

# Mor

*Newsletter of World Pheasant Association - India*



## Editorial

By the time this issue reaches you, the monsoon season would commence, coinciding with the most important phase in the life cycle of the Indian Peafowl, our national bird. For it is at this time of the year, when dark, rain-laden clouds are on the horizon, that the Peafowl become most active and make their presence felt. This is also the nesting period of the species. Hence, this issue is dedicated to the 'Mor' itself.

To complement the update on conservation issues of the Indian Peafowl, also included in this issue are some very interesting observations made by our President on the nesting of peafowl in urban premises. Indeed, it is a historic event that, for the first time, not one but three peahens have laid eggs on ledges of windows in the annexe of the India International Centre in New Delhi. Why did the birds choose the window ledges (and not the extensive parks and gardens of the adjacent Lodhi Garden)? What will happen to the chicks when the eggs hatch? How will they reach the ground about 24 ft. below? .....I leave it to the reader to know all about this in the following pages.

*Dr. A.J. Urfi*  
Editor

## Peafowl species found worldwide



Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*  
Found in SE Asia and south China;  
status in NE India uncertain.



Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*  
Found in India, Nepal and  
Sri Lanka.



Congo Peafowl *Afropavo congensis*  
Found in the Congo basin - only  
African pheasant species.



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## Highlights (January – June 2007)

- \* WPA-India Governing Board met twice during the past six months - on 25 January and 28 April 2007. Dr. Sanjeeva Pandey, former Director, Great Himlayan National Park, HP, is the new Board member.
- \* Dr. Philip McGowan, Director, WPA, and Mr. John Corder, Vice Chairman, WPA, visited India in January and held discussions with the WPA-India President and Board Members. Dr. Philip McGowan also visited Dehradun and other places in Uttarakhand in connection with the Key Areas Project. During the visit of Mr. John Corder, a meeting of the WPA-India Governing Board was held in Delhi in which he participated. PCCF & CWLW, HP, Shri Vinay Tandon also participated, specially in connection with the pending Pheasant Conservation Project in HP. Thereafter, Mr. John Corder visited HP at the invitation of the State Govt.
- \* In pursuance of the MoU between WPA-India and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), a significant initiative is the preparation of a special issue (publication) on Galliformes Conservation in India to be brought out by the WII. This publication will cover all relevant data and various aspects of galliformes conservation, including reports of the concerned States. Efforts are being made to get the publication ready for the forthcoming International Galliformes Symposium in China.
- \* The most exciting news of the period was the rediscovery of the Western Tragopan (*Tragopan melanocephalus*) in some parts of Uttarakhand during the field surveys under the Key Areas Project and a report on sighting of the Manipur Bush Quail (*Perdica manipurensis*) in Assam in June 2006 after a gap of about 74 years. Efforts to confirm the rare sighting are in progress.
- \* Another exciting development is the success in breeding of the Western Tragopan (*Tragopan melanocephalus*) at Sarahan in Himachal Pradesh. During June 07 ten new chicks were hatched, which is a world record. All credit goes to the HP Forest Deptt., which has, no doubt, benefitted from the expertise made available by the WPA.
- \* The progress of field projects is briefly given below:
  - 1). **Wildlife and Floristic Studies in Allain-Duhangan catchments, Himachal Pradesh (Funded by ERM India)** – The project has been completed and final report submitted to ERM in July 2006.
  - 2). **Effect of pesticide use on the Blue Peafowl and Grey Francolin in Central India (Funded by Ministry of Environment and Forests)** - This is the second year of the project and field work is in progress. The report for the past year was submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
  - 3). **Community based conservation of Galliformes in the Gori Basin, Uttaranchal (Funded by Ministry of Environment and Forests)** - Project work commenced in April 2006, in collaboration with the Sarmoli-Jainti Van Panchayat, Munsiari.
  - 4). **Key Areas Project (Funded by WPA)** - Field work in Uttarakhand is in progress. The project is being handled by Investigator Dr. K. Ramesh based at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- \* WPA-India, led by the President, participated actively in the 10<sup>th</sup> Birding Fair organized at Jaipur by the Tourism & Wildlife Society of India on 22-24 January 2007. A new feature this year was the National Workshop on Environment and Wildlife Reporting, which was supported by the US Embassy in India. During the workshop, a presentation on the ongoing project on the Blue Peafowl and Grey Francolin was made and information on Galliformes was made available to the media persons (around 50) who participated in the workshop.
- \* In April 2007, a workshop was organized by WPA-India at Morena in Madhya Pradesh under the ongoing field project. The purpose was to create awareness about the impact of pesticides used in agriculture on birds, specially the Blue Peafowl and Grey Francolin. The workshop was attended by the more than 200 farmers and other interested persons from nearby villages.

