododendrons in the Horton Plains, leopards in Wilpattu, and the little shrimps in the Negombo lagoon, the mangroves in Muturajawela, and the sea urchins and coral are all part of the biotic diversity of Sri Lanka and occupy an important niche in our ecosystem and need to be looked after and so must the soil, the sand on our beaches, the water in our streams and rivers, and the air we breathe. We need to have a thorough grasp of the inter-relationship of ecosystems and the balance in Nature, when we plan for the development of our country.

Over-exploitation of our natural resources is harmful. Conservation, however, does not imply non use of natural resources but it means protecting natural resources which form the main supply for future use for the wellbeing of man. The central government as well as the

provincial councils should have a grasp of the need to conserve for the future of the nation and formulate policies for forest conservation, soil conservation, water-management and the conservation of flora and fauna which are an integral part of man's environment and foster programmes which will maintain a natural ecological balance. The nation does not have to choose between improving the environment through conservation on the one hand and development on the other. We can have both if the need for conservation is properly understood and integrated into development projects. Growth and survival are both essential. Conservation is the scientific foundation for the future. Cutting trees and burning firewood and polluting the air adds to the carbon dioxide concentration even though in a miniscule way to the world's dilemma of a 'green house' effect which adversely affects global climate. While we increase productivity and bulldoze vast areas to provide agriculture and housing for our people, it is imperative that we steer away from opportunism and the destructive impact of human activity and foster corrective measures for the future, with vision and foresight. We should preserve ecosystems and conserve them. The responsibility lies squarely with us. Unless we act with foresight to maintain environmental balance and biological diversity, future generations will look back on our stewardship with dismay.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE ENDEMIC REDLIP GOBY

Sicyopus jonklaasi

— M. A. Kalum Nalinda

The Island of Sri Lanka supports a rich and varied freshwater fish fauna. Sixty six species of freshwater fishes are known from Sri Lanka at present. While most of the freshwater fishes of Sri Lanka also occur in India, many are endemic to Sri Lanka. Of the true freshwater fishes, 28% are endemic to the Island. The family Gobiidae may be introduced as a medium-sized species of freshwater fish.

Family - Gobiidae - Members of this family are commonly known as Gobies. The Body is normally robust, not much compressed, rather elongate and scaly; sometimes naked with feeble fin spines. Pelvic fins and fully united to form a feeble sucking disc. They have two separate dorsal fins; the first dorsal fin has 5—6 feeble spines. No lateral line is present. Mouth is usually large, with small canine teeth. The bodies of many are coated with thick mucus so as to be slimy. Some are indeed among the smallest of living vertebrates, the adult being less than an inch in length.

FRESHWATER GOBIES IN SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka this family is represented by four species, two of which are endemic, belonging to four genera. They are *Glossogobius giuris*, *Gobius grammepomus*, *Sicydium halei* (endemic) and *Sicyopus jonklaasi*. (endemic)

This paper is the result of observations and field work carried out by me in the rain forest area of Sri Lanka since 1988.

SICYOPUS JONKLAASI

Structure - Long and subcylindrical body, typically scaly. Head is slightly dorsoventrally

flattened. The region behind the dorsal fin is laterally flattened while the rest of the body is subcylindrical. Eyes are placed laterally high on the head and are relatively small. The snout is blunt. Mouth is large and ventrally with thick lips. This fish has large curved canines in both jaws. The mouth parts are supposed to be an adaptation for scraping material from the surfaces of the rocks. Pelvic fins and fully united to form a sucking disc (fig. 2), of the two separate dorsal fins; the first is with 5 feeble spines. The Pectoral fin is large and round (fig. 3). The free edges of the dorsal and anal fins are wavy and round. The total length is 44.6 mm. This specimen was collected from a fast flowing stream in Nachchimale on 20th August 1988.

Colour - Generally the body colour of the adult is olive. The olive colour is intense on the dorsal side and gradually becomes lighter or takes a greenish - white colour towards the ventral side. The ventral region from the head to the pelvic sucker is white and the interior edge of the pelvic sucker is red. Males are darker, and have a red upper lip and caudal peduncle. The body has few light yellow patches or bands. The colour of all the fins take shades of light yellow to light green. Spines of the first dorsal fin is black in colour. Rays of the second dorsal fin is lighter in colour and has 2—3 black markings on them. The caudal fin has 3 vertical black bands. The female is much lighter and the upper lip is black in colour. In the female a black stripe runs laterally along the middle of the body from the upper lip to the tip of the caudal peduncle.

Habitat and Ecology — The REDLIP GOBY is found in very fast-flowing, larger streams in the mid hill country, with a substrate of pebbles, boulders and bed rock. It is a bottom-living fish found in both deep (2m.) and shallow (15 cm.) waters. It is abundantly found in rock pools. It is also found resting on rock boulders close to the surface of the water. The preferred substrates are bed rock and boulder on to which the fish clings, moving only short distances. This fish is also found in rock holes in the stream where the force of the water is less.

Sicyopus jonklaas is often found in association with the following fresh water species; *Garra lampta*, *Danio malabaricus*, *Schistura notostigma*, *Gobius grammepomus*, *Sicydium halei*, *Rasbora vaterifloris*, *Belontia signata* and *Barbus asoka*.

Food — It feeds on algae, insect larvae etc. That are attached to the smooth boulders in very strong currents. (R. Jonklaas, 1989)

Adaptations — Found in streams with pebbles, boulders and bed rock. The body colour of *Sicyopus jonklaasi* is also similar to the colour of these surfaces. When the fish with its olive body and light markings are found among these surfaces, it is effectively camouflaged. This is a good colour adaptation. This fish is found in fast flowing streams and as

such the large pectoral fins and ventral sucker help to withstand the onslaught of the current. To do this the ventral sucker and pectoral fins are spread along on surfaces and the fish remains anchored to the object. It is possible that the mouth with its curved canines may assist the current along with the help of the depressed head.

Distribution — *Sicyopus jonklaasi* is endemic to Sri Lanka, occurring in the southwestern tchthyological province. Mr. Rodney Jonklaas itates (LORIS 1981) that this species has a wide distribution in many areas in the Atweltota, Elpitiya, Dehiowita and Kuruwita. I have found this fish in many areas. They are Nachchimale, Kudawa (Sinharaja Forest), Kithulgala, Horawala and Neluwa.

Because of its adaptations to live in rapids and its criptic colouration this species is very difficult to collect. Not a single young fish has ever been observed. Nothing is known of breeding.

Acknowledgements — I am grateful to the late Mr. Rodney Jonklaas for the data given to me in preparing this paper and my thanks to my friends Mr. Ajith Lokuge (Neo-Synthesis Research Centre, Bandarawela) and Mr. Shantha Jayaweera for their help in collecting and accompanying me on my field trips. I also thank Mr. P. B. Karunaratne and Mr. Dharma Sri Kandambi Curator, Zoo Dep., National Museums, Colombo-7) for providing me with the literature.

* * * *

AN ODYSSEY OF AN ORCHID

— Jim David

In 1969 the Ceylon Steel Corporation was setting up its sophisticated Metallurgical Laboratory at Oruwala for testing of its steel and metal products. To assist the Corporation in this regard the services of a Chief Metallurgical Engineer from Moscow was obtained as the Steel Project was being commissioned under a bi-lateral Agreement between Sri Lanka and the USSR. Part of my work at the Corporation entailed an oversight of the welfare facilities of the large group of Soviet personnel working there and on arrival the Engineer concerned was introduced to me by a Russian lady-translator as the Engineer was not fluent in English. When the formalities were over, the Engineer looked at me and uttered the word "Wanarajah." I looked non-plussed and sought a translation from the Interpreter. She laughed and said Dr. Nazarov is speaking to you in Sinhala". Of course he was referring to our Jewel Orchid-*Anaechtochilus setaceus* and had been primed regarding my association with the Orchid Circle of Ceylon. Well that was the start of a close friendship with a Russian who was a very highly qualified Metallurgist whose extra-mural proclivities included a very scientific and through interest in our local flora. He told me later that before starting for Sri Lanka he had spent all his leisure at the Moscow University studying Macmillian's Tropical Planting and Gardening."

An enlightened Management allowed the Soviets the use of a vehicle on week-ends and holidays to visit and appreciate our places of cultural and scenic interests. Dr. Eugene Nazarov and I made use of this facility to see and study indigenous botanical species, particularly Orchids.

One week-end in April, 1972 we travelled to Kandy, saw the Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya and spent the night at the Teldeniya Resthouse. Our intention was to collect specimens of the Jewel Orchids *Anaechtochilus setaceus*

(Wanarajah) and *Zeuxine regia* (Iru raja). We also looked for *Desmodium gyrans* (Chanchalla or Pranajeeva) as we could not trace these plants at the Ayurvedic Nurseries at Nawinna. The *Desmodium*, in addition to its medicinal properties has a strange habit of rotating its lateral leaflets which gave it the common English name of Telegraph or Semaphore plant. The movements are spontaneous and irrespective of heliotropism wind, touch as in the case of *Mimosa* or any external source. Dr. Nazarov's interest in this plant arose from the fact that he said some research was being done in Moscow in relation to cybernetics and the involuntary movements of the leaflets. As all these plants were to be found in the Hunnasgiriya area and we were able to collect a range of colour forms of the Wanaraja together with the Iru raja. The finding and collection of the Chanchalla is another story.

We had decided to climb through Loolwatta and Corbetts Gap into Rangala and then on to Kandy and back to Colombo. On the way to Loolwatta we stopped occasionally to collect interesting botanical specimens and in a particular damp and rather dark area, I noticed two plants which resembled the Jewel Orchid but appeared to be an albino form. The normal veininhg of the *Anaechtochilus* was apparent over a translucent white background. Dr. Nazarov took one specimen with him to Moscow when he returned to the USSR and grew it in a temperature and light controlled terrarium in his flat. My specimen could not survive the rigours of a Colombo climate and perished.

