

A black and blue bird, possibly a Blue-winged Kite, is perched on a mossy branch. The bird has a black head and back, with blue wings and a long, dark tail. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green forest.

COMMON FAUNA OF KALLAR AND MANKULAM

IDUKKI, KERALA, INDIA

Ishan Shanavas

WELCOME

The Western Ghats of India throb with life. Mammals, reptiles, birds, insects—you name it. This region has it. It is one of the most biodiverse places on Earth.

Idukki district, at the heart of the Western Ghats, stands out for its phenomenal wildlife. The region is covered in forests and plantations, forming a bewildering palette of landscapes. Hiding within the trees are many animals, from mighty elephants to deadly serpents.

For the past few years, I've been roaming this landscape. I've walked through acres of jungle, farms, misty mountains and gushing streams between Kallar and Mankulam, recording all the birds, mammals, and reptiles I've come across. I've interacted with locals and got their intel on the local wildlife.

I've compiled all the common wildlife I've found into this mini easy-to-read booklet.

Many thanks to Daimler Pereira, Thomas Job, Chinmayi Moyi and Sandeep Das for their images and aid in identifying the animals.

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BIRDS

01 MALABAR WHISTLING THRUSH

Scientific name: *Myophonus horsfieldii*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Rocky hill streams in forests and well-wooded areas



02 GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO

Scientific name: *Dicrurus paradiseus*

Size: 32 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved forest and bamboo jungle



03 ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD

Scientific name: *Irena puella*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Evergreen and moist deciduous forest

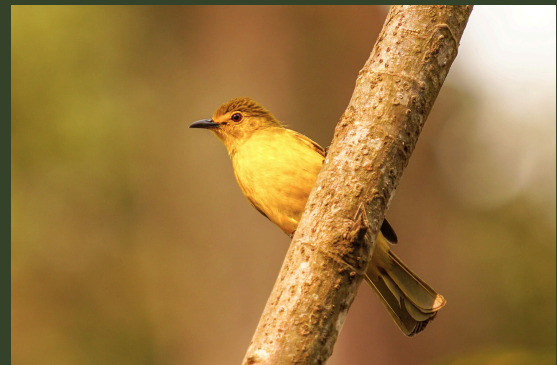


04 YELLOW-BROWED BULBUL

Scientific name: *Acrithas indica*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Moist forest and secondary growth



05 ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE

Scientific name: *Zosterops palpebrosus*

Size: 10 cm

Preferred habitat: Open broadleaved forest, groves, gardens orchards, mangroves and cardamom plantations



06 ORANGE MINIVET

Scientific name: *Pericrocotus flammeus*

Size: 20-22 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded areas



07 ASIAN PARADISE FLYCATCHER

Scientific name: *Terpsiphone paradisi*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded areas



08 CRESTED SERPENT EAGLE

Scientific name: *Spilornis cheela*

Size: 56-74 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded country



09 RED WHISKERED BULBUL

Scientific name: *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest, scrub jungle, gardens, orchards and bushes around villages and cultivation



10 LESSER HILL MYNA

Scientific name: *Gracula (religiosa) indica*

Size: 24 cm

Preferred habitat: Moist forest and plantations



11 CRIMSON-BACKED SUNBIRD

Scientific name: *Leptocoma minima*

Size: 8 cm

Preferred habitat: Evergreen forest and plantations



12 PLUM-HEADED PARAKEET

Scientific name: *Psittacula cyanocephala*

Size: 36 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded areas



13 MALABAR PARAKEET

Scientific name: *Psittacula columboides*

Size: 38 cm

Preferred habitat: Well-wooded areas



14 RUFOUS-BELLIED EAGLE

Scientific name: *Lophotriorchis kienerii*

Size: 53-61 cm

Preferred habitat: Evergreen and moist deciduous broadleaved forest



15 VERNAL HANGING PARROT

Scientific name: *Loriculus vernalis*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved evergreen and moist deciduous forest



16 WHITE-BELLIED TREEPIE

Scientific name: *Dendrocitta leucogastra*

Size: 48 cm

Preferred habitat: Evergreen hill forest and secondary growth



17 WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER

Scientific name: *Halcyon smyrnensis*

Size: 27-28 cm

Preferred habitat: Wide ranging habitat, often far from water: cultivation, forest edges, gardens, freshwater and coastal wetlands

