

Call for Field Research for Bird Conservation

Are you interested in bird research and evidence-based conservation of birds in India? If you are excited about studying natural history, ecology, or behaviour of India's birds to generate key evidence for conservation action, read on...

Despite the wide interest in birds and birdwatching in India, several of our bird species are in need of research attention and lacking basic information. The State of India's Birds 2023 report has highlighted the importance of further research on birds across the country to understand their conservation requirements. For example, we know that the veterinary drug diclofenac had a significant role in vulture declines and a complete ban was necessary for vultures to survive. However, Indian Courser is declining rapidly even within grasslands but we do not know why. Reasons for the decline of many species are still poorly known, and therefore what interventions are needed to halt those declines are unclear.

This field research is directed towards supporting work on species identified as high conservation priority or having insufficient data by the State of India's Birds 2023 report.

We especially encourage proposals on the following species:

- Andaman Teal
- Pale-capped Pigeon
- Indian Courser
- White-naped Tit
- Black-breasted Parrotbill
- Grey-crowned Prinia
- Jerdon's Babbler
- Chestnut-backed Laughingthrush
- Bank Myna
- Stoliczka's Bushchat

While these are our priority species for this year's grant, we welcome proposals based on other species that broadly meet the criteria of being of high conservation priority and /or with insufficient data.

The list we propose covers species from different regions and habitats from across the country that will benefit from focused research efforts. More research on their habitat requirements, diet, breeding biology as well as aspects like its sensitivity to disturbances are particularly encouraged.

Duration of project: 1-2 years

Grant Amount: 1-3 Lakhs (including honorarium to field researchers, travel and other expenses)

Who can apply:

This call is specifically targeted at amateur ornithologists - birdwatchers who have a passion towards ornithology. Applications from backgrounds other than life sciences or ecology would be given priority. This is a competitive grant and each year, only two of the top research proposals will be awarded.

Requirements:

1. A proposal (*in the format provided below*), highlighting the importance of the species, specific research idea and the justification, study area, a research plan, tentative timeline and budget (all details provided in the format).

<Format for the application:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uPvvnEAhdhWmYrzf2qHEO0aIYiO2eDbIrEVbUzgC61Q/edit>>

2. Please include your CV with some details demonstrating your prior interest in ornithology - e.g. online certificate courses, published papers or notes, popular media articles, links to recordings of webinars you presented, etc - anything that will help us assess your inclination and commitment towards ornithology research.

Email your application package (CV and proposal) to: rbcgrants.in@gmail.com

Deadline for application: ~~15 March 2024~~ **31st March 2024**

After the initial screening of proposals, there will be an extended timeframe when the proposal will be developed by the applicants with support from mentors from the grants team. This will happen over emails and several rounds of online discussions. Selected applicants should be willing to work on this proposal with their mentor(s). The final proposals will be submitted to the grant selection team for consideration. Only the proposals that get selected at this final stage will qualify for the grant.

This activity is part of a collaborative project between NCF and IIIT-Delhi on avifauna conservation. The coordinators of the project are Prof. Pankaj Jalote from IIIT-Delhi and Praveen J from NCF.