

Project Update: November 2021

Concrete information on seasonal distribution and habitat preference of birds is a central dogma for bird monitoring and conservation planning. This is particularly important in areas where anthropogenic activities are major factors threatening the survival of birds. The project intended to evaluate species composition, relative abundance and habitat preference of birds and partially fill the existing information gap. This allows tracking population change over time, prioritising conservation measures for threatened species, highlighting the role and importance of the site in the bird's annual cycle and encourages continued monitoring of the sites by taking corrective measures.

The team has completed the project successfully and come up with astonishing results. Since the start of the project, the locals have been part of the project. The project was carried out in the outskirts of Asmara, the capital city, and covered both the wet and dry seasons. The survey area included irrigated farmlands, open grazing areas, riparian woodlands in Park Semaetat, and wetlands, primarily reservoirs and sewage streams in Asmara.

Activity 1: Bird Surveys

Throughout the study period, 120 bird species were recorded, 47 of which are waterbirds. The list of birds includes both migratory and resident species, as well as globally and regionally threatened species.



Fig.-1: Mixed flocks of waterbirds. **Fig.-2:** Sacred ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) & Wattled Ibis (*Bostrychia carunculata*)

Table: List of bird species registered during the study period

Common Name			
Abdim's Stork	Green Sandpiper	Sacred Ibis	Northern Pintail Duck
Abyssinian Black-wheater	Grey Heron	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	Erpanger's Lark
Abyssinian Roller	Ground scraper Thrush	Sooty Falcon	Northern Shoveler

African Citril	Hadada Ibis	Speckled Mouthbird	Gull-billed Tern
African Cuckoo	Hamerkop	Speckled Pigeon	Black-tailed Godwit
African Silverbill	Helmeted guineafowl	Spur-Winged Plover	Little Egret
Augur Buzzard	House Crow	Steppe Eagle	Pied Wheatear
Baglafaecht Weaver	House Sparrow	Stricky Seedeater	Three banded Plover
Black-Headed Heron	Isbelline Wheater	Swainson's Sparrow	Ring-necked Plover
Black-Headed Plover	Lark spp (2)	Tekeze Sunbird	Orthland Bunting
Blak-crowned Tchagra	Laughing Dove	Thekla Lark	White-Backed Vulture
Black Kite	Lesser Kestrel	Towny Eagle	Common kestrel
Black-winged Stilt	Little grebe	Variable Sunbird	Black-Caped Warbler
Blanford's Lark	Little Swallow	Village Weaver	Blue Breasted Bee-eater
Blue Eared Starling	Little Swift	Village Indigobird	Black-Billed Egret
Brown-rumped Seedeater	Moccoa Duck	Wattled Ibis	Malakayt kingfisher
Common Fiscal	Mocking Cliff Chat	Wattled Plover	Falcon (Unidentified)
Common Bulbul	Namaqua Dove	Wheatear (Unidentified)	Green-Backed Commoropetra
Common Cuckoo	Northern Red-Bishop	white Throated Robin	Cinerous Banting
Cut-Throat Finch	Pied Crow	White Winged Turn	Fun-Tailed Raven
Dark-chanting Goshawk	Pink-backed Pelican	Willow warbler	Somali Starling
Desert Lark	Pin-tailed Whydah	Yellow-billed Egret	Red Shank
Diderick Cuckoo	Red-Chicked Cordon-bleu	Yellow-billed Kite	Eurasian Teal
Dusky Turtle Dove	Red-Collared Widowbird	Yellow-billed Stork	Garganey
Eagle	Red-eyed Dove	Yellow-breasted Barbet	Glossy Ibis
Egyptian Goose	Red-eyed Fire finch	Zitting Cisticola	Ring-necked Dove
Eurasian Coot	Red-knoped Coot	Egret spp. (Unidentified)	Rock Martine
European Bee Eater	Red-Winged Starling	Grey Wagtail	Booted Eagle
Garden Warbler	Roughet's Rail	Yellow Wagtail	Squacu Heron
Grassland Pipit	Ruff	Common Sandpiper	Yellow-Billed Waxbill

Bird species were recorded during both the wet and dry seasons and the number of individuals was counted or estimated to determine the relative abundance of each species at various seasons and study sites.

Activity 2: Awareness programme

The team has successfully reached out the local communities, in collaboration with the local governmental authorities, and organised awareness programmes for community representatives and schoolchildren to increase their ornithological consciousness level, promote conservational ethic, appreciate the value of birds and, in long term, take part in bird monitoring scheme.



Fig.-3: Trainees practicing in the field