



AAETI

A BIRDWATCHER'S HAVEN

Mornings at AAETI, depending on the season, can be quite fulfilling if it is birds you are interested in. All you need is a sharp eye, loads of patience and a capable pair of binoculars. A stroll around the campus can bring you face to face with a wide variety of its winged residents and visitors – from a Black Redstart to a Green Bee-eater, from a Red-wattled Lapwing to a White-breasted Kingfisher, from a rarely seen Sirkeer Malkoha to the Common Babbler.



Clockwise
(from top left):
Purple sunbird,
Green bee-eater,
Long-tailed shrike,
Red-wattled lapwing

Illustrations of birds by Chhavi Mathur



BIRDWATCHING

SOME BASIC GUIDELINES



DOs

- ✓ Be observant, keep quiet and listen to the bird call. Maintain respectable distance during observation and restrict yourself from sudden movements which may scare the bird away.
- ✓ Keep a notepad (paper/gadget) handy to note down your observations about the shape, size, colour and behaviour of the bird.
- ✓ Use a binocular to observe a bird closely.
- ✓ Carrying a camera is advisable: you can take pictures and identify the bird later on.
- ✓ To check the identity of the bird you can use any field guide like Birds of the Indian Subcontinent or any other convenient bird ID app like Merlin by Cornell Lab or check it directly through Google Lens. Sometimes apps may not be accurate. In that case, you can contact an avian expert.
- ✓ Always wear natural coloured clothes while birding (camouflage, earthy, green, grey, blue or any light colour).
- ✓ Use full-sleeve shirt, trouser, shoes and cap to protect yourself from insect bites etc. Carry rain gear during monsoon birding.



DON'Ts

- ✗ Do not use recorded playback or any bait to lure birds. It can cause extreme stress and may even kill them!
- ✗ Do not feed birds. They are smart enough to collect their own food.
- ✗ Do not approach any nest. Disturbing nests can cause the parent birds to abandon their brood as well as the nest.
- ✗ Do not use strong perfumes.
- ✗ Do not litter or leave trash in the area of birding. It may damage their habitat.
- ✗ Do not use bright/blinding lights to locate a bird during cloudy or dark days.
- ✗ Avoid handling injured birds if you are not a trained person to prevent stress or injury. Take the help of someone trained to do that.
- ✗ Never use drones to photograph or record video footage of nests.
- ✗ Do not disclose the location of sensitive species such as owls.

Collated and shared by Gargi Mishra

A BIRDER REMINISCES...



Trishant Dev

“The first time I arrived at AAETI, I remember thinking that this would be a good place to find birds, perhaps even some unique to this region. The landscape, the campus, the mornings broken by bird calls – it all felt like an invitation. Since then, Indian robins have darted across walkways, and sunbirds have tapped at the glass outside my window. Once, as I walked out, a shikra had flown low, pausing briefly on a branch before vanishing behind a building.

Birdwatching at AAETI is not something you set aside time for, it happens as you walk to break-fast, between sessions, or during a quiet evening stroll. It invites you to notice not just the birds, but also the flowers, butterflies, and the soft hush of the landscape that makes you pause, look up, and pay attention.”