We kept in touch with each other and in October, 1977, Dr. Nazarov wrote to me, which I think is best expressed in his very words which said "I think it will be interesting for you to know about white *Anaechtochilus* species which you found in mountains of Ceylon, Remember you? It was small plant with

silver leaves? This *Anaechtochilus* two month ago very nice bloomed first time. This is victory! The flowers on it are white colour, the form like flower of *Habenaria* and they available very nice perfume, excellent fragrant and strong. This plant by Moscow is not determination. May be you know is name of it?" I think nothing can be as graphic as the language used by this keen amateur Russian botanist on discovering this rare plants in flower.

To help Dr. Nazarov to identify this plant, I pursued the matter at the Colombo and Peradeniya Universities and the Public and Museum Libraries but was not successful. I also wrote to him to send me a photograph of the plant and if possible a botanical description of plant and flower.

In October 1980, Dr. Nazarov wrote to me and using his words again, said - "I think you will be interesting for you know about this white *Anaechtochilus* — yes? That plant from Hunnasingiriya is *Zeuxine affinis*. This determination made the Botanist from the main Botanical Gardens. Very sad that have no photo of it. Now this *Zeuxine affinis* live in Botanical Gardens. I pass to him and in this time I have' nt it"

I then wrote to Dr. I.U.N. Gunatilleke of the Department of Botany, University of Peradeniya seeking his views, Dr. Gunatilleke informed me that the only recorded *Zeuxines* in Sri Lanka were *Z. strateumatica*, *Z. longilabris*, *Z. flavand* *Z. regia* and that *Z. affinis* is not recorded from Ceylon. He also suggested that it resemble *Z. longilabris* from my description of the plant found at Hunnasingiriya and described *Z. longilabris* as "glabrous, hyaline and 7-veined". The leaves tallied in that they were glabrous - having a smooth surface, but not strictly hyaline although according to my recollection they had a degree of transparency apparent in the white background to the irregular veinings. Other important differences applied to the flowers are:

Z. longilabris: large flat labellum (unlike *Habenarias*), not having a per-

fume and greenish with white lip

Z. affinis: *Habenaria*-like flowers, white and highly scented.

The description of the recorded plant is taken from the standard work on Orchids "A Revised Handbook of the Flora of Ceylon" by Dassanayake and Fosberg, Vol. 11, pp.319. Dr. Nazarov himself refers to the plant as a "white *Anaechtochilus*" - so probably *Z. affinis* is the correct name as *Zeuxines* and *Anaechtochilus* are closely related, belonging to the same tribe Neottiae. A reconstruction of the plant collected at Hunnasingiriya (*Z. affinis*?) from memory together with that of *Z. longilabris* as appearing in the Handbook are reproduced here for comparison.

I would like to add a footnote to this. I was very anxious to obtain a botanical description of the plant and flower and wrote to Dr. Nazarov for his assistance in this regard in getting it from the Botanical Gardens in Moscow. There was no reply to my many letters and as this was most uncharacteristic of him, I appealed to the Soviet Embassy in Sri Lanka asking for assistance in tracing the whereabouts of Dr. Nazarov giving his last known private address and also that he was working in the Department of Metallurgy at the Moscow University - in the alternative I enquired for the address of the Moscow Botanical Gardens. Three letters were sent to the Embassy including one sent under registered post and one handed in personally at the Cultural Section at Independence Avenue. Sad to relate there was neither an acknowledgement or reply. I wonder whether this wall of silence is a part of the Iron Curtain we read about! It seems very unfortunate as the Moscow Botanical Gardens could not contribute information of value to the botanist in Sri Lanka and the horticultural world at large.

The reconstructed Orchid -
Zeuxine affinis?

(from The Revised Handbook of the
Flora of Ceylon)

ENVIRONMENTAL SUICIDE IN THE EAST

— T. Hoffman

In the Eastern Province, particularly in the wider Kalkudah-Valaichchenai area, people are hell-bent in destroying their own habitat, an environment which was once pleasant and cosy, with shady trees, thick and high forests, mangroves, coconut and garden plots, as well as Sri Lanka's most beautiful bays and beaches. With sullen single-mindedness a bunch of Mudalali entrepreneurs is busy demolishing the fringing reefs and the coastal reef flats at Kalkudah, at both ends of Pasekudah Bay, in Vandeloos Bay, at Arnakallu (Elephant Point) and Thenadi Bay. Vast quantities of coral rock and pieces are carted daily to the 50 odd lime kilns in the area. Similar loads of freshly cut firewood are brought from all directions as far as 20 km away, because in the wider Valaichchenai area the resource has been exhausted, with hardly a tree or shrub remaining anywhere. Forests, mangroves, scrub and even coconut groves have fallen to the axe. Road traffic is almost solely devoted to the transportation of illicit firewood which is carried on tractor-trailers, bullock carts and pushcycles. To make matters worse, the dynamiting of fish is again rampant; it destroys indiscriminately all marine life and the coral. And aquarium fish collectors again rob and deplete the reefs. It is a world of the modern Freebooter.

The once enchanting area is turning into a kind of desert. Wells become saline or dry up. Fish is becoming rare because the early stages of life require the shelter of undisturbed reefs and mangroves. Birds and wildlife find the land increasingly inhospitable, and so does man. The climate becomes harsher and hotter. There is no shelter against sun, rain and wind, storm and cyclone. The coast has become vulnerable and wide open, its natural defenses gone or badly damaged. There is massive sea erosion and a noticeable flattening of the coast, with its formerly perfect bays and tree-studded

promontories, all then protected by extensive coral reefs and flats. The aesthetic beauty of the area is gone to a great extent and with it its touristic attraction and potential. The air is polluted by acrid smoke from the freshly cut firewood smoldering day and night in the many kilns.

The physical and economic well-being of the resident people is seriously affected and the situation is getting worse from year to year, from month to month. Those most affected are fishermen. Do the resident people notice and care? Seemingly not! A few greedy lime kiln owners, operating with contract labour are permitted to openly devastate the coastal land for great undeserved and untaxed profits at the permanent expense of the community. Today in the east there prevails a somewhat understandable "each for himself" attitude.

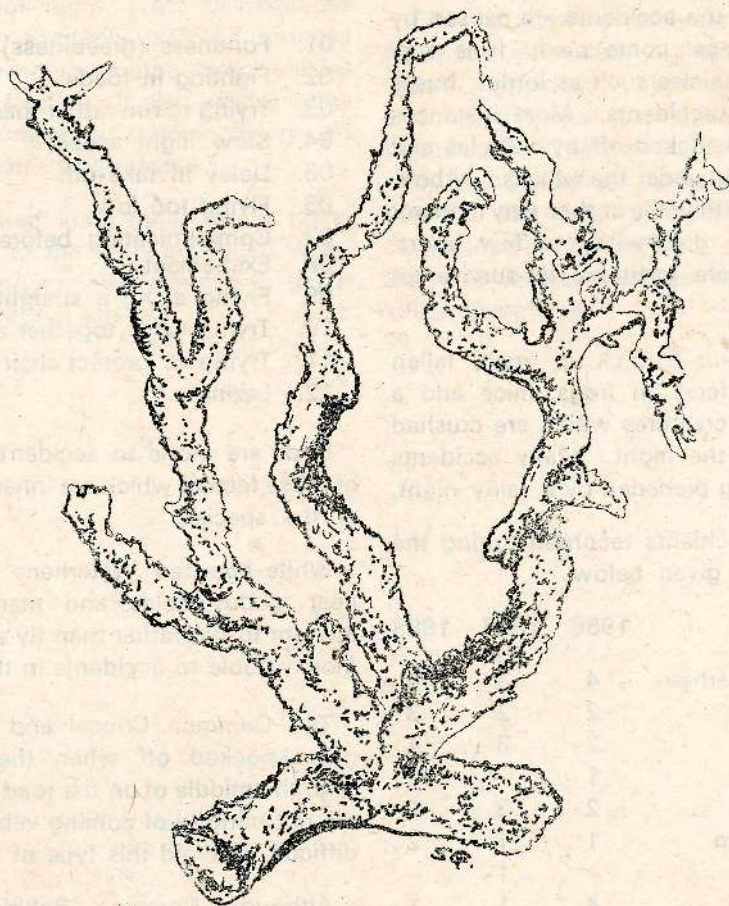
And the Authorities? There are none! All the damaging activities, the breaking, transporting and burning of coral and of firewood from state lands are illegal, and so is dynamiting. Nothing is done to prevent them. If these menaces are not stopped forthwith and permanently, Sri Lanka's once most superb coastal stretch will be a thing of the past and become an unpleasant, unproductive semi-desert! Even if the destruction was totally arrested now, it would take many decades for the coral and forests to even partly recover and the coast to stabilize.

Until 4 years ago coral breaking and burning was strictly prohibited in the area. Illegal kilns were destroyed by the Authorities and only a few traditional small sippi kilns were allowed to satisfy genuine local needs for lime. The present mammoth production of coral lime at Pasekudah, Valaichchenai and Kayankerni is transported by lorry to the south and the hills, to Kurunegala, Colombo, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, for use in the building trade and in

agriculture. At the existing road blocks which control all main roads out of the east, the illicit traffic could be easily stopped. But seemingly nobody cares to apply this simple remedy.

Another and probably the most effective measure against the rape of reefs anywhere would be large scale production of quality lime at the Puttalam and K.K.S. Cement Works, where almost inexhaustible quantities of limestone are available. The product would have to be effectively marketed throughout the

country at a price (if necessary subsidized) which would render the Mudalalis' coral-lime operations unremunerative. This simple, relatively cheap and effective method has been suggested to Government on several past occasions, was once halfheartedly tried and quietly allowed to fade out. The coral-lime industry is a national threat of some magnitude and only persistent, determined action by determined and vigilant administrators can stop it. Halfhearted, half measures will never do.



ROAD ACCIDENTS IN BIRD LIFE

—M. Jayantha Jayewardene

This deals with instances where birds faced road accidents in rural and forest areas of low Country dry zone during the past three years. This information was collected by observing the instances when birds were knocked down by vehicles in which I was travelling and also by inspecting the cell in front of the radiators of vehicles.