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### Peafowl Conservation Reserves

Recently, Peafowl Conservation Reserves have been established at: 1. Dungarpur, Dungarpur District, Rajasthan. 2. Bankapura, Haveri District, Karnataka. 3. Aska, Ganjam District, Orissa

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## The National Bird

Several countries have adopted the concept of a 'national bird'. In India and the United States of America (USA), apart from a national bird, each state of the federal union has a designated state bird. The USA was perhaps the first to start this practice, coinciding with the growth of the conservation movement in that country. The idea was adopted for the States in India in the mid-80s. However, much before that in 1963, the Government of India had named the **Indian** or **Blue Peafowl** (*Pavo cristatus*), also called the Blue Peafowl, as the **National Bird of India**. The Asiatic Lion was declared the National Animal, but the Tiger replaced it in 1974, after the launch of Project Tiger and following a worldwide outcry about the fate of the Tiger. Significantly, no such change has occurred in regard to the Indian Peafowl, which proudly continues to be the National Bird.

Renowned ornithologist, the Late Dr. Salim Ali, once told me that the choice was between the Indian Peafowl and the Great Indian Bustard, both big and prominent birds and typically Indian. The matter was debated in the Indian Board for Wildlife and eventually the Indian Peafowl was selected and recommended to the Government, not only on account of its widespread distribution in the country but also because of its longstanding association with the life and culture of the Indian people. Somehow, this latter aspect is taken for granted and it is generally not appreciated that in no other country of the world the bonds between the national bird and its people are as ancient and intimate as in India.

The Peafowl is considered a divine creature in Indian mythology, especially as the vahana of Kartikeya, son of Lord Shiva and army commander of all the gods. It is also said that at one time when the gods took the form of various birds, Devraj Indra chose the finest form, that of a peacock, and ever since, whenever Indra brings rain on earth, all the peacocks dance in joy and merriment - a sight to behold, meant for the gods. Lord Krishna's association with the peafowl is verily legendary: peacock feathers have always adorned his headgear, popularly known as the 'mor-mukut', and it is said that Krishna danced like a peacock to court his beloved Radha and when he played his mellifluous flute, the peacocks danced in unison with the gopis. Even now, the temples dedicated to Krishna display the peacocks prominently on the entrance gates. The famous epic Ramayan has many references to these birds and there is even a folklore that traces the birth of Sita from a peahen egg. Likewise, one Buddhist Jataka folktale, called the 'Maha-mor', relates how Gautam Buddha was a golden peacock prior to his birth as a human being. In Buddhist mythology, the peacock is a symbol of compassion and watchfulness. Buddhist and Jain legends

and folklore contain numerous references to the role and importance of the peafowl.

