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## **Campus Birding: Diversity of Birds in CVSc, AAU, Khanapara**

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### **Introduction:**

Birds are beautiful gifts of nature. These winged creatures come in a variety of size, shape, color, etc. with their unique feeding habits and habitats. In fact, biodiversity is basically the variety of life on earth, especially variation at the genetic, species, and ecosystem levels. Birds are a group of endothermic vertebrates, characterised by feathers, toothless beaked jaws, the laying of hard-shelled eggs, a high metabolic rate, a four-chambered heart, and a strong yet lightweight skeleton (Gilbert).

### **Birding as a hobby:**

A thing of beauty is a source of joy. Birds are beautiful creatures; some birds can even sing or make a sweet call! Truly speaking, Nature gives an ample scope to recreate our-self by involving in activities or taking up a hobby like birding, wildlife safari, trekking in the woods/hills, etc. As the saying goes “Birds of the same feather flock together”, we (Derhasar and Leons) find our

joy in watching birds and appreciating the biodiversity of nature. In fact, enjoying the beauty of nature is one of the most pleasant sources of recreation.

### **Location:**

The campus of CVSc, AAU, Khanapara, located at the eastern fringe of the Guwahati city, has a number of evergreen trees and is bordered by the hills of the Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary and thus making a hotspot for more than 100 species of different birds including both resident and migratory birds. In fact, it is like a mini heaven for fulfilling a bird lover's hobby of birding. Our birding location mainly involved surrounding the PG Hostel, AT Hostel, the hillock behind PG hostel, periphery of Livestock Farm complexes, Canal running through the campus, fodder cultivation area and low-laying water logged wetland areas behind the farm complexes.

**Gears used:** Canon EOS 1300D, 50-250 mm lens

**Software used:** Picasa

### Collection of our work:

We hereby present the checklist of birds in CVSc, Khanapara campus along with some of our birding pictures that we have recorded in a span of two years, though the list is not exhaustive and many species are yet to be recorded, as there is every possibility of missing some elusive species that prefer to stay in the thickets or the adjacent hill tops, away from human sight. The list includes different species covering from sunbirds to flying eagles on the skies. Most preferably, the spring and autumn seasons attract a variety of different birds from different species and usually most of the birds are especially sighted in the morning and the evening hours.

### Checklist of birds in CVSc, AAU, Khanapara Campus:

#### A. COMMON RESIDENT BIRDS:

Sl.no	Common Name & Scientific Name	Location where spotted
1	Ashy Drongo ( <i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i> )	At the hillock behind PG hostel.
2	Ashy Woodswallow ( <i>Artamus fuscus</i> )	Behind PG hostel and farm complexes.
3	Asian Koel ( <i>Eudynamis scolapaceus</i> )	Near PG hostel, AT hostel and Farm complexes.
4	Asian Openbill ( <i>Anastomus oscitans</i> )	Wetlands behind the farm complex.
5	Asian Palm Swift ( <i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i> )	On flight above PG hostel area and the hillock.
6	Asian Pied Starling ( <i>Gracupica contra</i> )	Throughout the campus.
7	Baya Weaver ( <i>Ploceus philippinus</i> )	On bushes and trees behind the PG hostel.
8	Black-hooded Oriole ( <i>Oriolus xanthornus</i> )	Throughout the campus and at the Hillock
9	Black Drongo ( <i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i> )	Throughout the campus.
10	Black Kite ( <i>Milvus migrans</i> )	On flight, near hostel, the hillock and farm complexes.
11	Blue-bearded Bee-eater ( <i>Nyctornis athertoni</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees behind PG hostel and at the hillock.
12	Blue-tailed Bee-eater ( <i>Merops philippinus</i> )	In the trees of the hillock and the power-lines behind PG hostel and farm complexes.
13	Blue-throated Barbet ( <i>Megalaima asiatica</i> )	In trees throughout the campus.
14	Bronzed Drongo ( <i>Dicrurus aeneus</i> )	On top of the hillock behind PG hostel.
15	Cattle Egret ( <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
16	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater ( <i>Merops leschenaultia</i> )	The hillock and the power-lines behind PG hostel.
17	Chestnut-tailed Starling ( <i>Sturnia malabarica</i> )	Near PG Hostel and the farm complexes.
18	Cinereous Tit ( <i>Parus major</i> )	Throughout the campus.
19	Cinnamon Bittern ( <i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i> )	On flight along the canal behind PG hostel.
20	Common Green Magpie ( <i>Cissa chinensis</i> )	Spotted only twice, on trees behind PG