Birds are mostly prone to accidents between 5.30 to 7.30 in the mornings. This is because the birds come to the roads during this time to find food and also to get the warmth emitted by the road. Many of the accidents are caused by cars. Vans and jeeps come next. It is very rarely that heavy Vehicles such as lorries, buses and tractors cause accidents. Most instances are when they are knocked off by vehicles and not by being crushed under the wheels. About 70% of the birds lose their life at that very moment while another 25% dies within a few hours. Only 5% of them are fortunate to survive an accident.

Birds come to roads to pick up grain, fallen from vehicles and feed on frogs, mice and a host of other small creatures which are crushed by vehicles during the night. Many accidents happen in a morning preceded by a rainy night.

A table of the accidents recorded during the past three years is given below.

	1986	1987	1988
White-breasted Waterhen	4	3	5
Indian Roller	2	2	3
Common Coucal	2	3	4
Common Babblar	1	—	2
Spotted Dove	2	3	2
Pied Crested Cuckoo	1	1	2
Koel	—	1	—
Common Mynah	4	1	1
White-breasted Kingfisher	—	2	1
Bronze-winged Pigeon	1	—	—

Black-headed Oriole	—	2	—
Paradise Flycatcher (Brown)	—	—	—
Red-vented Bulbul	—	2	1
Ceylon Junglefowl	—	1	—
Pond Heron	1	1	2
Cattle Egret	1	—	—
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	—	2	—
Ceylon Bustard Quail	1	1	—
Fish Owl	1	—	1
Long-tailed Night Jar	5	3	3

The reasons why birds are prone to accidents are as follows:

01. Fondness (greediness) for food.
02. Fighting in roads.
03. Trying to run rather than flying.
04. Slow flight speed.
05. Delay in take-off.
06. Flying too low.
07. Communicating before flying away.
08. Excitement.
09. Flying along a straight line.
10. Trying to fly together as a flock.
11. Trying to protect their young.
12. Laziness.

Birds are prone to accidents by one or more of these factors which are inherent characteristics of the species.

White-breasted Waterhens get killed mostly near paddy fields and marshes, when they attempt to run rather than fly away. This bird is mostly liable to accidents in the early mornings.

The Common Coucal and the Indian Roller gets knocked off when they suddenly dash onto the middle of on the road pursuing prey and are not mindful of coming vehicles and it is very difficult to avoid this type of accidents.

Although Common Babblars spend much time on roads, they are rarely killed and are able to fly away as a vehicle comes close. The

two instances when they got killed were when they attempted to save their young without minding their own safety.

The spotted Dove is another bird commonly seen on roads in the morning. Though it is able to fly away when vehicles approach, it is liable to accidents because of its habit of flying in a straight line. If the flight path is along the road it gets knocked down by the vehicle which comes behind it.

Koels and Pied Crested Cuckoos which inhabit low bushes along roads gets knocked down when they fly low across the roads. All the incidents of Common Mynahs getting killed were recorded in mornings after nights in which winged termites took flight. This was because the mynahs which excitedly pick off termites on the road fail to notice approaching vehicles while engrossed in feeding. It also wastes some vital time communicating before flying off which also contributes to its death.

The White-breasted kingfishers which come in pursuit of prey to the road are killed when they make a second or third attempt to get it when it fails in its initial attempt.

The two instances when Black-headed Orioles were involved in accidents were when they attempted to protect their young. The Ceylon Jungle fowls which occasionally come to the road are usually able to fly away and the incident when one was knocked down and killed by the vehicle I was travelling happened at Habarana.

Pond Herons and cattle Egrets are prone to accidents when they congregate when fields are ploughed. In fields near roads, the birds which run after the plough and avoiding the buffalows are not mindful about vehicles passing on the roads. Pheasant tailed Jacanas are occasionally knocked down on roads going through rural tanks.

The fish Owl is rarely knocked down near tanks on very dark nights. One of the two recorded incidents happened near Kala Wewa and the other near Nachchidaduwa tank. These happen when the owl suddenly tries to take off after being startled by the head lights of a vehicle. The long-tailed Night-jar which lies on the road at night to get prey does not fly away until the vehicle is almost upon it and so gets killed sometimes.

* * * *

THE SPERM WHALES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

—D. B. G. Manendra

Man and whales have had a long standing historic relationship. Men have used the whale and part of its body for their daily requirements. Technological development particularly in its early stages of development saw mans destruction of whales. Whaling flourished as a very profitable commercial venture in many countries and this resulted in a whaling industry.

The sperm whale's (*physeter macrocephalus*) contribution to the industry because of its precious spermaceti oil was remarkable. However, with the advancement and development of technology and science these whale products have been replaced by synthetic products. At the same time the environmentalists and scientists discovered that the destruction of whales for scientific and commercial purposes was well over the M.S.Y. (Maximum Suitable Yield) and that the species was endangered.

As a result of this, the Indian Ocean was declared a sanctuary for sperm whales by the I.W.C. (International whaling commission) in 1979, giving consideration to the abundance of sperm whales in the Indian Ocean. This created not only interest and public awareness within this country, but also won International recognition for Sri Lanka as a local point for whale studies.

The research carried out so far by N.A.R.A. as International research has revealed sperm whale occurrences around the coastal waters of Sri Lanka except in the Gulf of Mannar area. The coastal waters off Trincomalee have attracted whale scientists as a good whale watching area. The birth of a sperm whale in the wild was recorded and filmed for the first time in the coastal waters off Trincomalee.

The sperm whale, the largest member of the toothed whales (*odontoceti*) known as "Komada" and "Mandha Thalmaha" in Sinhala is

of the family *Physeteridae* of the order *Cetacea*. The spermaceti organ which occupies about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the head portion may have occasioned the name "Mandha Thalmaha". This organ is filled with precious oil which causes the relentless hunting of these whales in the early stages of whaling.

The sperm whale is reputed to be the deep diver among whales, diving to a depth around 2500 m, searching for its prey. Generally a dive lasts about 50 minutes which is a considerable length of time. The role of its wax becomes evident in this context as it needs control over its buoyancy at different depths. Density could be changed in order to get neutral buoyancy by keeping the wax cooled with water drawn through the nasal passage. This oily wax sac is also considered to be a sonar apparatus by scientists.

The phenomenon, echolocation similar to radar system is used by whales in hunting in addition to the clicks of various frequencies emitted as a mode of communication.

Male sperm whales are larger than female sperm whales of the same age. They reach a body length of average 15 m for males and 11 m for females when they are well grown. Calves are about 4 m at birth. Both males and females become sexually mature at the average age of 10 years. But males live as separate bachelor groups till they reach 20 — 25 years of age. At this point they are able to form a harem. In most cases only one male is noticed in a harem while all others are pregnant or lactating females. The birth cycle is about 4 years including the gestation, weaning and relaxing period. Identification of these animals in the wild, out at sea is easy as they have certain unique characteristics. The single blow spout (single blow hole) which is at an angle could be seen from about $1\frac{1}{2}$ km.

away. After a long dive, they spout water making a high blow as their blunt box like head surfaces out of the water. They blow small quantities of water several times on the surface before they make a another deep dive.

Occasionally one or more sperm whales gets stranded. This is a rare occurrence and has resulted in a great deal of publicity. Scientists believe that a single whale could be stranded due to disorientation during a storm, illness or a parasitic infection. Mass strandings could occur due to social cohesion of the whales. This year N.A.R.A. recorded two such strandings of whales; one was at Barudalpotha - Thaduwwa and the other was the much publicised slaughter of a live sperm whale at Negombo. This incident highlighted the need to make the

fishing community aware of the importance of the conservation of these endangered species.

Man is totally dependent on the environment. The destruction of environment means the slow death of mankind. It is naturally beneficial for us to protect the environment since this would mean the protection of man. The whales are an unique and dying element of the marine eco system. It is essential that this endangered species should be protected and nurtured. A greater awareness of our environment and the conservation of an endangered species is required. Human beings are dependent on the environment and the environment has to be sustained. It is a natural relationship and there has to be a balance.

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THE CEYLON BIRD CLUB

A Brief Avifaunal Survey is for 1988
and not for 1989 as Published in Vol. XVIII
No. 3, 1989 issue.

Ed.

THE 1989 WATERFOWL CENSUS IN SRI LANKA

—Thilo Hoffman

The 6th waterfowl census since 1983 was carried out by members of the Ceylon Bird Club in January, 1989, and for the first time since 1984 it did include the very important Jaffna Peninsula. There is still one major site missing, namely the Manner area, but I confidently expect that next year it could be covered. Wetlands along the west and south coasts from north of Kalpitiya through to Yala National Park, and a number of irrigation tanks (reservoirs) in the North-Central Low-country Dry Zone were counted, with a somewhat wider coverage than in earlier years.

The following members participated in this years' count :

Jaffna Peninsula and islands	.. C. B. Bavinck & Thilo Hoffmann
Tanks in Mahaweli System H' (from Rajangana in the west to Kandalama in the east)	.. A. A. Munasinghe
North of Kalpitiya to Mundel	Thilo Hoffmann
Tanks east of Puttalam and wet-lands south of Puttalam Lagoon	.. Anura Ratnayake & Clevo Wilson
Muttupantiya Lagoon, Annaivilundawa Tanks & Deduru Oya estuary	.. Anne Outwater
Chilaw spit	.. Thilo Hoffmann
Selected tanks in the Kurunegala District	.. T. S. U. De Zylva
Selected tanks in Mahaweli System B' (Polonnaruwa District)	.. S. R. B. Dissanayake

Wetlands between Chilaw and Negombo

Southern end of Negombo Lagoon and Muturajawela

Colombo coast and Beira Lake

Kotte Sanctuary and Bellanwila Marshes at Colombo

Wetlands connected with the Bolgoda Lake system

Coastal area between Panadura and Galle

Galle to Ambalangoda, coastal and inland wetlands

Southern tanks between Walawe and the coast

Hambantota wetlands and Tissa tanks

Bundala Sanctuary

Kirindi Oya to Menik Ganga

Lucky Abeywardene, Hiran Caldera and Sathis Perera

Douglas B. Ranasinghe & S. Edusuriya

Deepal Warakagoda

Jagath Gunawardana

Ismeth Raheem & P. B. Karunaratne

Ranjen Fernando, Lucian De Silva, A. G. I. De Silva, Dayarathne Dalawelle and Lal Wickramaratne

S. C. Seneviratne

Bennie L. Abeyratne

Yasa Ratnayake

John and Judy Banks

R. Y. Dias-Abeyesinghe & friends

After six annual counts, it can now be stated with some certainty that —

(a) there are **4 major sites** for wintering waterbirds in Sri Lanka, namely :

1. the Jaffna Peninsula and Islands with Chundikkulam and the northern portion of Chalai Lagoon;
2. the Adam's Bridge-Mannar-Vankalai area (including Giant's Tank);
3. the Dutch Bay-Kalpitiya-Puttalam-Mundel area with coastal tanks (dry this year, few birds), and
4. the Kalametiya - Hambantota - Bundala area (lagoons, salterns and coastal tanks).

