



Continued Bird Watching

My bird watching is getting better by the day! As if birds heard me, they seem to visit my home much more than it was the case when I first wrote *Armchair Birdwatcher*. These days my house is buzzing with the sweet calls of Olive-backed Sunbirds. They are all around the house, especially on the Garlic Vine which blooms almost every month and has been doing so since last September. There are other houses with flowers in the neighborhood so the sunbirds are around all the time. Their distinct frequent call announces their arrival. Since the garlic vine flowers died out, I can see the pair from my desk by the window, frequently perching on my soft spiny succulent *Huernia*, the Carrion maroon flower. They don't seem to suck the flowers but prefer to peck on the soft stem.

The other day, as I was returning from my walks in the evening, I noticed a big swarm of noisy birds flying just outside our house. I had not seen this bird here before. Quickly retrieving my binoculars from the house, I realized that they were Blue-throated Bee-eaters. Hundreds of them were planning to roost on my neighbor's tree for the night. They had just come to say hello to me, as they never returned to roost on the tree again!

For some reason the noisy bulbuls are not so frequent visitors to our little garden now (as I am writing this, as if they heard me, they have appeared and making soft cooing noises!), but a Tailor Bird seems to like the hedge and flips around almost daily. Ashy Wood-swallows continue to perch on the wires around the village in the evenings. Doves, both Zebra and Spotted, and Bulbuls, are around the village whole day. Asian Koel is heard often but rarely seen. Oriental Magpie-robins are a common site in and around the village as usual.

On my walks I have been seeing Black-collared Starlings foraging for insects on the banks of the canal after the grass has been cut. The Cinnamon Bittern and Chinese Pong Heron frequently surprise me with sudden flight from where they were sitting waiting for prey by the canal. Scaly-breasted Munias keep changing their favorite site for feeding and I see them on a vacant overgrown patch with some seeds that they seem to prefer. In the same patch I have been seeing a family of White-breasted Water hen with three chicks. Lately, only two chicks are seen with the parents. I presume, the nature has decided the fate of the third!

I had mentioned in my earlier article about the beautiful and impressive Greater Racket-



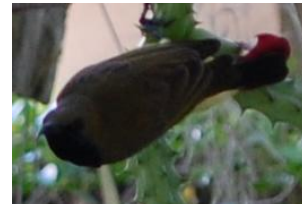
tailed Drongo at a specific spot on my walks but I had only seen them through naked eye. Last month, on my walks one evening, fortunately this time with my binoculars, two of them flew from one tall tree to another across the canal and kept hopping in the branches. I had a good view of these magnificent birds for almost ten minutes, first time with the binoculars, filling me with great delight.

The paddy fields look beautiful as the sun is setting. Recently planted paddy fields are full of White-vented Mynas. Greater Coucals are also frequent visitors of these fields with occasional White-breasted Water hen on the lookout for prey.

Last month we went again to Doi Inthenon to see some birds. Unfortunately it rained relentlessly and we could hardly see any birds or go for a walk. However, we did manage to see both male and female Scarlet Minivet, which was a pleasure. We also saw White-crested Laughingthrush, Shrikes, Munias, Bulbuls and Oriental Magpie-robins.

One of my friends, who is not a keen bird watcher, asked me why I did not put pictures of these birds alongside my article. Unfortunately, I don't have the right equipment to do close up bird photography. I have decided to copy pictures from the internet so that my readers can see which bird I am talking about.

See this article with Pictures at [Continued Bird Watching](#)



Olive-backed Sunbird (F) on Huernia from my D-40 Nikon. At last success!





Male Olive-backed Sunbird



Blue-throated Bee-eater



Tailorbird



Ashy Woodswallow



Red-whiskered Bulbul





Oriental Magpie-robin Male (L) Female (R)



Black-collared Starling



Scaly-breasted Munia



White-breasted Waterhen



Greater Racket-tailed Drongo



Greater Coucal



White-crested Laughingthrush





Cinnamon Bittern



Chinese Pond Heron



Scarlet Minivet (Male)



Scarlet Minivet (Female)

Source: All Pictures from Internet unless stated

