



Birds of Ambuja



This is the story of a plant that decided to grow flowers, invite birds, create manure out of waste, use water and resources sustainably, make friends with neighbours and bring happiness to everyone...

This plant just happens to be a Cement Plant.

Welcome to the Cement Plant that cares for its Environment- Ambuja Cement Ltd. at Ambujanagar, Gujarat.

Top :
A Plumeria flower

Opposite:
The Plant that bloomed flowers.



COLOUR, SONG AND INSPIRATION

Amongst the most beautiful of our birds, the Peacock is a combination of vibrant colours, fascinating movements and melodious calls.

Residents of Ambujanagar today wake up to the *meows* of these birds and then spend the day watching them roam the colony area.

Left :
**Monsoon
inspires the
vibrant
dance form.**

Right:
**A Peacock
walks in the
Vice-
Chairman's
garden.**



Limestone extraction creates large lifeless mines. At Ambujanagar, we dared to be different and started the process of restoring life into these areas.

Today excavation completed mines are converted into living eco-systems. The process was slow but the results- heartening.

Left:
**Spoonbills
and Painted
storks
congregate.**

Right:
**Darter -
snake bird
on a rock at
the Eco
Park.**



BIRDS AS INDICATORS

Converting old mines into living waterbodies is a big statement. The reality of such a dream can only be approved by nature. And what better approvers than a flock of delicate Demoiselle Cranes or the tiger of the waterbodies - the Osprey.

Their presence indicates a healthy food chain in the waterbody.



Left:
**Demoiselle
Cranes in
Solaz
waterbody**

Right:
**An Osprey
on a tree
stump in the
Eco Park
waterbody.**



WATERBODIES SUPPORT LIFE

Waterfowl like the migratory Pintail duck, who come here from Europe and Siberia and the resident Spot billed duck find sufficient food in the waterbodies.

These birds are surface feeders and are able to find food by tipping or up-ending in shallow waters.

Left:
Pintail ducks in flight.

Right:
Spotbill ducks are regularly seen in the Eco Park waterbody.



RESIDENTS OF OUR WATERBODIES

Nakta ducks, also called the Comb Ducks as the males have a swollen knobs at the base of their bill, are residents of Ambujanagar.

Cormorant is another interesting bird. Despite lacking the oil glands to keep the wings dry, this bird feeds by diving in the water for fish.



Left:
**Nakta ducks
take to
wings.**

Right:
**A Cormorant
drying its
wings.**





Left:
Glossy Ibis
walks tall.

Right:
Painted
Storks are
colourful as
their name.



STATELY FIGURES WALK TALL

Birds like the Glossy Ibis, Painted Storks and Grey Herons appear stately as they wade in the shallow waterbodies.

Their slim tall legs and long beaks help them in searching for food in the mud.

Ambujanagar residents have started identifying a number of birds in their neighbourhood. Some of the commonest ones include the Babblers, Mynas and Parakeets.

Not a single day passes when these flying wonders do not fascinate the residents of Ambujanagar.

Left :
Large Grey Babbler
fighting with
its
reflection in
vehicle
mirrors is an
interesting
sight.

Right:
Mynas are a
common
sight



WHEN YOU THINK OF COLOUR...

Birds are probably the most colourful creations of nature. The Roller Bird or *Neelkanth*, as it is locally called, displays fluorescent blue colours.

The Golden Oriole displays brilliant yellow colours, giving it the apt name *Haladya*.



Left :
**An Indian
Roller keeps
a watch on
insects, as it
prepares to
swoop down
on them
from its
perch.**



Right:
**Golden
Oriole**



NESTING AROUND OUR HOMES

A number of birds like the Red Vented Bulbul are choosing the residential area for nesting. The sight of parent birds raising babies is always fascinating.

This nesting behaviour reflects the faith bestowed by the birds in the people.

Left :
**Red Vented
Bulbul**

Right:
**Nest of a
Drongo.**



Barbets and Owls find nesting places amongst the mature trees. While Barbets make holes in dead wood, Owls prefer hollows.

Barbets resound Ambujanagar with their metallic tuk, tuk... calls during the day and the Owls resonate the nights with their squabbling calls.

Left:
A Crimson Breasted Barbet searches for figs.

Right:
A Spotted Owlet seems to be disturbed by a daytime intruder.





Left :
**A Grey
Partridge
walks along
a waterbody.**

Right:
**A Cattle
Egret picks
up insects
from a
bullock.**

The Grey Partridge is a shy bird; heard more often than actually seen. A good place to observe these birds is in the D block mines.

The white coloured Egrets are seen gracefully flying in the evening skies. Cattle Egrets are regularly seen in association with cattle, pecking at the disturbed



The onset of monsoons invites the ringing calls of the Pied Crested Cuckoo, or *Papiya* as it is locally called, as pairs of these birds fly from tree to tree.

The calls of the flying Parakeets every evening inspire a feeling of freedom.



Left :
**Roseringed
Parakeet**

Right:
**A Pied
Crested
Cuckoo**



SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Size matters! Infact in nature, many of the beautiful forms come in small packages.

The colourful White-eye or *Chasmewala* as it is called and the Tickell's Flycatcher are a treat to watch.



Left :
**A White Eye
showing off
its specks**

Right:
**Tickell's
Flycatcher
in the Vice -
Chairman's
bungalow**



BEAKS AND WINGS TO STALK INSECTS

Bee Eaters and Sunbirds are excellent fliers as they chase and catch insects in flight.

The Sunbird's tubular bill also helps in extracting nectar from flowers. The VIP guest house is an excellent place to watch both these birds in action.



Left:
**A Bee Eater
keeps a
lookout from
an out-
stretched
branch.**

Right:
**A Sunbird
seeks nectar
from flow-
ers.**



Flights of birds have always fascinated man. The sight of a Vulture soaring in the thermals is as equally impressive as the flight of a Black Winged Kite.

These birds can be seen flying in the skies of Ambujanagar.



Left:
**A Long
Billed
Vulture
soars.**

Right:
**A resident
Black
Winged Kite
goes off on
a prowl.**



PREDATORS - BIG AND SMALL

Man owes his existence to the birds like Honey Buzzards and Owls, who prey on insects and rodents, which otherwise have the capacity to destroy crops.

Shrikes are called ‘butchers’ for their habits of sticking insects into thorns of the Acacia trees, to be eaten later.

Left:
A Honey Buzzard keeps a watch from the trees near the old railway line.

Right:
A Shrike watches smaller prey from his Acacia haunt.



BUILDING A BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT

Endeavour has always been on building a bird friendly habitat at Ambujanagar... planting bird attracting trees, installing nest boxes, keeping grains and water.

However, the one single most important input has been the residents providing the sense of security to the birds.



Left :
**Students
planting the
future.**

Right:
**Squirrel
babies
peeping out
of a nest
box.**





The bus with pictures of birds, as it drives in the neighbouring community, acts as a mobile exhibit - communicating the environment consciousness of the company.

The signages also create awareness in the society - bringing people and birds closer.

Left :
**The BIRD
Bus**

Right:
**Waterbath
and grains
to attract
birds.
Signages
help
residents in
identification.**



Together lets make a more livable planet



This booklet is an effort to display some of the 130 plus species of birds observed at Ambujanagar.

The birds have been photographed by Anirudh Chaoji, Trishant Simlai and Sudeep Datre

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