(b) in all likelihood there are no comparable major sites along the east coast, except those included in (1) above, and possibly in the Arugam Bay-Kumana area (more resident birds), and

(c) most of the migrant waterbirds winter along or near the coast and not inland. Even the villus along the Mahaweli Ganga in the Polonnaruwa District do not carry notable populations of wintering Ducks or waders, except on passage. However, these villus remain to be investigated.

Even those migrating waterbirds which use fresh water habitats will be found mostly within a narrow 10—15 km. wide coastal strip; in particular wintering Ducks, the majority of which are Pintail and Garganey, frequent in large numbers the overgrown tanks within the coastal strip, but hardly other inland waters, except on passage.

Based on previous years' experience, I have started a process of consolidating sites, i.e., to designate and demarcate considerably larger count units on the basis of ecological and geographical factors, as well as practical aspects connected with the count. In the Jaffna Peninsula the sites were thus standardized, which resulted in 13 locations in respect of which census forms and count unit forms were submitted. A similar consolidation was carried out in the Kalpitiya-Puttalam-Mundel-Chilaw area, where the number of count units has been considerably reduced.

As time goes by the other areas will be treated similarly, so that eventually we will have standardized sites for future work and easy comparison.

The count units in the **Jaffna** area have been determined as follows :

1. Delft Island (all wetlands, wet grasslands and coast).
2. Punkudutivu Island (lagoon and coasts).
3. Kayts Island, north-eastern shore up to Kayts, including causeway, mud-flats and wet grasslands in Munkumpan area.
4. Kayts Island, western shore (sea) and lagoons.
5. Mandaitivu Island (lagoon and wet grasslands).
6. Jaffna to Araly South Jetty (lagoon shore, mud-flats, grasslands) and Valuki Aru at Araly Bridge.
7. Coast of lagoon and mud-flats between Araly South Jetty and Punnali Causeway, including Katkali Kulam.
8. Punnalai mud-flats north of Causeway and mouth of lagoon.
9. All wetlands south of Jaffna-Chavakachcheri Road up to Karaitivu Jetty and including Navatkuli branch of Jaffna Lagoon.
10. Uppu Aru Lagoon and wetlands lying between Jaffna-Chavakachcheri Road (S) and Puttur-Sarasalai Road (N).
11. Northern portions of Uppu Aru Lagoon and all other wetlands (sand-flats and mud-flats) lying between the Puttur-Sarasalai Road (S), and the track from Puttur West (Achchuveli Junction) to Antanantidal (N).
12. All wetlands north of the above track (lagoon, wet grasslands, mud and sand-flats) up to the seacoast at Tondaimannar in the north and Tunnalai south (Mulli) in the east.

13. Main Jaffna Lagoon between Elephant Pass and Pooneryn Point.

Another important count unit (site) is the Chundikkulam Lagoon, especially the eastern sector near its mouth and the northern parts of Chalai Lagoon. This site, which may be given **No 14** could not be counted this year. A possible **15th site** might be the coastline around Devil's Point and Iranaitivu Islands.

The next major area is the **Adam's Bridge-Mannar-Vankalai** sector. This could conveniently be sub-divided into 3 count units, namely —

1. Adam's Bridge sand-flats and islands:
2. Mannar island, and
3. Wetlands on the adjoining mainland (Vankalai), including Giant's Tank.

The **Puttalam-Mundel** area can be sub-divided into 5 count units:

1. Dutch Bay, i.e. all sites north of Kalpitiya and Kandakuli, and wetlands around Karaitivu (Pomparappi).
2. Wetlands along road from Palavi to Kalpitiya and Puttalam Lagoon.
3. Salterns and wetlands just north of Puttalam.
4. Wetlands between Puttalam Lagoon and Mundel Lake, Mundel Lake and Mutupantiya Lagoon.
5. Tanks in the Puttalam-Chilaw coastal strip.

The long stretch of west coast from Chilaw to Galle does not contain many migrant waterbirds (or even resident ones), and the same is true of the south coast from Galle to about Tangalle. In view of this we may in years to come omit these areas from the count, except for one or two selected sites, e.g. Muturajawela, Kotte Sanctuary and Attidiya Marches at

Colombo, and instead concentrate our resources on those 4 main areas mentioned earlier. The principal area in the south could be divided into 3 consolidated count units, namely —

1. all coastal wetlands between Tangalle and Ambalantota (which includes the Kalametiya Sanctuary);
2. the Hambantota coastal wetlands, with Karagan Lewaya, the Bundala Sanctuary and coastal wetlands up to Yala NP;
3. Tanks in the Wirawila-Tissa area and Katagamuwa.

As for **resident waterbirds**, these are, of course, found both in the coastal wetlands as well as in inland tanks, swamps, villus and rice paddies. There are about 36,000 man-made **tanks** (irrigation reservoirs) in Sri Lanka, many of which (especially the smaller, neglected and overgrown ones) are suitable for resident waterfowl, such as the Tree Duck, Cotton Teal, various species of Storks, Egrets, Grebes, Pelicans, Cormorants, Ibis, Coots, Rails, Jacanas and resident waders. In addition, there are dozens of **villus**, many swamps and vast extents of **rice paddies** covering millions of acres, all of which may harbour waterfowl at one time or other of the year, not only resident birds, but also those migrants who prefer these habitats, e.g. Snipe, Rails, land-Terns, and some waders. It will never be possible to cover even a small portion of these inland wetlands in annual waterfowl counts, and, therefore, I propose to continue with the present system of **selective counting**, depending on the availability of volunteers. We will try to widen somewhat the coverage of these inland wetlands, but I do not expect any exciting or dramatic results. However, the odd rare species may turn up in inland censuses, e.g. the Spot-billed Duck, the Ruddy Shelduck, the White Stork, the Giant Heron, the Bittern, Baillon's Crake. Of course, inland tanks also carry at times substantial numbers of migrating waterbirds, chiefly Ducks on internal migration from one major wintering

area to another or on arrival in the island and during dispersal. Special attention must be paid to the Mahaweli villus.

It may be noted that the **main wintering areas** coincide largely with the **chief landfall areas** where the birds arrive in autumn. Those waterbirds which migrate mainly along the east coast of India arrive in the Jaffna-Chundikkulam area; those which follow the western route fall in chiefly between Mannar and Mundel. Migrating Passerines are more widely dispersed. The coastal wetlands in the northern half of the island also serve as assembly and departure points for the return migration of waterbirds in April and May when Ducks, Terns, Waders concentrate on wetlands along the north-western, northern and north-eastern coasts of Sri Lanka.

During winter there appear to be frequent movements of waterbirds between the North of Sri Lanka and neighbouring South India, i.e. Point Calimere and other wetlands in Southern Tamil Nadu. Especially Ducks seem to use wetlands on either side of Palk Strait, presumably on the basis of feeding conditions (see earlier count reports). Within Sri Lanka waterbirds disperse from North to South and back again prior to departure. Highest concentrations in the North are reported in February/March, which would indicate that some arriving birds do not stay long in landfall areas and make straight for the South; of the Ducks these would be Garganey and Pintail and a few shovellers. Many stay in the North throughout, especially Wigeon (only rare stray birds reach the South), and also the European Teal as well as most of the Shovellers. It is probable that Garganey and Pintail come by both the western and eastern routes, whereas Wigeon would only arrive by the latter.

With specific regard to **this year's count**, it could be said that there was a general impression of **fewer birds** than usual in all areas, especially in the Kalpitiya-Chilaw area (only 32,000 birds compared with 67,000 last year,

despite more counters). Total figures (about 110,000 last year, over 300,000 this year) can, of course, not be directly compared with those of the last few years because of the addition of the Jaffna count unit, which alone produced nearly 140,000 birds or 45% of the total. Generally water levels were low (practical failure of N—E Monsoon in Sri Lanka), many wet grasslands, mud and sand-flats were dry, which may account for the general impression of lower numbers. In contrast to this, excessively high levels of water are reported from the Bundala Sanctuary due to heavy use of irrigation water in adjoining newly developed agricultural tracts. Drainage water from these new fields now floods the sanctuary, which severely affects the ecological systems there. The excess water cannot escape through the sand bars which are thrown up by wave action on the seacoast. An early solution will have to be found to this problem.

The results of the 1989 count in groups and in respect of geographical main areas (7, last year 10) are shown in the table. The number of species has increased by as many as 17, from 77 last year to 94 this year. 303,610 birds (110,000 last year) were counted or estimated, with waders by far the largest group (just under 140,000) and heavy concentrations in the Jaffna and Hambantota coastal areas. The Kalametiya Sanctuary was again disappointing. The second largest group was Ducks (86,029), followed by Gulls and Terns (23,465), Herons (18,180) Cormorants (17,910). The number of Storks was greater this year (5,176, compared with only 341 last year) and 3,651 Spotbilled Pelicans were recorded.