As for recorded Indian history, the earliest findings relate to the Indus Valley Civilisation dating back to about five thousand years. The excavations at Harappa, Mohenjodaro and some other sites have thrown up evidence not only of the existence of peafowl at that time but also, and more importantly, of the pre-eminent role accorded to the bird by the people in those days. There was even a popular belief then that after death the human soul travels to its heavenly abode with the help of a peacock and in its form. Later, throughout India's history, the peafowl has received state recognition, one way or the other. The Maurya and Gupta rulers conferred special status to the species and even reared these birds in their palace gardens. Emperor Ashok in the second century BC forbade the killing of peafowl for the table and some of his stone edicts displayed the peacock prominently. The famous Sanchi Stupa of around the same period also carries images of the peacock. During the Gupta period in the fifth century AD, several coins depicting the peacock were issued and it was also a favourite subject for the art and architecture of that time. This trend continued in varying forms subsequently, even during the medieval period when the Muslim rulers were dominant. For instance, the Tughlak kings were so fascinated by the peafowl feather that they adopted its design for the state emblem and prescribed its use in various ways, including the headgear of the soldiers. Moreover, fans made of peacock feathers were regularly used in the courtrooms of many rulers all across the country, including the imperial Mughals.

The memoirs of the first Mughal Emperor called the Baburnamah, carries an interesting and perceptive account of the birds of India, which appropriately starts with the peafowl. Babur described the peacock as "a beautifully coloured and splendid bird; its form is not equal to its colouring and beauty." However, it was the fifth Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, who paid perhaps the greatest tribute to the bird, when he got the jewelled Peacock Throne made soon after assuming power. It was a unique and fabulous piece of artistic work, which took seven years to complete and its cost even at that time was computed in several millions; it is surmised that the cost was at least twice as much as that for the Taj Mahal. The dazzling structure, studded with precious gems and jewels, had a canopy supported on twelve emerald columns or pillars; on top were beautifully crafted large-sized peacocks facing each other and bedecked with gems - shining rubies, diamonds, emeralds and pearls. Shah Jahan was surely aware of the Islamic folklore that the peacock was the original guardian of the gates of Paradise and the Persian myth that two peacocks facing each other on either side of the 'Tree

of Life' symbolise the duality of human nature. For a century or so, the Peacock Throne became the most prestigious symbol of Mughal power and authority, and around 1648 it was shifted from Agra to Delhi, when Shah Jahan changed his capital. Then in 1739, Nadir Shah invaded India, plundered Delhi and took away this marvellous throne to Persia, along with all the other booty. For more than two hundred years, it was known to be at Teheran, but then it disappeared mysteriously and has since not been found. Now, it is no more than a legend.

However, after being deprived of the original peacock throne, the later Mughal Emperors, right till the deposition of Bahadur Shah in 1857, are said to have used a silver peacock throne, which was, of course, a mere shadow of the original one. Besides, even during the time of Emperor Aurangzeb and, in fact, to honour him in a way, a small exquisite peacock throne was made within a fabulous diorama built at Dresden in Austria. And then, about a hundred years back, King Ludwig of Germany got a peacock throne made, embellished with three life-size enamelled peacocks.

It is evident that the fascination for the Indian Peafowl had spread to other parts of the world several centuries ago and it was taken to various countries in Asia, Africa and Europe at different times, mainly by the invaders and traders. There are reports of these birds in the palace gardens of the Egyptian Pharaohs, the Roman Emperors and even the legendary King Solomon, whose throne had attractive peacock images. When Alexander invaded India in the third century BC, he took back with him to Macedonia several Indian peafowl. There is an interesting Greek myth about the origin of the peacock's colourful tail feathers, according to which the favourite bird of Hera, wife of the mythical hero Zeus, was a peacock and she was responsible for placing on the peacock tail the eyes of the hundred-eyed giant Argos, when the latter was slain in a battle. In early Christian art, two peacocks facing each other represented the souls of the faithful drinking from the Fountain of Life and there was a Christian belief, ascribed to St. Augustine, that the peacock symbolised immortality of the soul, since its flesh did not decay. Even in China, the peacock was considered a symbol of beauty, dignity and rank and was made the emblem of the Ming rulers. In modern times, the Indian Peafowl has been coveted by several zoological gardens in different countries and some of these birds were also kept in the premises of the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

As a result of consistent royal patronage over the ages, in India the peafowl has managed to permeate numerous facets of the life and culture of the Indian people from the earliest times and it has literally adorned everything that has been associated with it. This is amply demonstrated in art, architecture, sculpture, painting,

metalwork, glasswork, jewellery, ornaments, handicrafts, handloom, textile, literature, music, folklore and the traditions of almost all regions in the country. There are examples aplenty to show that humankind, over the ages, has been greatly fascinated and inspired by this gorgeous bird to give expression to highest levels of creativity in multifarious ways and forms.