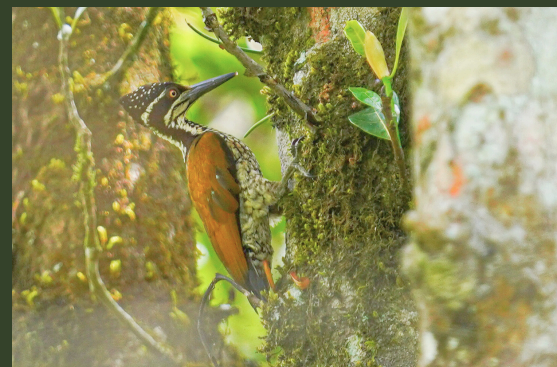


18 GREATER GOLDENBACK

Scientific name: *Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus*

Size: 33 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and groves



19 COMMON HAWK-CUCKOO

Scientific name: *Hierococcyx varius*

Size: 34 cm

Preferred habitat: Well-wooded country



20 INDIAN POND HERON

Scientific name: *Ardeola grayii*

Size: 42-45 cm

Preferred habitat: Marshes, flooded paddy fields, lakes, village tanks, ditches, mangrove creeks and tidal mudflats



21 BROWN SHRIKE

Scientific name: *Lanius cristatus*

Size: 18-19 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest edges and scrub



22 CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER

Scientific name: *Merops leschenaulti*

Size: 18-20 cm

Preferred habitat: Vicinity of water in deciduous forest



23 BLACK EAGLE

Scientific name: *Ictinaetus malaiensis*

Size: 69-81 cm

Preferred habitat: Hills and mountain forests



24 BROWN-BREASTED FLYCATCHER

Scientific name: *Muscicapa muttui*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Dense thickets in broadleaved evergreen forest



25 MALABAR TROGON

Scientific name *Harpactes fasciatus*

Size: 31 cm

Preferred habitat: Dense forest



26 RED VENTED BULBUL

Scientific name: *Pycnonotus cafer*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Open deciduous forest, secondary growth, gardens and light scrub



27 COMMON TAILORBIRD

Scientific name: *Orthotomus sutorius*

Size: 13 cm

Preferred habitat: Bushes in gardens, cultivation edges and forest edges



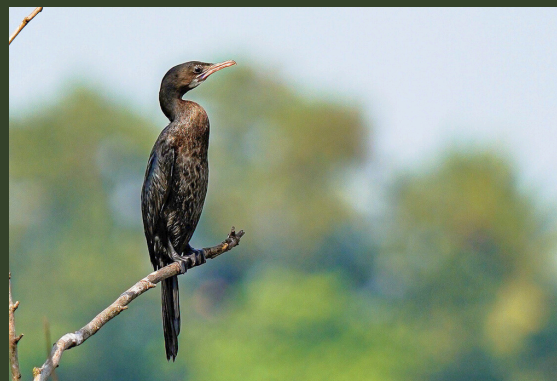
PC: Thomas Job

28 LITTLE CORMORANT

Scientific name: *Phalacrocorax niger*

Size: 51 cm

Preferred habitat: Rivers, lakes, reservoirs, village tanks, marshes, canals, estuaries, saltpans and coastal waters



29 WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER

Scientific name: *Dryocopus javensis*

Size: 48 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and secondary growth with tall trees



PC: "White-bellied woodpecker" by Sai Adikarla is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

30 SOUTHERN COUCAL

Scientific name: *Centropus (sinensis) parroti*

Size: 48 cm

Preferred habitat: Open woods, thick scrub, grassland and dense cover in gardens



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31 GREY-BREASTED PRINIA

Scientific name: *Prinia hodgsonii*

Size: 11 cm

Preferred habitat: Bushes and forest edges, scrub and secondary growth



32 MALABAR GREY HORNBILL

Scientific name: *Ocyeros griseus*

Size: 45 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest



PC: Thomas Job

33 WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN

Scientific name: *Amourornis phoenicurus*

Size: 32 cm

Preferred habitat: Thick cover close to freshwater



34 BROWN FISH OWL

Scientific name: *Ketupa zeylonensis*

Size: 56 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded areas near water