The number of resident waterbirds in the count is, of course, in no way representative of Sri Lanka as a whole; this is particularly the case with Little Grebe, Spotbilled Pelican, Cormorants, Darters, Herons of all kinds, Painted, Open-bill and White-necked Storks, the 2 Ibises, Tree Duck, Rails, Coots and Jacanas, and some waders, such as the Little Ringed and Kentish Plovers, the Red-wattled Lapwing,

Painted Snipe, as well as the migratory Snipes, all of which are also found (some in considerable numbers) in inland areas not covered by the count.

There are some interesting comparisons between the frequency of some migrant species this year and in earlier counts:

1. Like last year, not a single Glossy Ibis was reported; this rare bird had been noted in increasing numbers in recent years at Kalametiya. Apparently the disturbances and the absence of protection there are already taking their toll.
2. Hardly any Flamingoes could be found, only a very small number (350) in the South, which apparently did not find suitable feeding conditions in their usual haunts (see flooding of Bundala wetlands). No Flamingoes were noted in the northern region which could be expected to have large flocks of up to 6 or 7,000 at this time of the year.
3. There were relatively few Black-tailed Godwits, only in the extreme North (1,635) and South (1,110). On the other hand there were 13 Bar-tailed Godwits (normally 1 or 2).
4. There were relatively few Wood Sandpipers (most in the extreme South), normally an abundant and widespread wintering species.
5. Like last year there were hardly any Ruff (only 10 in the extreme South). In recent years this species had been found more widely spread in greater numbers in the dry zone.

6. A relatively large number of Terek Sandpipers (47) was noted in the Kalpitiya-Puttalam area.

7. There were fewer (2,249) Common Terns (mostly immatures) than in recent years, and relatively many Caspian Terns (1,658).

8. One **Ruddy Shelduck** (f) was observed in the Jaffna, area, a very late straggler to Sri Lanka. Other relatively rare water-birds may be noted as follows :

- 1 Malay Bittern (M)
- 9 Adjutant Storks (R)
- 4 Black-necked Storks (R)
- 12 Ruddy Crakes (R)
- 6 Oystercatchers (M)
- 4 Avocet (M)
- 6 Crab Plovers (R)
- 40 Small Indian Pratincole (R)
- 32 Large Sand Plovers (M)
- 97 Grey Plover (M)
- 13 Bar-tailed Godwits (M)
- 1 Spotted Redshank (M)
- 10 Green Sandpipers (M)
- 48 Terek Sandpipers (M)
- 41 Broad-billed Sandpipers (M)
- 3 Red-necked Phalarope (M)
- 2 Herring Gull (M)
- 8 Lesser Black-backed (M)

114 census forms and a number of new site descriptions, sketches and maps were submitted to IWRB. In early March, there were 600 Flamingoes at Bundala, but still none in the Jaffna area; all the Ducks had left the North by then, with only 50 Pintail and 100 Garganey at Elephant Pass.

Colombo, March 1989.

AN OBSERVATION ON THE FEEDING OF THE MERREM'S HUMP-NOSED VIPER, HYPNALE IN THE WILDS

—G. L. A. Nanayakkara

Hypnale hypnale (Merrea), 1820 is a common pit-viper of Sri Lanka and Peninsular India. It is reported to be nocturnal in habit. It feeds on small mammals frogs and skinks. Although a common species, there are few reports of its feeding habits in the wilds. Therefore the following report is somewhat illuminating.

The snake was discovered at Labugama, Sri Lanka; on 22 May, 1989. It was among the leaf litter in thick primary forest close to the edge of the reservoir. The day was cloudy; though there was plenty of light. The ground was wet from the previous days rain. The time was 9.30 A.M. The snake when discovered was in the process of swallowing a skink which had been swallowed upto the fore limbs. Upon discovery the snake remained immobile for some time and then disgorged the prey. The snake and the skink were collected for measurement and identification. The skink is of the genus *Sphenomorphus*, and is probably *S. fallax*. It has a fang mark on top of the head. The scales on top of the head easily disintegrated probably due to the digestive enzymes. The snake was measured alive and the dead skink was measured 30 hours later, having been kept in deep freeze until then.

Discription :

- A. *Hypnale hypnale*: Snout-vent 132mm, Tail 19mm, Weight 1.38gms.
- B. *Sphenomorphus* sp: Snout-vent 40mm, Tail 49mm, Weight 1.48gms.

These observations bring to light two important facts.

1. The snake, at times feeds on prey that equals or exceeds its own weight.
2. This snake is reported to be nocturnal. But the above observation indicates that it is not necessarily so, and that the snake in the wilds may feed at day time too. In this respect it agrees with the behaviour of the Green pit-viper, *Trimeresurus trigonocephalus* (Sonn. & Latr.), 1801, which is generally nocturnal but, is alert during the day." (De Silva, 1980)

Since this is an isolated incident additional observations by independent observers regarding the above matter would be of great interest.

Acknowledgements: I wish to thank the members of the Young Zoologists Association who accompanied me on the above field trip for their help and also Mr. Lakdeepal De Silva for his help in measuring and weighing the specimens.

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WHITE FOXTAIL ORCHID

—Prasantha Chandana Jayasekera

This orchid is known to the scientific community as *Rhynchostylis retusa* var. *alba* or var. *heathii*, in English as Foxtail and in Sinhala as Guru-raja-Mala owing to its allusion to the cylindrical thunderbolt of Jupiter, the "Guru" or preceptor of gods. This evergreen vandaceous can tolerate extreme arid conditions. Apart from the dry zone of Sri Lanka where the dry days and dewless nights extend to almost six months, it grows in many other South East Asian countries. In Sri Lanka, it favours Bibile, Mahiyanganaya, Batticaloa and Ampara areas in Uva and eastern provinces.

It bears two neat regular rows of fluted, strap like rigid, leathery, fleshy leaves which are with a neatly set, beautiful fan-like arrangement. They are channelled, unequally notched at the tips, dark green in colour and 6—15 inches (15—30 cm) long. It grows to a height of above 1 foot (30cm) and bears a strong, erect, woody stem with leafy upper and leafless lower parts covered with brown old leaf-sheath remnants, often branched at the base, with a bush-like appearance. Fleshy, vermiform, very long aerial roots that has a diameter of 1/4 of an inch (7mm), are white in colour but the tips are green.

Flowering of the Foxtail orchid occurs once in a few years, in the months of January, April, July or November. These faintly scented, long lasting (a month to 6 weeks under favourable condition) pointed racemes emerge from the axils of leaves, can some times be upto 15 in number, with a diameter of 2.5" (6 cm). The flowers of the albino variety, which are small and short petioled, are entirely white in colour. The dorsal sepal is narrower than the two lateral sepals, but is slightly broader than the petals. Pedicels are small. The pounced lip terminates in a spur which is conical in shape. The base of the lip is connected to the beaked column

which is stout and thick. These flowers are densely and neatly packed to form a cylindrical raceme which is 10—18 inches in length. This characteristic feature has earned it the name "Fox-tail". Variety *alba* which is extremely rare always attracts the attention in exhibitions and always fetches a very high price in auctions. The commoner variety of this plant bears flowers with white and pink coloured floral leaves and a light purple lip. Apart from having pure white flowers, this albino variety has leaves which are not so prominently channelled, while the flowers are slightly larger and set further apart, in comparison with the common foxtail. Variety *guttata*, which grows from India to Java, bears more slender and longer leaves than this type. Flowers of this variety are more profusely spotted but smaller in size and number of flowers in a raceme is higher. *Holfordianum* is a larger flowered variety with a rich crimson lip, that grows in India. Variety *magus* which grows in the Moulmein forest in Burma, has an unusually stronger habit with longer scapes and flowers.

Apart from these varieties, a yellow coloured Foxtail is supposed to exist in Sri Lanka. This is thought to be a natural hybrid between *Rhynchostylis retusa* and *Saccolobium wightianum*.

The *Rhynchostylis retusa* — the Foxtail orchid — is absolutely protected in Sri Lanka since 1937 by the fauna and flora protection ordinance of 1937. According to the Ordinance, removing this plant from the growing areas, uprooting, destroying, harming or damaging, selling, exhibiting or offering for sale without a valid permit is an offence and can be punished by law.

Acknowledgement :

To Jagath Gunawardana and Sanjeeva Ranwalla for their valuable suggestions, and assistance.

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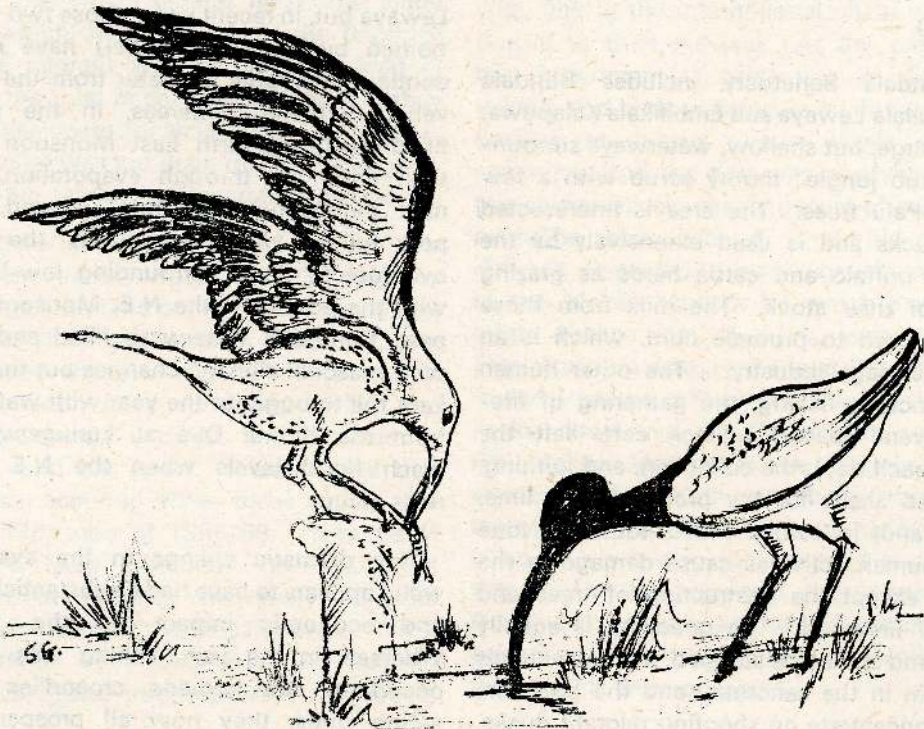
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BUNDALA SANCTUARY

—J. D. N. Banks

The Bundala Sanctuary was one of the last places we visited before leaving Sri Lanka in March 1987, and it was the first place to attract us when we returned to the island in January, 1989. It is a marvelous place to see birds, especially if it is possible, with the prior approval of the National Salt Corporation, to spend time in the Bundala Salterns viewing the birdlife in that area. Notwithstanding unsettled conditions in the Hambantota District at that time, we spent 10 days visiting old haunts in the sanctuary and were glad to find that very little had changed although many of the Palu trees appeared to have disappeared and there were signs that low lying areas of the sanctuary had been subjected to flooding.