It is this remarkable attribute of 'adding value' that makes the Indian Peafowl very special in India. Added to it is the fact that this is one bird that is known in every household throughout India and even the children get to know about it quite early in life. Perhaps one reason is that Indian literature in virtually all languages and dialects, starting from Sanskrit, is replete with references to the peafowl, particularly the peacock, in adorable terms and in a manner that no other bird or animal has been able to equal. The same applies to the folklore, songs and music of different regions across the country. However, it is noteworthy that even the English language has not escaped its sweep and impact. The expressions 'peacockish' and 'proud as a peacock' are often used, but there are several other ways in which the peacock has invaded the English dictionary and again 'added value' in meaningful terms. Hence, we have colours that are called 'peacock blue' and 'peacock green', birds that are called 'peacock bittern', 'peacock heron' and 'peacock pheasant', flowers called 'peacock flower' and 'peacock iris', a 'peacock butterfly', a 'peacock beetle', a 'peacock moth', and even a kind of 'peacock ore' and a type of 'peacock coal'. Then, there is the well known 'peacock dance', essentially a courtship display but also signifying the role of a dependable weatherman, heralding the onset of the monsoon from year to year and endearing the bird for obvious reasons.

Another remarkable attribute of the Indian Peafowl is its amazing adaptability. It belongs to the Pheasant family, of which there are 17 species in India, which means one-third of the world's total number of 51 pheasant species. All of them are essentially birds of the jungles and mountains. While the Indian Peafowl prefers scrub forest for its habitat and is distributed widely through the country, it is the only pheasant species that is able to adjust easily to human beings and is at home near habitations and even in urban areas. This is another factor that has facilitated its long and intimate association with the people in India.

For sheer attractiveness, adorning ability and adaptability, the Indian Peafowl is clearly unsurpassable and incomparable. No other bird can claim such a triple 'A' standing. Regal and resplendent, yet common and plebian, it stands in a class of its own, a true symbol of India in all its beauty and colourful splendour. It is rightly the **National Bird of India**.

*by Samar Sigh, President, WPA-India*

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## Unusual Nesting Behaviour of the Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)

Indian or Blue Peafowl are essentially ground dwelling birds, though at night they generally roost on big trees. It is also known that peahens almost always nest on the ground. All available records and field observations, including those of legendary ornithologists Salim Ali and AO Hume, indicate that the normal behaviour of the species is to nest on the ground and cases of nesting on buildings are very few, especially in the urban areas. In this context, recent cases of peafowl nesting at considerable heights in window ledges of the India International Centre (IIC) Annexe located in the heart of New Delhi, the national capital, are quite unique and merit attention as well as careful study.

The first time this kind of unusual behaviour came to my notice was in 2004, when a peahen had laid eggs in a window ledge of the IIC Annexe dining room and she successfully incubated and hatched the eggs there. However, two chicks were killed and eaten by feral cats. In the summer of 2006 also, one peahen laid eggs at the same place and the story was repeated. This year on 14 May I came to know about a peahen egg laid the previous night in the same window ledge abutting the dining room on the second floor. The ledge (3ft x 2 ft) is filled with soil and usually asparagus grass is grown in it. The creamish white single egg was resting on this grass. On 16 and 19 May, two more eggs were laid at the same place. Simultaneously, another peahen laid an egg in a similar window ledge on the opposite side, facing north towards the World Bank office. Both these window ledges are at a height of about 24-ft. Then, on the night of 21 May, yet another peahen laid an egg in a window ledge on the third floor at a height of about 36-ft.