		hostel.
21	Common hill myna ( <i>Gracula religiosa</i> )	Near PG Hostel and the Poultry farm complex.
22	Common Hoopoe ( <i>Upupa epops</i> )	In-front of PG and AT hostel and near farm complexes.
23	Common Iora ( <i>Argithina tiphia</i> )	Near PG hostel and the Hillcok.
24	Common Kingfisher ( <i>Alcedo atthis</i> )	Near the pond behind the AT hostel.
25	Common Hawk Cuckoo ( <i>Hierococcyx varius</i> )	Near PG and AT hostel and the adjacent hillocks.
26	Common Myna ( <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> )	Very common throughout the campus.
27	Common/Rock Pigeon ( <i>Columba livia</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
28	Common Moorhen ( <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> )	Commonly spotted at the pond behind the AT hostel.
29	Common Tailorbird ( <i>Orthotomus sutorius</i> )	Throughout the campus.
30	Coppersmith Barbet ( <i>Megalaima haemacephala</i> )	Commonly spotted in trees near PG and AT hostel and the farm complexes.
31	Crested Serpent Eagle ( <i>Spilornis cheela</i> )	Spotted once atop tree on the hillock behind PG hostel.
32	Crimson Sunbird ( <i>Aethopyga siparaja</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
33	Eastern Jungle Crow ( <i>Corvus macrorhynchos levaillantii</i> )	Near PG, AT hostel and the adjacent hillock.
34	Eurasian Collared Dove ( <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> )	At the hillock near farm complex.
35	Eurasian tree sparrow ( <i>Passer montanus</i> )	PG hostel garden.
36	Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker ( <i>Dendrocopos nanus</i> )	Near PG and AT hostel and the hillock.
37	Greater Adjutant ( <i>Leptoptilos dubius</i> )	On flight in the skies above the campus.
38	Green Bee-eater ( <i>Merops orientalis</i> )	The hillock and the power-lines behind PG hostel.
39	Great Myna ( <i>Acridotheres grandis</i> )	Near PG hostel and the Academic building.
40	Green-billed Malkoha ( <i>Rhopodytes tristis</i> )	The hillock behind the PG Hostel.
41	Greater Coucal ( <i>Centropus sinensis</i> )	The hillock behind the PG Hostel.
42	Grey-headed Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus cinereus</i> )	Wetland behind the farm complexes
43	Hair-crested drongo ( <i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i> )	Near PG hostel and on top of the hillock.
44	House Crow ( <i>Corvus splendens</i> )	Throughout the campus.
45	House Sparrow ( <i>Passer domesticus</i> )	Throughout the campus.
46	Indian Cuckoo ( <i>Cuculus micropterus</i> )	Occasionally spotted in trees on top of adjacent Hills.
47	Indian Pond Heron ( <i>Ardeola grayii</i> )	Wetlands, near pond and along the canal behind PG hostel.
48	Indian Roller ( <i>Coracias benghalensis</i> )	In-front of AT hostel and at the hillock opposite the cattle farm.
49	Intermediate Egret ( <i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i> )	Wetland near Sahiwal cattle farm.
50	Jungle Babbler ( <i>Turdoides striata</i> )	Throughout the campus.
51	Jungle Myna ( <i>Acridotheres fusus</i> )	Throughout the campus.
52	Large Cuckooshrike ( <i>Carocina macei</i> )	Near PG hostel and the hillock
53	Lesser Adjutant ( <i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i> )	Occasionally spotted in wet lands behind farm complex
54	Lesser Goldenback ( <i>Dinopium benghalense</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees near PG hostel and the hillock.
55	Lesser Whistling-duck ( <i>Dendrocygna javanica</i> )	Spotted occasionally near the pond area.
56	Lineated Barbet ( <i>Megalaima lineate</i> )	Occasionally spotted in trees throughout the campus.