The Bundala Sanctuary includes Bundala Lewaya, Malala Lewaya and Embilikala Kalapuwa. These are large, but shallow, waterways surrounded by scrub jungle; thorny scrub with a few groves of Palu trees. The area is intersected by jeep tracks and is used extensively by the owners of buffalo and cattle herds as grazing grounds for their stock. The milk from those animals is used to produce curd, which is an important cottage industry. The other human activities include fishing, the gathering of firewood (several loaded bullock carts left the sanctuary each day), the collection, and burning, of fossilised shells for the production of lime, poaching and, in settled times, tourism. None of these human activities cause damage to the sanctuary except the destruction of trees and removal of firewood. The poaching is equally unlawful, and should be stopped, but few animals now remain in the sanctuary and the poachers seem to concentrate on shooting migrant ducks. However, the ducks are at Bundala when the sanctuary is most visited by tourists and the possibility exists that, by providing a presence both morning and evening, the tourists deter the activity of poachers to a considerable extent.

The tourists certainly provide employment, and a livelihood, for locally based jeep drivers and their families; an example of local residents benefitting from a sanctuary - a renewable resource. Admittedly, the jeeps do a certain amount of damage to the fragile earth, but so do the bovine residents through over-grazing.

The main problem at Bundala seems to be an excess of water at certain times of the year. The Bundala Lewaya is still rain-fed, receiving its water during the North East Monsoon period and drying out, through evaporation, over the remaining months of the year. This was once the case for Embilikala Kalapuwa and Malala Lewaya but, in recent years, those two waterways (joined by a short channel) have received a continuous supply of water from the Lunuganvehera scheme. Whereas, in the past, they filled up from North East Monsoon rains and then dried up, through evaporation, until the next monsoon downpours occurred, they are now full of water throughout the year and overflow to flood surrounding low-lying lands with the advent of the N.E. Monsoons. In the past, Bundala's waterways filled and dried out with seasonal climatic changes but they are now kept full throughout the year with water diverted from the Kirindi Oya at Lunuganvehera and reach flood levels when the N.E. Monsoon rains occur.

This dramatic change in the availability of water appears to have had a substantial ecological and economic impact on the sanctuary. Whereas, in the past, fishing was a seasonal occupation for humans, crocodiles and fish-eating birds, they now all prosper from the continuous availability of water and abundant fish stocks for all. Whereas, in the past, the animals (including domestic stock) suffered from an acute shortage of water for months in the year, there is now a perennial supply of

potable water. This has probably resulted in a more constant supply of milk and curd to the benefit of the villagers who depend on that industry. The diversion of Kirindi Oya waters into Bundala has therefore, we think, had many beneficial effects for humans, animals and vegetation — for most of the year. The problem arises when the water in Embilikala Kalapuwa and Malala Lewaya is augmented during the North East Monsoon and low-lying areas are flooded because the sand bar at Malala — the Malala Modera — acts as a dam and prevents the excess water from flowing into the sea. When such floods occur, they inundate large extents where buffalo and cattle normally graze, swamp a few houses, prevent fishermen from wading into the waterways to cast their nets and, of course, interfere with the feeding habits of numerous species of birds e.g., migrant dabbling ducks which cannot reach the water weeds on which they feed due to the depth of water. The migrant waders prefer to feed in mud when the mud is covered with water, they must look elsewhere for their food. In January, 1989, the water was too deep for the flamingoes, and they were feeding at Karagan Lewaya.

The villagers in the area solved the problem caused by the excess water, and flooding, by cutting through the sand bar — Malala Modera — to allow the unwanted water to flow into the sea. However, the sea soon rebuilt the sand bar, the monsoon rains continued to fall, the flooding re-occured and the villagers had to breach the sand bar again. I understand that this situation occurred three times during the North East Monsoon of 1988/89. In terms of the Fauna & Flora Protection Ordinance, the management of Bundala Sanctuary, and its protection, is vested in the Department of Wildlife Conservation. For many years, the Department has maintained establishments at Bundala

Village and at Hambantota but although we have never seen any representative of the Department in or near the sanctuary. The Department has now constructed quarters for staff along the road leading to Bundala Village, and within the sanctuary on a site bordering Embilikala Kalapuwa. It should not, therefore, be a difficult matter for the Department of Wildlife Conservation to monitor the water levels and take responsibility for exercising control over such levels. The Department, not the villagers, should ensure that the sand bar is breached before flooding occurs since the maintenance of constant, and reasonable, water levels is vital to the well being of the bird life whether the species are resident or migratory. Bundala has been a popular winter feeding ground for, countless migratory waterfowl for generations and it is therefore a very important, may be vital, link in the international chain which is so crucial to their survival. At the present time, the Department is neglecting its duty to the wildlife and birds of Bundala by doing absolutely nothing to control water levels within the sanctuary, and the time has surely come when this comparatively simple aspect of management might be taken in hand. I should not be too difficult, or costly, to instal some form of sluice at the Malala Modera by which excess water might escape into the sea, when the North East Monsoon deluges the land, thereby preventing the waterways from over flowing their banks. In the alternative, the Department could cause the Malala Modera to be breached **before** inland flooding of the sanctuary occurs, rather than leave it to the whim and fancy of a few villagers. It is also to be hoped that now the Department has quarters for rangers within Bundala Sanctuary, something will be done to protect the Palu trees from knives and axes and the wild life from poachers.

GUESS WHO CAME TO DINNER

—Dr. W. R. Gooneratne

March 21st 1989 Kosgasmarkada Camp site Yala - The time was 7.15 p.m. There were 13 of us in camp, my two younger sons, daughter-in-law and 18 month old grandson. The rest were Medical students, some with their girl friends. The cook house was by the bank of the river. The menu for the evening was Fried Rice and Chicken Curry - A La Medico style. Perhaps to add to the flavour, there was much noise - singing and laughter during the preparation.

It was the day before full moon and the river bed reflected a golden glow with silvery streams of water glinting in the Moonlight. On the other side of the camp shafts of moonlight filtered through the canopy of trees above, forming a pattern on the ground.

At the entrance to the camp was a roaring campfire, and to be as faraway as possible from the hubbub of the cook house, my elder son, grandson and I drew our chairs close to the fire and were enjoying a sundowner in anticipation of a ???? delicious dinner. Jithomuni the tracker went up to the campfire perhaps to stoke it, and suddenly turned round to me and said, "Sir, bring me a flashlight, there is a leopard here". At first, I thought he was joking, but when I saw the expression on his face, I realised that there must be something in what he said. My son and I walked up to him and flashed the light into the darkness beyond, and sure enough there was a leopard stalking us with belly to ground. My first impulse was to throw a fire-brand at him because I expected him to leap on us at any moment. Fortunately I changed my mind and shouted at him. The response was dramatic - the uninitiated would perhaps have thought that I had cast some spell on the beautiful creature, for he immediately relaxed and sat down. I even thought that he smiled at us. He was only seven meters from us. A big male leopard in prime condition. The din and laughter

from the kitchen had ceased and the cooks had all rushed up to see this spectacle.

Fortunately my vehicle was facing the direction of the leopard and my son lost no time switching on the head lights and videoing him. The animal then moved two meters to the left and lay down on the ground, still quite relaxed and looking at us with a whimsical smile as if he realised what entertainment he was providing us humans. He got up again and went behind a tree and peeped from behind it as if to tease us. He performed thus for at least 10 minutes alternately rolling on the ground and lying down and then walked into the jungle on the far side. Minutes later he turned up on the north side of the camp and continued to watch us quite unconcerned while cars were being started and headlights trained on him. The videoing continued and the flash guns popped. The pictures are dramatic. After about another ten minutes he walked away into the jungle.

The million dollar question was why this dramatic visitation and what would be his next move. While keeping a sharp look out, dinner was gone through hurriedly and I noticed that a lot of brave guys had lost their appetites and a good part of the delicious meal was uneaten. The younger folks thought that the smell of food had attracted the beast, but I disagreed. Leopards do not fancy spicy foods like humans - for them the smellier the better. However to disprove the food theory, I dumped the leftovers in the garbage pit, but kept it open. I believe lots of people had insomnia that night. However, no leopard visited the camp or even the garbage pit. Next morning we tried to figure out what had happened. The animal had walked along the river-bed from the direction of Yala drunk water at the Parana Thotapola, climbed up the bank and walked along the track to our camp.

Many theories have been adduced for this unusual behaviour of a leopard. Two days before this incident, Mr. Lal Anthonis who was at the Yala Bungalow, had been woken up at 2 a.m. due to the moonlight falling on his face. He had looked out over the beautiful scene spread out before him, the almost full moon casting its silvery light over forest and plain, and the beautiful Situlpahuva Chaitya pushing its bosom in contrasting white from out of the darkened forest. A movement in the compound caught his eye and there was a huge leopard

which looked up and growled at him. It was perhaps the same visitor we had.