The peahen that laid three eggs in the south facing ledge and the peahen that laid an egg in the third floor ledge were not consistent in sitting over their eggs, most probably due to some disturbing factors. As a result, on 25 May the crows ate up two eggs of the first clutch. The remaining two eggs were rescued and sent for artificial incubation to the National Zoological Park. However, these turned out to be infertile.

On the other hand, the peahen that laid three eggs in the north facing window ledge was very particular about sitting over her eggs, especially during day-time. In fact, she started incubation as soon as the third egg was laid on 21 May. In the initial period of about ten days, she used to disappear for short stretches either before sunset or at dawn to drink water and to feed. Thereafter, she stopped doing that and it is amazing that she remained perched on the window ledge continuously for the next two weeks. Some caring IIC staff members started putting out water, breadcrumbs and some coarse grain (bajra) on the ledge and the peahen happily accepted the same. Meanwhile, all these developments created considerable excitement among the concerned staff and interested members of a recently started Nature Group at the IIC, who worked in tandem to ensure privacy for the bird and also to keep a watch on possible predators. Endearingly, the bird was named *Matari* meaning 'mother'.

On 15-16 June, Delhi experienced pre-monsoon showers. *Matari* was drenched, but remained on the ledge. Then, on the afternoon of 16 June, at about 1450 p.m., one egg was hatched. The next day, the second hatching was observed around 0800 am and the third one around 1230 p.m. Thus, the three eggs were hatched successfully on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> days of the incubation period.

Now, a major concern related to the safety of the newly born chicks and how they would descend to the ground from a height of about 24-ft. Hence, preparations were made to address this problem and eventually a wooden platform, with a net thrown on top, was erected directly below the window ledge at a height of about 10 ft. The idea was to prevent any injury to the chicks in case they came tumbling down.

Peafowl are precocial birds and their chicks become active within hours of birth. *Matari's* newly born chicks gave ample evidence of this by playing around their mother and were seen pecking at the grass and the tit bits on the ledge. On 18 June the family stayed put on the ledge, but early on 19 June *Matari* flew out of the ledge, receded the surroundings and prepared her chicks for the next move. Around 0730 am, she nudged the two active chicks and, one by one, they took the plunge at an angle to the lawn below by slightly raising their tiny wings, which enabled them to come down somewhat like a parachute. Then *Matari* descended and instinctively the third chick, the youngest and smallest, followed. The whole operation was swift and the chicks landed safely, making the raised platform totally redundant.

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Once on the ground, *Matari* quickly led her chicks to the sunken garden in the premises and remained there among the bushes. Later, the family moved to other parts of the garden and, after surveying the area, *Matari* decided to stay on there rather than the adjoining Lodi Gardens. Over the next two days, the mother and her young ones were seen moving about freely and seemed quite at home in the IIC premises.

Looking at the whole incident, the following aspects are clearly very unusual and perhaps this is the first time such unusual behaviour has been observed in the Indian Peafowl:

- (1) Nesting by three peahens in window ledges at considerable heights in very busy urban premises and the successful incubation and hatching of three eggs by *Matari*.
- (2) Continuous perching by a peahen for incubation and hatching in a window ledge 24 ft high over a period of about 17-18 days.
- (3) The manner in which newly born chicks (1-2 days old) successfully flew down parachute-like to the ground about 30 ft below.

At the same time, the key issue is that this kind of very unusual behaviour of the peahens is clearly indicative of a situation in which excessive human activity and other disturbing factors in the adjoining parks are compelling the birds to seek safe refuge elsewhere. It is very necessary for the management of such parks in Delhi and elsewhere to take serious cognizance of this development and to take corrective steps to provide some undisturbed and secluded spots for facilitating the breeding and nesting of ground dwelling birds, especially the Indian Peafowl. It is also necessary to study the impact on the population of the species, especially in view of reports of declining numbers in recent years. On the other hand, it is a tribute to the gardens in the relatively small IIC premises which attract a variety of birds and the architecture of the IIC buildings that has found favour with the beleaguered peahens. No doubt, these lovely birds have to be admired for displaying remarkable intelligence and adaptability, a major reason for the survival of the species in sizeable numbers even in an urban setting.