57	Little Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax niger</i> )	Occasionally spotted near the pond behind AT Hostel.
58	Little Egret ( <i>Ergetta garzetta</i> )	Occasionally spotted in low laying wetland near buffalofarm
59	Mrs Gould's Sunbird ( <i>Aethopyga gouldiae</i> )	Hostel gardens
60	Olive-backed Pipit ( <i>Anthus hodgsoni</i> )	Rarely spotted (twice) on power-line near PG hostel.
61	Orange headed Thrush ( <i>Zoothera citrina</i> )	Spotted only twice, near marsh covered by bushes, behind the PG Hostel.
62	Oriental Honey-buzard ( <i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> )	Occasionally spotted atop trees on the hillock and flying above the hillock and farm complexes.
63	Oriental Magpie Robin ( <i>Copsychus saularis</i> )	Throughout the campus.
64	Oriental Pied Hornbill ( <i>Anthraceroceros albirostris</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees near the AT hostel, PG Hostel and at the hillock.
65	Oriental turtle dove ( <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i> )	Spotted at the marsh area of the canal, near the hillock, near the bridge before the cattle farm.
66	Oriental white-eye ( <i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees throughout the campus, especially at the flowering season.
67	Paddyfield Pipit ( <i>Anthus rufulus</i> )	Spotted on grass fields near the farm complexes.
68	Pied Bushchat ( <i>Saxicola caprata</i> )	In the bushes behind the farm complexes.
69	Plaintive Cuckoo ( <i>Cacomantis merulinus</i> )	Spotted on trees near the PG and AT hostel and behind the farm complexes.
70	Purple Heron ( <i>Ardea purpurea</i> )	Wetland behind the farm complexes
71	Purple Sunbird ( <i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
72	Red Collared Dove ( <i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees near the cattle and pig farm.
73	Red Junglefowl ( <i>Gallus gallus</i> )	Area behind the PG hostel and the hillock
74	Red-rumped Swallow ( <i>Cecropis daurica</i> )	Spotted perching on power-lines and flying behind the PG hostel area.
75	Red-vented Bulbul ( <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> )	Very common throughout the campus.
76	Red-wattled Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus indicus</i> )	Spotted at the marsh area of the canal, near the hillock.
77	Red-whiskered Bulbul ( <i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i> )	Usually spotted behind the PG hostel on bushes and trees at the hillock.
78	Rose-ringed Parakeet ( <i>Psittacula krameri</i> )	Usually spotted at the trees near the PG hostel, AT hostel, Farm complexes.
79	Rufous Treepie ( <i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
80	Rufous woodpecker ( <i>Micropternus brachyurus</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees near the PG hostel.
81	Scaly-breasted Munia ( <i>Lonchura punctulata</i> )	Spotted throughout the campus in grass and bushes.
82	Shikra ( <i>Accipiter badius</i> )	Occasionally spotted in flight and in trees atop the adjacent hills.
83	Spotted Dove ( <i>Stigmatopelia chinensis</i> )	Common throughout the campus.
84	Spotted Owlet ( <i>Athene brama</i> )	Commonly seen in the evening in-front of PG and AT hostel and the farm complexes.
85	Stork-billed Kingfisher ( <i>Pelargopsis capensis</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees near the