PC: "Brown Fish Owl" by Koshyk is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

35 PALE-BILLED FLOWERPECKER

Scientific name: *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*

Size: 8 cm

Preferred habitat: Open broadleaved forest and well-wooded areas



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36 ORANGE-HEADED THRUSH

Scientific name: *Zoothera citrina*

Size: 21 cm

Preferred habitat: Damp, shady places in forests



PC: Thomas Job

37 ORIENTAL HONEY BUZZARD

Scientific name: *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Size: 57-60 cm

Preferred habitat: Well-wooded country



38 WHITE-CHEEKED BARBET

Scientific name: *Megalamia viridis*

Size: 23 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved evergreen and moist deciduous wooded areas, gardens, groves



39 BLACK BULBUL (SQUARE TAILED BULBUL)

Scientific name: *Hypsipetes (leucocephalus) ganeesa*

Size: 22 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved evergreen forest



PC: Thomas Job

40 BLACKBIRD

Scientific name: *Turdus (merula) simillimus*

Size: 24.5 cm

Preferred habitat: Moist forest, sholas and wooded ravines



PC: Thomas Job

41 LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER

Scientific name: *Arachnothera longirostra*

Size: 16 cm

Preferred habitat: Wild bananas in moist broadleaved forest



42 RUFOUS BABBLER

Scientific name: *Turdoides subrufa*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Thick cover and edges of forest clearings in moist forests; favours habitats intermixed with tall grass and bamboo



43 MALABAR LARK

Scientific name: *Galerida malabarica*

Size: 16 cm

Preferred habitat: Cultivation, grass-covered hills and open scrub



44 RAIN QUAIL

Scientific name: *Coturnix coromandelica*

Size: 18 cm

Preferred habitat: Crops, grasslands, grass and scrub jungle



PC: Thomas Job

45 COMMON IORA

Scientific name: *Aegithina tiphia*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Open forest and well-wooded areas



46 ORIENTAL MAGPIE ROBIN

Scientific name: *Copsychus saularis*

Size: 20 cm

Preferred habitat: Gardens, groves and open broadleaved forest



47 BLUE-CAPPED ROCK THRUSH

Scientific name: *Monticola cinclorhynchus*

Size: 15-17 cm

Preferred habitat: Hill forests



48 GOLDEN-FRONTED LAFBIRD

Scientific name: *Chloropsis aurifrons*

Size: 19 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved forest and secondary growth



49 SHIKRA

Scientific name: *Accipiter badius*

Size: 30-36 cm

Preferred habitat: Open-wooded country



50 GREAT TIT

Scientific name: *Parus major*

Size: 14 cm

Preferred habitat: Forest and well-wooded country



51 JUNGLE BABBLER

Scientific name: *Turdoides striata*

Size: 25 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous forest, cultivation and gardens



REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

01 WALL'S VINE SNAKE

Scientific name: *Ahaetulla isabellina*

Size: 1.5–2 m

Preferred habitat: Low bushes, trees



02 ANAMALAI PIT VIPER

Scientific name: *Craspedocephalus anamallensis*

Size: 5–100 cm

Preferred habitat: Broadleaved forest and bamboo jungle



03 INDIAN RAT SNAKE

Scientific name: *Ptyas mucosa*

Size: 1.5–1.95 m

Preferred habitat: Wide range of habitats—coastal, arid, wet, mountainous, open fields and forests



04 THACKERAY'S CAT SNAKE

Scientific name: *Boiga thackerayi*

Size: 90 cm



05 SAHYADRI VINE SNAKE

Scientific name: *Ahaetulla sahyadrensis*
Size: 1.9 m



06 BEDDOME'S KEELBACK

Scientific name: *Amphiesma beddomei*
Size: 15-66 cm
Preferred habitat: Found near streams and forest paths of high rainfall areas