*by Samar Singh, President, WPA-India*

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### **Interesting observation about Peafowl chicks riding their mother**

*by Manvijay Singh, Bhojpur Kothi, Dumraon (Bihar)*

Our family home called the Bhojpur Kothi in Dumraon near Buxar in Bihar has a compound of about 64 acres. In my childhood days, there were about a hundred Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) in the area. Gradually, with the expansion of agriculture and horticulture activities, the peafowl population declined and by the late 1980s only one male of the species remained. Then, my father, Maharaja Kamal Singhji, former MP, got two young peahens from somewhere and asked me to release them in the compound. However, at first I kept them in an enclosure in our house for a couple of months to get them settled and after that I put them in a portable cage in our Tennis Court, which was frequented by the solitary resident peacock, who used to strut about in the manner of the Old Patriarch. The cage was also meant to protect the peahens from predators, like Jackals, Jungle Cats and Civets, that abound in the area. Within two days, the old fellow showed his liking for the peahens and then I opened the cage to set free the birds. It was a very exciting moment to witness the peahens join the peacock and disappear into the bushes.

Ever since, I have been keeping a strict watch on these birds, especially during the breeding season, followed by egg-laying, hatching and the rearing of chicks. In this connection, a very interesting and unusual episode took place in the autumn of 2003, when the jackal menace was at its peak in our area. One clever peahen decided to move camp to the premises of our nearby guest house by flying over the high compound wall. She laid her eggs on the asbestos roof of the gardener's tool room at a height of 7-8 ft and incubated the eggs in that safe hideout. In due course, four chicks were born and the mother peahen stayed put till the chicks were a little bigger than a quail. Then, one day the mother led her four chicks on the ground all the way to our compound wall, which at the point she chose to cross over is about 8 ft high. The technique she used is quite common with the Sloth Bears, but not associated with peafowl. The mother peahen lowered herself by sitting down with her wings half spread and encouraged the chicks to crawl on to her back and then she took a hopping flight to gently land on top of the wall and then land on the other side. It took 5-6 attempts to achieve her goal of getting all four chicks across. With the chicks slipping off her back, it was quite tedious and laborious, but the mother's instincts, patience and relentless efforts paid and she finally got all her children back home!! For me, it was simply fascinating to witness the whole drama as it was enacted.

Currently, despite all the odds, there is a resident population of about 15 Peafowl in our compound and all possible efforts are being made to protect them. About an equal number must have ventured out over the years.

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## Current Status of the Indian Peafowl

*Prof. B.C. Choudhury & Dr. S. Sathyakumar, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun*

In 2004, the Endangered Species Management Department of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) initiated gathering information on the status of the Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*). The status assessment is actually a continuous process based on questionnaire survey. A structured questionnaire was sent to 448 Protected Areas located in the peafowl range states in the country. Till June 2007, 230 PAs (51%) have responded with varied levels of information on the presence of peafowl in 189 PAs. Some of these PAs have also provided information on the status of the species in the adjoining reserve forests and agricultural landscapes. Of these, 60 PAs reported the peafowl population to be increasing, 32 PAs stable and 5 PAs decreasing and the remaining consider their population to be unknown. Only 7 PAs reported crop depredation by peafowl to be a problem, whereas 55 PAs reported this to be occasional and 42 PAs reported no crop depredation by the peafowl in the surrounding agricultural landscape. Most PAs reported encountering shed peafowl feathers, but collection of feathers from PAs was reported to be occasional or non-existent. Only 10% of the PAs reported instances of poaching/trade in peafowl feathers. The process of collecting information from the other PAs is in progress.