As I said before, many theories have been adduced for this strange and unusual behaviour. It was perhaps just curiosity which fortunately did not kill the cat!!! I am almost certain it was not interested in the junk foods which we humans eat. My own theory is that this was his territory and he came to lodge his protest against us intruders into his domain.

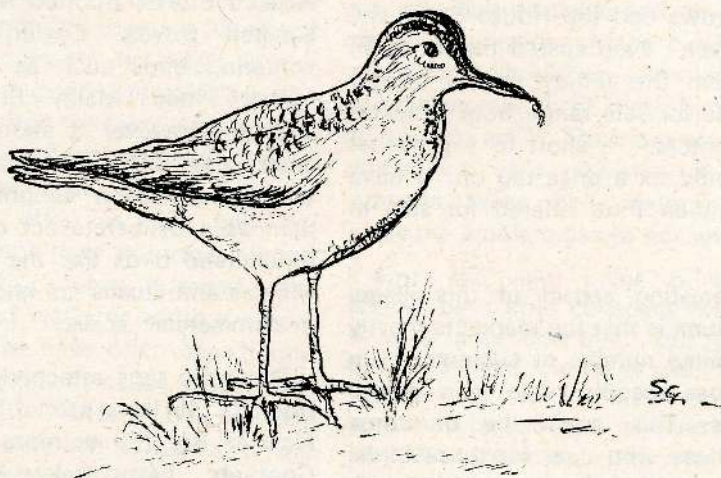
Whatever the reason may be, we had an unforgettable experience and some dramatic pictures to crown a wonderful trip.

Appropriate Technology Services

121, POINT • PELLIC FOAD

* NALLUR, JAFFNA

No.



SALE OF CAPTURED BIRDS

—Clevo Wilson

Of late urban Sri Lanka has been witnessing a boom in the sale of wild birds as pets. Prior to this we had witnessed the sale of exotic species like the budgerigars, Java sparrows, Finches, etc. as pets. Furthermore these birds have adapted so well to live in cages that they are better kept as pets rather than being in the wild. What is worrying today is the alarming increase in the number of bird shops that deal with many of our native avifauna.

These pet shops have mushroomed so to say in almost all the major towns where the affluent people live. I say affluent because the sale is virtually restricted to these people because of the high prices involved. The situation could be regarded as quite serious in areas such as Colombo and Kandy where most of the selling is being done.

These pet shops deal with almost any wild bird that these traders could get hold of except for the House Crows and the House Sparrows. These traders haven't even spared the innocent pigeons that roam the untidy streets of our towns. The birds for sale range from Grackles to Storks and raptors. In short to say almost any bird they could fix a price tag on. I have even seen an Indian Pitta offered for sale in Kandy.

The most interesting aspect of this illegal sale of wild avifauna is that the market is mostly confined to a limited number of customers. In other words those people who can afford exorbitant prices. This could be of some consolation to those who care for these birds. Furthermore we could be quite satisfied that there is no known proof of Sri Lankan avifaunal exports except for a few cases where some housemaids destined to the Middle Eastern countries are known to carry parakeets as pets to their employers. Permits are granted only for the taking out of the common species of

parakeets. However as there are no trained personnel in this field in the customs department Layards Parakeets (which is an endemic to the island) may also be among the several other parakeets that are being taken out of the country. However if we take into consideration the high mortality rate involved from the time of capture to the point where it is sold then it could be regarded as serious. Also alarming is the fact that Sri Lanka's endemics too are involved in this trade. The endemics so far involved are the Ceylon Grackle and the Layards Parakeet. Others that could be involved in the future are the Ceylon Jungle Fowl, Ceylon Spur-fowl, Yellow-Eared Bulbul, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Ceylon Lorikeet etc. The beautiful Ceylon Magpie will also no doubt be an attractive species if they could be caught easily.

Some of the other birds that are being sold are the Blue Breasted Banded Rail, Common Grackles, Night Heron, Purple Heron, White Necked Storks, Spotted Munias, Purple Coots, Spotted Doves, Ceylon Shikra, etc. Even wintering birds such as the Golden Plovers, Indian Pittas, Malay Bitterns haven't been spared. However it should be noted that in most cases the specimens involved are small which have been caught by accident rather than as a deliberate act of the trade. On the other hand birds like the Parakeets, Grackles, Munias and Quails are known to be trapped on a commercial scale.

The price tags attached to these birds range from Rs. 45 for a pair of Spotted Munias to as high as Rs. 750 or more for a pair of Purple Coot etc. Given below is a list of prices of some birds offered for sale in the Colombo and Kandy areas.

COLOMBO

Purple Coot	— Rs. 350/- (pair)
Spotted Munias	— Rs. 50/- "
Alexandrine Parakeet	Rs. 300/- "

Blue Breasted Banded Rail	—	Rs. 200/- (single)
Rose Ringed Parakeet	—	Rs. 50/- "
Common Grackle	—	Rs. 350/- "
Banded Crane	—	Rs. 200/- "
Kora	—	Rs. 400/- "
Malay Bittern	—	Rs. 400/- "
Golden plover	—	Rs. 200/- "

KANDY

Alexandrine Parakeet	—	Rs. 300/- (pair)
Layard's Parakeet	—	Rs. 600/- "
Rose-Ringed Parakeet	—	Rs. 250/- "
Ceylon Bustard-Quails	—	Rs. 85/- "
Spotted Doves	—	Rs. 250/- "
Purple coot	—	Rs. 750/- "
Common Grackles	—	Rs. 600/- "

Different methods are known to be employed in the capture of these birds depending on the birds behaviour. Most commonly used methods are the mist nets, ground nets, baited traps, etc. Another method of capture is to remove the young birds from their nests especially from tree cavities. This is especially so in the case of Grackles and Parakeets.

Adult birds captured by netting no doubt undergo a lot of suffering till they are transferred to cages. Sometimes many die while in the process of netting—a good example are the mist nets where very often the birds are scorched by the blazing sun when not removed in time. The captured birds are usually kept in crowded cages and die quite often as they fight for survival, trying to escape from the cage injuring themselves in the mesh or while in transit without sufficient food and water or without proper ventilation. Adult birds have often been found to be averse to being put in cages where they tend to commit suicide. Also these bird catchers prefer young birds as they can be trained to live in cages and also make them talk. This may be one reason why young birds are preferred. However capturing young birds while still in their nests too have their drawbacks. Most of them fail to reach adult hood due to various reasons such as diseases, lack of proper food, etc.

Even if the food supply is good, they do not eat due to fear since they are not used to the new environment and therefore die of starvation. When they are brought to the pet shops they are once again kept in crowded cages and sometimes die due to lack of proper food or proper hygienic conditions. The most affected are the Alexandrine and the Rose-ringed Parakeets which are kept in cramped up conditions without the slightest well-being. The Bustard Quails in a pet shop in Kandy had even lost their feathers due to the unhealthy and unnatural conditions.

Most of these birds especially the endemics are protected by the law under section 30 of the Fauna and flora protection ordinance, chapter 469. According to the law it should be the responsibility of the Wild-Life officials who should enforce the law together with assistance from the Police department if necessary. However we notice that this hardly happens. Then who should protect and preserve these birds is anybody's guess.

Some species in Sri Lanka which are common may not be protected by the law because they are regarded as pests and are not endangered. However considering the cruelty that is taking place there should be some kind of a provision for the protection of these birds in the "cruelty to animals act". Therefore we see that there is some kind of a provision in the law which protects these birds from exploitation. But sadly the problem lies in not enforcing the laws.

From the view point of conservation we should be a little consoled that the trade itself is not a large scale one. But nevertheless when our endemics are involved we should take serious note of it. Furthermore if this trade is permitted to continue it could very well lead to an export venture in the near future involving the endemics too. This could really spell disaster to Sri Lanka's avifauna.

References :

- Ceylon Bird Club, Notes For November, 1988, Page 79.
- Ceylon Bird Club, Notes For December, 1981, Pages 82, 83, 84.
- Ceylon Daily News, Saturday March 18, 1989, Page 25.
- The Sunday Times, Sunday March 12, 1989, Page 16.

SLAUGHTER ON THE BEACH

—Suhashini Hewavisenth

It was a lovely morning. The sun wasn't very strong. The sound of waves was disturbed by the chatter of fisherman, who were busy involved in distributing and selling their catch of fish.

As we got down from the jeep at a fishing village on the North western coast of the island, all eyes were focused on us. We started walking along the beach, avoiding the remains of fish thrown on the ground, while peeping into the boats to take a glance at the catch of fish. Skulls and fins of fish, pieces of Lobsters, dead corals, skeletons of starfish and sea urchins were scattered all over the beach. The strong fishy odour around the area and the noise of crows wasn't very pleasant. Conditions in the small cadjan huts reflected their poverty.

The fishing village, known as the "turtle grave yard" showed no signs of piled turtle carapaces. Anuk who had previously been here, tried to locate the carapaces, but failed to do so. With previous experience I knew, it was always easy to get information from kids, if they were approached carefully. We kept on chatting to the boys who were following us. All of them were aware of the fact that it is against the law to kill turtles. Recently there had been a few police raids and since then all the carapaces were hidden.

We assured them that we were not from the police, and that we were only interested in taking measurements of carapaces. Within a few minutes, five Olive ridley carapaces were placed in front of us and the number kept on increasing. A lot of carapaces were being used as kitchen utensils, as containers to dry fish and for feeding dogs etc. While Anuk and I were busy measuring the carapaces and noting down the number of scutes, Childes and Chamendra we chatted to a few fishermen. One person pointed to a boat, anchored about

100 meters away from the shore and said that there was a Leatherback turtle in it, which they intended killing when there was less people around. Pretending that we have never seen a live turtle, we pleaded with them to show us one. Surprisingly they suggested that we could go to that boat.