07 LARGE SCALED FOREST LIZARD

Scientific name: *Calotes grandisquamis*
Size: 45 cm



08 YELLOW-THROATED ROUND EYED GECKO

Scientific name: *Cnemaspis flavigularis*



09 ELLIOT'S FOREST LIZARD

Scientific name: *Monilesaurus ellioti*



10 DON'S GOLDEN-BACKED FROG

Scientific name: *Indosylvirana doni*



11 WAYANAD BUSH FROG

Scientific name: *Pseudophilautus wynaadensis*



12 MINERVARYA FROG

Scientific name: *Minervarya*



13 KERALA WARTY FROG

Scientific name: *Minervarya keralensis*



14 RAORCHESTES GRIET

Scientific name: *Raorchestes griet*



15 DUTTAPHRYNUS TOAD

Scientific name: Duttaphrynus



MAMMALS

01 MALABAR GIANT SQUIRREL

Scientific name: *Ratufa indica*

Size: 25–50 cm

Preferred habitat: High canopy in dry and moist deciduous forests, semi-evergreen and evergreen forests

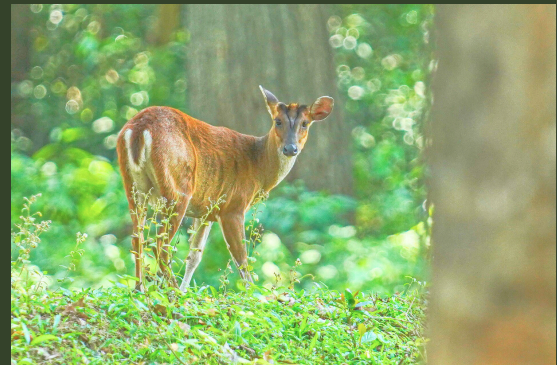


02 BARKING DEER

Scientific name: *Muntiacus muntjak*

Size: 99 cm

Preferred habitat: Hilly and moist areas, thick deciduous forests, evergreen forests, plantation and plantation edges and secondary forests

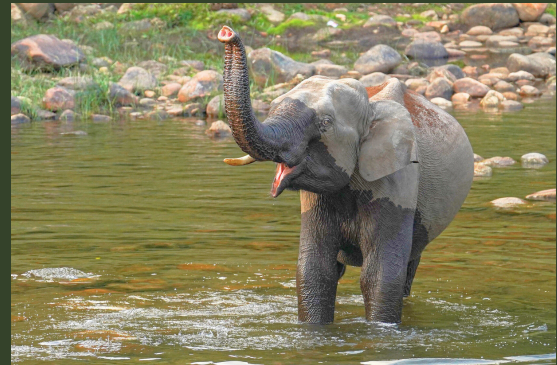


03 ASIAN ELEPHANT

Scientific name: *Elephas maximus*

Size: 5.5–6.5 m

Preferred habitat: Mixed deciduous, evergreen forest, scub, floodplains and grasslands



04 BONNET MACAQUE

Scientific name: *Macaca radiata*

Size: 35–60 cm

Preferred habitat: Urban and rural areas, tropical dry thorn, scub, dry and moist deciduous forest, semi-evergreen forests



05 NILGIRI MARTEN

Scientific name: *Martes gwatkinsii*

Size: 55-70 cm

Preferred habitat: Montane, evergreen forests, moist deciduous forests and plantations



PC: "File:Nilgiri Marten (Martes gwatkinsii).jpg" by Navaneeth Kishor is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

06 WILD BOAR

Scientific name: *Sus scrofa*

Size: 90-200 cm

Preferred habitat: All habitats including scrub, grasslands, mixed deciduous and evergreen forests, agricultural fields and forest fringes



07 SAMBHAR DEER

Scientific name: *Rusa unicolor*

Size: 2 m

Preferred habitat: Mixed deciduous forest, arid and dry forests, shola grasslands, pine and oak and evergreen forests

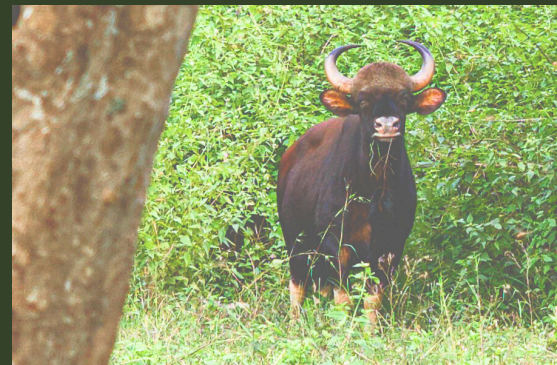


08 GAUR

Scientific name: *Bos gaurus*

Size: 250-360 cm

Preferred habitat: Moist and dry deciduous forests, bamboo and teak habitats, open grasslands, semi evergreen forests, scrub and plantations