Since 2006, the Institute has also sent questionnaires to 350 District Collectors and 1470 NGOs, NGIs and other professional research organizations. However, in spite of the fact that peafowl are perhaps equally encountered in the non forested landscapes of the country, so far only 106 (6%) have responded. Very few NGOs have provided information in a systematic manner. The WII plans to intensify the nation-wide information gathering on the status of Indian Peafowl through networking with a wider level of institutions and organizations as well as initiating a major research project on the biology, ecology and approaches of community based conservation initiatives. In this connection, it is noteworthy that as part of the nation-wide campaign *Save the National Bird*, WPA-India had put forward certain proposals, including a rapid survey to assess the current status of the species, to the National Board for Wildlife headed by the Prime Minister. In its meeting held on 19 June 2006, the Board approved a rapid survey to assess the current status of the species and periodic monitoring and proper protection measures.

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### Effect of Pesticide use on Indian Blue Peafowl and Grey Francolin in Central India

(Research Project funded by the Ministry of Environment and Forest)

The project is being carried out at (a) experimental sites where pesticides are being used and peafowl deaths have been reported, and (b) control sites where the usage of pesticides is minimal. Such sites include areas inside Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur (Rajasthan) and Madhav National Park Shivpuri (M.P.).

Field work began with a general survey of Sariska Tiger Reserve followed by a detailed survey in Alwar (Rajasthan) and Morena (M.P.) districts to ascertain presence/absence of Peafowl and Gray Francolin and the use of pesticides. Information was collected from pesticide dealers and farmers.

Study in Keoladeo National Park (KNP) has been completed and the main findings are as follows:

**Inside KNP:** *Peafowl* - 570 individuals recorded (pooled data) at 370 locations (recorded by GPS). The age and sex structure for the pooled data are: 0.41 (male), 0.34 (female), 0.04 (juvenile) and 0.19 (sub adult). *Grey Francolin* - 1258 individuals recorded (pooled data) at 370 locations (recorded by GPS). The age and sex structure for the pooled data are: 0.23 (male), 0.23 (female), 0.01 (juvenile) and 0.09 (sub adult).

**Outside KNP:** *Peafowl* - 359 individuals recorded at 99 locations (recorded by GPS). The age and sex structure: 0.20 (male), 0.58 (Female), 0.13 (Juveniles), and 0.07 (Sub adults). *Grey Francolin* - 127 individuals recorded at 78 different locations (recorded by GPS). The age and sex structure: 0.48 (male), 0.44 (females), and 0.06 (Juvenile).

In KNP, Peafowl and Grey Francolin were not distributed uniformly. Differences in densities were higher in forest area and very low in open scrub area.

Organochlorine pesticides were detected in soil samples collected during the study from inside and outside of KNP. Presence of Organochlorine pesticides in fecal samples of Peafowl collected from inside of KNP was lower in comparison to the samples collected from outside of KNP. However, concentration of pesticides was higher in the fecal samples of Grey Francolin collected from inside of KNP.

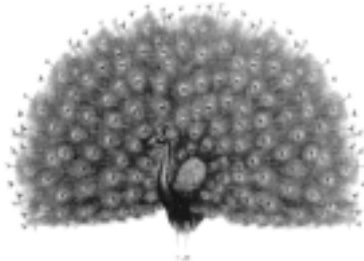
Two workshops on right use of pesticides and their effects on birds were organized. First was organized in Bharatpur (Rajasthan) on April 15<sup>th</sup> 2006 and second in Haveli village of Morena (M.P.) on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2007. The main objective was to spread awareness among farmers about the impacts of pesticides on birds, specially peafowl and partridges, and to inform them about precautions, correct dosage, etc.

## Save the National Bird



Indian Peafowl/ekj  
*Pavo cristatus*

- Endemic/Indian Species. \* Lons kh@Hkkj rh; i ztkfrA
- Prominent place in Indian art, culture and tradition (including music) for centuries. \* I fn; ka I s Hkkj rh; dyk] I l dfr ,oa i jEi jk (I æhr I fgr½ ea i æd[k LFkuA
- Helps in maintaining balance of nature. \* i kdfrd I Uryu cuk, j [kus ea I gk; dA
- Hunting, killing, poisoning or trapping is punishable under Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. \* dkuu ds rgr i wk I j {kkA
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