The four of us were taken in a smaller boat, to the one where the turtle was. The sight that met our eyes was most heart breaking. A young female turtle lay there, tied mercilessly with ropes. Her head and flippers bore wounds that were still bleeding. She was lying motionless, as if she had resigned her self to the fate that awaited her. The tensed silence that prevailed was broken by her heavy breathing. "Why does she deserve such a cruel fate?" I pondered. I had an uncontrollable urge to plead with them to set her free, but I knew such a request would be utter foolishness on my part. To adopt an unsympathetic attitude towards the animal would be the best thing to do, under the circumstances I thought.

My reverie was broken by the chatter of fisher men. They were thrilled to be photographed and by now had become very friendly. Some suggested that we could take photographs of the slaughter and take some meat with us as well. Without even waiting for a reply, four men raised the tied animal with difficulty and put her in to the sea. They took care to hold fast to the rope. Once she was in the water, the poor animal would have got a hope of getting back her freedom. But she was dragged on to the shore with a smaller boat.

By the time we were taken back to the shore, the turtle had been turned on her back on the beach, exposed to the scorching sun. It was all excitement among the crowd that had gattered around her. Perhaps she was aware of the fate that was in store for her, that she kept on

flapping her flippers vigorously unable to offer any other form of resistance. Tears poured from her eyes. John (not his real name), sharpened his long knife and approached the animal. Then he started slitting the plastron while the animal was still alive. Her eyes pleaded for mercy while she kept on flapping her flippers vigorously - the only thing she was free to do. She displayed the immense pain she was undergoing by a few gurgling noises. Being a dumb animal that was all she could do. If she had started wailing or howling it would have been beyond our endurance. It was quite a normal job for John. He next proceeded to slit the throat and then cut the lower part of the jaw. I closed my eyes. A cold shiver ran through my body. I glanced at the audience. There were no sign of sympathy or feeling to be seen on any face. I had to watch this process ever so unwillingly.

Gradually the whole plastron was removed, exposing the inner musculature. It was one mass of flesh. The flapping of the flippers was getting less forceful now. By this time she had lost the battle.

I have been working with turtle hatchlings and juveniles for more than one year, and had got very attached to these harmless animals. This sheer brutality was more than I could bear. Tears pour down unrestrainedly down my cheeks. I walked away slowly and joined Anuk. The audience had been surprised to see my tears. They had made inquiries from Childes and Chamendra as to why I was crying.

Chamendra had photographed the whole process, while Childes had noted down details. Later the meat was sold at Rs. 15/- kilogram.

Life of a Leatherback turtle, although it is an endangered species according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), was taken away in this brutal manner. In Sri Lanka,

all marine turtles are protected under the fauna and flora protection ordinance, chapter 469 as amended by acts no 44 of 1964 and no 1 of 1970. It is an offence under section 31 of the act, for any person to possess, capture, kill and injure a turtle or collect their eggs for consumption. It was obvious that the fishermen were aware of the law. But economic pressures tend to make them, oblivious of the law. When it is a question of food on the table or obeying the law, one can guess what their choice would be. When the fishing is poor a turtle that swims by is not going to be spared.

Sadly we left the fishing village. A few weeks later I visited a landing site in Negombo. I was surprised to see a Leatherback turtle turned on it's back, waiting to be slaughtered. If I had waited for another half an hour I could have watched the entire process all over again, but I couldn't bear to witness that inhuman act again.

In town, they are not worried about the police and the slaughter takes place openly, where as in a rural fishing village they are more careful. A lot of Olive ridley turtles are also being slaughtered here regularly.

How could one put a stop to this brutal slaughter? What importance can be attached to my trying to conserve turtles at a time when people are slaughtering each other, in the most brutal manner?" I asked my husband. "That is the very reason why you should conserve animals" he replied, with a forced smile.

Acknowledgment

I am grateful to Mr Childes Jayawardena and Miss Anuk Illangakoon from the NARA who accompanied me on this trip and grateful thanks go to my husband, Mr Chamendra Hewavisenthi for all the assistance and genuine interest taken throughout this excursion.

I thank my mother, Mrs. Sumana De Zylva for her valuable comments on this paper.

IN MEMORIAM

— Rodney Jonklaas

On my return to Colombo recently, I was deeply grieved to learn of the death of Rodney Jonklaas. He was my oldest Sri Lankan friend. I met him exactly thirty-five years ago this month, when I first set foot in the island, on my way to the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. He was introduced to me by another remarkable character, the late Major Raven-Hart, who took me to the Dehiwela Zoo, where Rodney was then Assistant Director.

His sudden death was a great shock, because although I knew he had been ill, the very last letter I received from him said that he was recovering and now felt "a new man".

He accompanied Mike Wilson and myself on most of our early underwater expeditions, culminating in our 1963 visit to the Great Basses Reef, as recorded in **The Treasure of the Great Reef and Indian Ocean Adventure**.

In the late 1950s, he was the star of our first underwater documentary, "Beneath the Seas of Ceylon", which Mike Wilson made for the Tea Propaganda Board and the Ceylon Tourist Bureau. I was glad to see it telecast on Rupavahini in a memorial tribute to Rodney last month.

Even now, I cannot believe that he is gone: I still have to stop myself collecting news items that I know would amuse him.....

With his passing, Sri Lanka loses someone with a unique knowledge of its flora and fauna, as well as a person of remarkable artistic, literary and musical talents.

The Seas of Ceylon will not be the same without him.

Arthur C. Clarke
1 December, 1989

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bilthoven, 23 October 1989
3722 WE — Putterlaan 13
Netherlands

The Editor,
LORIS Journal of the WNPS.

The forest Wagtail

Dear Editor,

Once again, it was a pleasant and welcome surprise to receive the December 1988 issue of LORIS, which arrived here last week.

As usual, I found the articles quite interesting, and I was particularly impressed by the contributions of Dr. Ranjan Fernando, and of the one-and-only Dr. Arthur C. Clarke.

Of course, I also read all the other contributions with great interest.

But what, perhaps, was the most important "message" of this issue for me was the fact that, notwithstanding all the sad news that reaches us from your beautiful Island, there still seem to be people who can, and do, interest themselves in the protection of the beautiful nature of Sri Lanka.

And every contribution brings back most precious memories of the years I spent at Kalutara, working for W.H.O., from 1955 till 1959.

I was astonished to read that, since I left Sri Lanka, the population has doubled! That must be another source for concern.

Needless to say that I hope that you would continue sending me the coming issues of LORIS.

Hoping that peace will soon return to Sri Lanka, and that the Wildlife Society may, once again, expand its activities, I remain.

yours gratefully
H. M. C. Poortman

Two forest wagtails (*Dendronanthus indicus*) were seen by me on the 14th October 1989 at Imaduwa, 13 miles from Galle along the Deniyaya road. I thought this is unusual, as G.M. Henry says in his *Birds of Ceylon* "Most take up quarters in the jungles of the northern half of the Island, a few find their way upcountry", on its arrival on Ceylon.

At about 9.30 a.m. my attention was drawn to a small sandpiper-like brown and white bird walking along a shady path in a well wooded garden in the proximity of a paddy field. As I focused my binoculars the pipit-like body and the long tail indicated it to be a wag-tail. The blackish bill, white supercilium, greyish brown upperparts, creamy white abdomen, 3—4 vertical wing bars, black double bars on the breast and the long dark tail edged with white left little doubt as to its identity as the Forest Wagtail; later confirmed with the aid of G.M. Henry's *Birds of Ceylon* and Ben King's *Birds of South East Asia*. When I was sketching this bird, another one flew in and alighted besides it, displaying the white-edged tail in flight. Both of them continued to walk along the path, picking up insects, in a gait aptly described by Henry as a "sedate walk" in contrast to the active running of the grey Wagtail. There was no up and down tail-wagging, but I failed to notice any side to side movement either, perhaps because I was too absorbed in noting down the details of the plumage. The birds were observed under good lighting conditions with a pair of 10 x 50 binoculars at a range of about 50 M for 10—15 mins. The only other bird, perhaps, which can be confused with it is the Pied Wagtail in its winter / immature plumage, but the vertical wing bars (as opposed to Magpie-Robin like horizontal lines) and the mannerisms leave little doubt.

I would like to know whether this bird had been sighted in the southern parts Sri Lanka before.

Thanking You,

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Athula Dissanayake MBBS, MD
Assistant Neurologist
Institute of Neurology
General Hospital, Colombo.

P.S.

If my observation is of any significance, I shall give a brief account of my previous experiences. I have been an amateur ornithologist since 1973. My "list" of species seen and identified in the field numbers 188, which includes several rare/exotic species as the Nothorn Orange-Leaded Ground Thrush, Trogon, Black-beakell Yellow Woodpecker, Ceylon Grey Partridge, Caspian Tern, Shatin Falcon, Green Imperial Pigeon, Grey Plover, Banded Crane etc. My previous articles to LORIS have been —

Observations of a Swps owl	— Dec.	1976
Ceylons Tailor Bird	— June	1978
A Kestral on the Wing	— June	1979

2 October 1989

SOMAPALA

Somapala died in October '89 unwept and unsung. The last Buddhist rites were per-

formed, and he was cremated by the ordinary folk he loved and lived with.

I met Somapala on my last visit to Yala a few weeks ago. This once robust man, who never knew a days illness, was weak and frail and had to struggle to get about with the aid of a Palu' stick.

Somapala was a unique figure, the like of whom we shall never see again. He left his home as a lad and in the early twenties, joined and roamed the wilds of our country in the company of jungle and nature lovers like the late Dr. R. L. Spittel. Later he settled himself at Yala and there was not an inch of that Ruhunu Sanctuary he did not know. He had no wordly possessions and he needed none. He was always helpful to those in need. He taught me (and many others) the ways of the jungle, with a knowledge that few had.

We who loved nature and our jungles will mourn for him and we will miss him.

Will it not be a fitting tribute to this unique man, who lived so close to nature, to name after him a villu, a hillock or even a tree in Yala- the sanctuary which he loved dearly and knew so well?

His spirit, I am sure, must be amongst the elephants, the leopards, the bears, the birds and the trees of the Ruhunu jungles. It will be their love too, for he loved them all.

Dr. Andrew Nanayakkara



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WNPS of Sri Lanka
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