09 NILGIRI LANGUR

Scientific name: *Semnopithecus johnii*

Size: 50-80 cm

Preferred habitat: Rainforests, deciduous patches, plantations and plantation edges



10 MOUSE DEER

Scientific name: *Jarini pandi*

Size: 45 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous, semi-evergreen and evergreen forests, and plantation forests, moist forests and riverine patches



PC: "File:Indian spotted chevrotain Moschiola indica Mouse deer from the Anaimalai hills DSC9927 03.jpg" by PJeganathan is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

11 THREE STRIPED PALM SQUIRREL

Scientific name: *Funambulus palmarum*

Size: 12-15 cm

Preferred habitat: Forests, scrub, grasslands, rural and urban habitation



PC: "Indian palm squirrel or three-striped palm squirrel (Funambulus palmarum)" by srikaanth.sekar is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.

12 INDIAN PORCUPINE

Scientific name: *Hystrix indica*

Size: 60-90 cm

Preferred habitat: Rocky hillsides, open countryside, deciduous forest, thick bush and tall grass



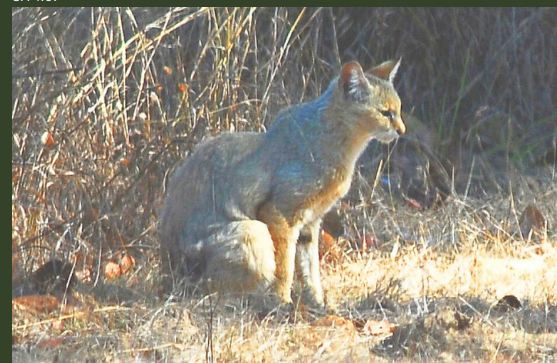
PC: "Indian crested porcupine (Hystrix indica)" by Davidvraju is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

13 JUNGLE CAT

Scientific name: *Felis chaus*

Size: 60-85 cm

Preferred habitat: Grasslands, scrub, dry deciduous and evergreen forests



PC: "Jungle Cat Felis chaus" by Dr. Tarak N Khan is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

14 SMALL INDIAN CIVET

Scientific name: *Viverricula indica*

Size: 53-58 cm

Preferred habitat: Semi-evergreen, deciduous, bamboo and scrub forests, open land, plantations and riverine habitats



PC: "File:Small Indian Civet DSC 6472.jpg" by Kalyan Varma is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

15 ASIAN PALM CIVET

Scientific name: *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*

Size: 53 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous, evergreen and scrub forests, well-wooded countryside and plantations



PC: "Asian Palm Civet" by Mike Prince is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

16 STRIPED NECKED MONGOOSE

Scientific name: *Herpestes vitticollis*

Size: 48 cm

Preferred habitat: Dry and moist deciduous forests, evergreen forests, plantations, scrub, swampy areas and hilly country



PC: "Stripe-necked Mongoose (Herpestes vitticollis)" by srikaanth.sekar is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.

17 DHOLE

Scientific name: *Cuon alpinus*

Size: 88-135 cm

Preferred habitat: Open woodland, grassy meadows, dry and moist deciduous, dry thorn, evergreen and semi-evergreen, and alpine steppe forests



18 INDIAN GIANT FLYING SQUIRREL

Scientific name: *Petaurista philippensis*

Size: 30-45 cm

Preferred habitat: Deciduous, semi-evergreen and evergreen forests; frequently found in forest edges and cardamom plantations



"Indian Giant Flying Squirrel captured at Polo Forests, Sabarkantha, Gujarat India" by Vicky Chauhan is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

NOTES



Ishan is an avid nature and wildlife enthusiast, writer, photographer and artist.

He writes regularly on his blog and his newsletter - The Owlet.

A student of Environmental Studies, Sociology & Anthropology at Ashoka University, he is currently working on a book about the natural world.



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