		pond behind AT hostel and Main-hostel.
86	Straited Swallow ( <i>Ceropsis striolata</i> )	Spotted perching on power-lines and flying behind the PG hostel area.
87	Thick-billed Green Pigeon ( <i>Treron curvirostra</i> )	Spotted at the marsh area of the canal, near the hillock, near the bridge before the cattle farm.
88	White-breasted Waterhen ( <i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i> )	Spotted behind the PG hostel, AT hostel and marsh area along the canal.
89	White-eyed Buzzard ( <i>Butastur teesa</i> )	On tree top of the hillock
90	White-rumped Munia ( <i>Lonchura striata</i> )	Occasionally spotted in-front of PG hostel garden.
91	White-rumped shama ( <i>Copsychus malabaricus</i> )	Spotted once near the Pig Farm.
92	White-throated Kingfisher ( <i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i> )	Very commonly spotted behind the PG and AT hostel.
93	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon ( <i>Treron phoenicopterus</i> )	Spotted on trees near the PG hostel, farm complex and at the adjacent hillocks.
94	Zitting Cisticola ( <i>Cisticola juncidis</i> )	In the bushes near the hillock and behind farm complexes.

## B. SESONAL MIGRATORY BIRDS:

### Summer Visitors:

Sl. No.	Common Name & Scientific Name	Spotted location
1	Jacobin Cuckoo ( <i>Clamator jacobinus</i> )	Spotted only once behind the PG Hostel.

### Winter Visitors:

Sl. No.	Common Name & Scientific Name	Location where Spotted
1	Barn Swallow ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> )	Behind PG hostel, AT hostel and near pond area.
2	Booted Eagle ( <i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i> )	On flight above the hillock and farm complexes.
3	Brown Shrike ( <i>Lanius cristatus</i> )	In bushes and trees behind PG hostel and the farm complexes.
4	Blyth's Leaf Warbler ( <i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i> )	On trees behind PG hostel
5	Changeable Hawk Eagle <i>Nisaetus (cirrhatus) limnaeetus</i>	On flight on top of the hillock near PG hostel
6	Common Stonechat ( <i>Saxicola torquatus</i> )	On bushes behind the farm complexes
7	Citrine Wagtail ( <i>Motacilla citreola</i> )	Along the canal behind PG hostel.
8	Dusky Warbler ( <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i> )	Occasionally spotted on trees behind the PG hostel, especially at the flowering season.
9	Green Sandpiper ( <i>Tringa ochropus</i> )	On low-laying wetland near the buffalo farm complex.

10	Grey-backed Shrike ( <i>Lanius tephronotus</i> )	In bushes and trees behind PG hostel and the farm complexes.
11	Grey Wagtail ( <i>Motacilla cinerea</i> )	Along the canal behind PG hostel.
12	Long-tailed Shrike ( <i>Lanius schach</i> )	In bushes and trees behind PG hostel and the farm complexes.
13	Siberian Rubythroat ( <i>Luscinia calliope</i> )	On trees near the farm complexes
14	Siberian stonechat or Asian stonechat ( <i>Saxicola maurus</i> )	In the bushes behind the farm complexes.
15	Taiga Flycatcher ( <i>Ficedula albicilla</i> )	In trees near cattle and Pig farm.
16	White Wagtail ( <i>Motacilla alba</i> )	Along the canal behind PG hostel.

**Conclusion:** Birds are an important part of our ecosystem and they help to control insect pests from the crop field besides breaking the silence of the forests by their sweet songs and also help the forests grow by spreading manure and seeds in their droppings. However, due to the ever shrinking forests due to expanding human habitations, many birds and animals are endangered and facing the brink of extinction. Thus, the biodiversity of Nature is in a descending trend with the fast growing pace of the modern world.

**Take-home message:** Nature is the mother of biodiversity which has an awe inspiring beauty. It is our duty to “Save Nature to Save Our Mother Earth!”

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