This guide covers 135 familiar birds found in Kerala as well as States like Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. For ease of reference, they have been sorted into the following 5 categories.

Wetlands include lakes, ponds, rivers, mangroves, swamps and marshy areas, which are important habitats used by birds for breeding and nesting. Most of the birds in this group (eg. ducks, cormorants, waders, herons etc) are only seen at wetlands whereas there are a few (Cattle Egret, White-throated Kingfisher, Yellow-wattled Lapwing) that are frequently seen away from water as well. Several migratory species visit our wetlands in winter.

Birds of Prey or Raptors hunt and feed on other animals, including smaller birds. They have excellent eyesight, strong feet, sharp talons for hunting, and a hooked beak for tearing into flesh. Among the birds listed in this group, some (eg. Black Kite, Brahminy Kite, Shikra, Barn Owl) have adapted to human habitats, whereas others (kestrels, harriers, honey-buzzards) are most often seen in open habitats like farmland/scrub. In winter, raptors are also seen hunting at wetlands where there are large congregations of waterfowl in winter.

GROUND FEEDING BIRDS

Ground feeders are a diverse group of birds that are primarily terrestrial and feed on the ground or in the undergrowth. They include large birds like pheasants, pigeons, crows to medium-sized birds like thrushes, babblers, mynas and starlings. Some ground feeders like wagtails are seen at wetlands, and some are forest dwellers (eg. Malabar Whistling-Thrush), but most prefer open areas or scrub. This category also includes birds like shrikes, rollers and chats which may perch low in a bush, but find their prey (small insects or reptiles) on the ground.

AERIAL FEEDING BIRDS

Aerial feeders like swallows and swifts are insectivorous birds that hunt and feed in flight. They have pointed wings and can often be seen gliding gracefully through the air or performing acrobatics to catch insects. They are very fast in flight and prefer open areas near water. At dawn and dusk, they may be found perching in groups on wires.

Arboreal birds are those whose life cycles are associated with trees and shrubs, and they include a wide variety of birds found in forests, open woodland and urban gardens. Many arboreal birds feed on fruits and berries (eg. hornbills, bulbuls, barbets, parakeets), while others feed on insects from tree bark (eq. woodpeckers). among leaves (eg. cuckoos, orioles, warblers) or in the air (eg. flycatchers, drongos, bee-eaters). Some, like sunbirds, feed on nectar from flowers. Smaller species are seen at a variety of heights while larger birds prefer the forest canopy.

Gender symbols indicate where the male and female of the species look different. If no symbols are shown, it means that they look similar.



Migratory birds which come to peninsular India during the winter (October -March), from their breeding grounds in the Himalayas or Central Asia/Europe.

Birds restricted to well-forested areas of the Western Ghats. They may replace species that are common in other parts of the peninsula.

Size indicates the length of the bird from beak tip to tail tip; br)indicates breeding plumage.

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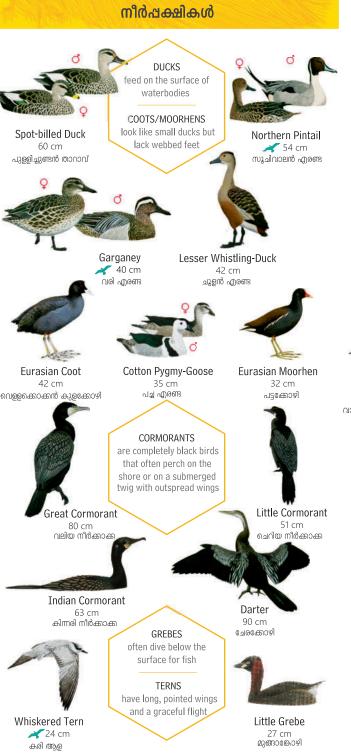


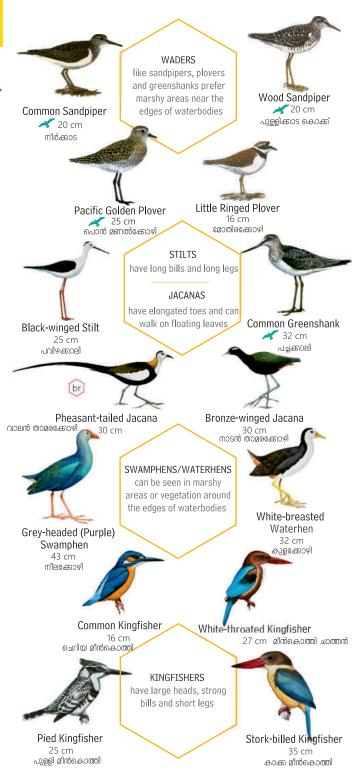
Garima Bhatia & Suhel Quade (WWF, Kerala)

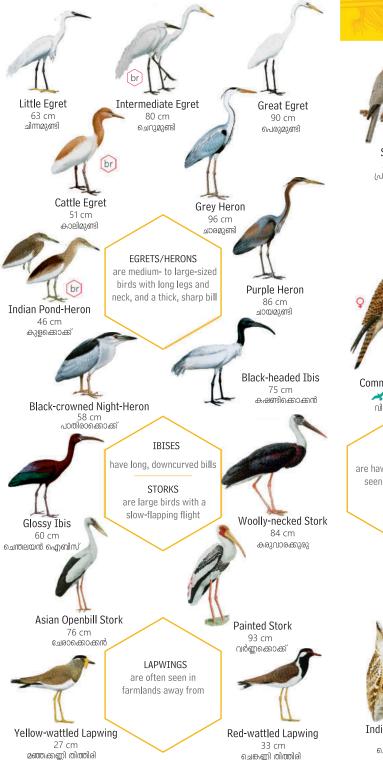


a pocket guide to 135 familiar birds

WETLAND BIRDS





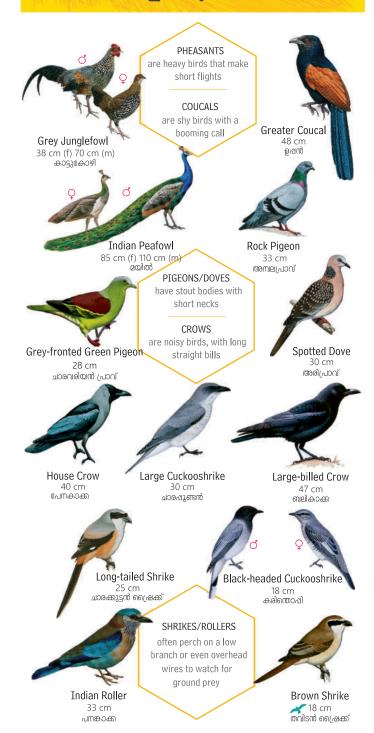


BIRDS OF PREY ഇരപിടിയൻ പക്ഷികൾ



ചെമ്പൻ നത്ത്

GROUND FEEDING BIRDS നിലത്ത് ഇരതേടുന്ന പക്ഷികൾ





21 cm

റോസ്മൈന

▲ 24 cm



ARBOREAL BIRDS മരങ്ങളിൽ ഇരതേടുന്ന പക്ഷികൾ