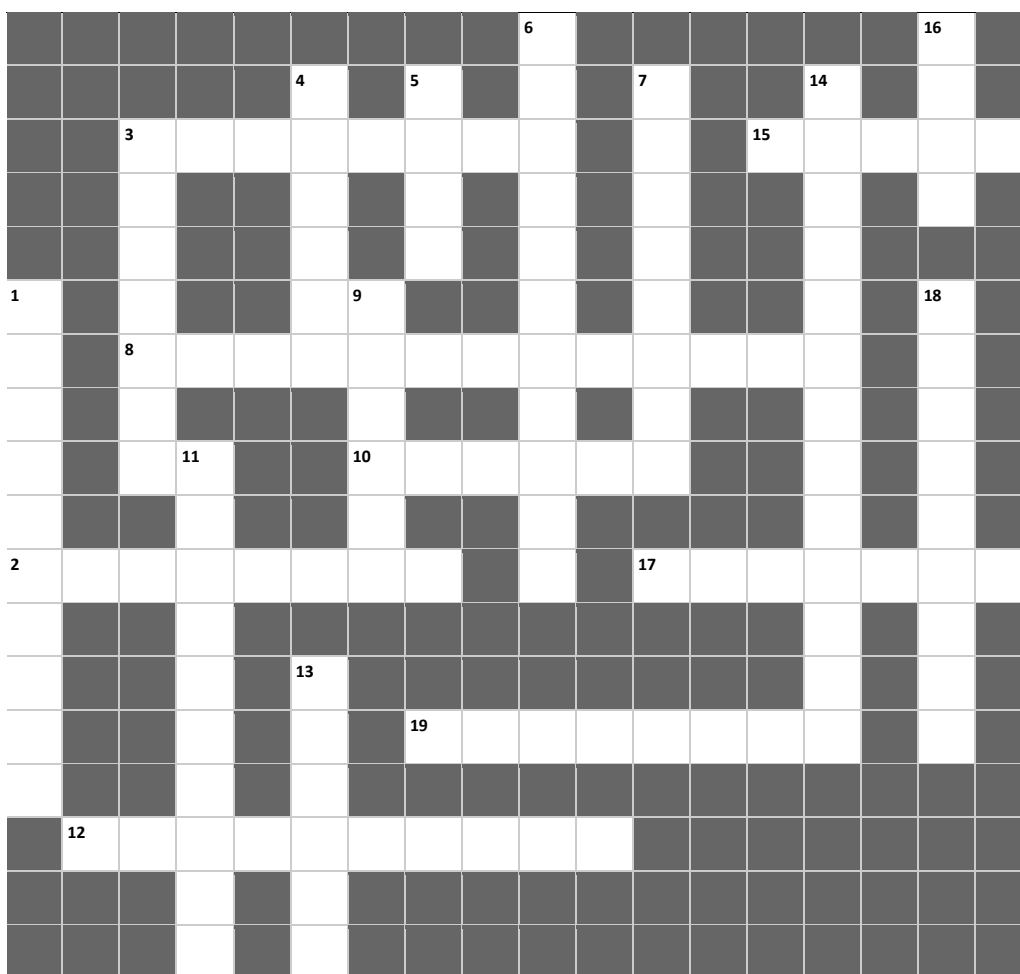
Gargi Mishra

“AAETI is located in a place that has a geological history of over a billion years: the Aravallis. This ecosystem hosts over 60 bird species (the number may vary depending on the weather and seasonal conditions). The campus and its surrounding areas host a 24x7 orchestra conducted by its avian residents. Not a single moment passes by without a bird's chirping or call. Birds have already built up their world around the buildings and structures.

Watching these birds up close is always an exhilarating experience! If you are interested in understanding their behaviours and their survival methods, you will lose track of time while observing them! It relieves stress and rejuvenates the soul!”

THE BIRDER'S CROSSWORD

CONCEIVED AND CREATED BY TRISHANT DEV



ACROSS

2. A medium-sized bird with a curved bill and a 'helmet' on top, commonly seen perched in the trees

3. A bird with a name that hints at the sky, often found in flocks, known for murmurations.

8. Cinnamon-coloured bird with a black head, loud calls, and a long tail.

10. With its bright red forehead and yellow-green body, this bird has a name that reflects the sound of its 'smithing' work.

12. This bird's name reflects its muted gray color, and it belongs to a family of birds also known as wren-warblers.

15. A tiny, brownish bird with a striking scaly pattern on its breast, this species forages in flocks and communicates with soft calls and whistles.

17. A small, iridescent bird with a vibrant purple sheen on its chest, often seen hovering near flowers while sipping nectar with its long, curved beak.

19. Vibrant green insectivore with a long curved bill and graceful flight.

DOWN

1. A medium-sized, grayish bird with a bold black mask around its eyes, known for its sharp call and habit of perching on open branches in woodland

3. A ubiquitous (or once ubiquitous) small bird, often nesting in urban rooftops, with a distinctive chirp and a stout, conical beak ideal for cracking seeds.

4. Black bird with a forked tail that's highly agile in flight.

5. Large raptor known for its soaring flight and sharp vision.

6. This small, bold bird is easily

recognized by its contrasting black and white plumage and its sweet, clear song.

7. Bright green bird often seen in noisy flocks; mimics sounds too

9. Popular garden bird with a red patch and bubbly call.

11. Flashy, fish-eating bird with a dagger-like bill and brilliant plumage.

13. A crested bird, known for its distinctive crown with zebra-striped feathers and an 'oopoop' call, is often seen perched in gardens or open woodlands.

14. Noisy brown bird that always moves in groups - nicknamed the 'seven sisters'.

16. Tall wading bird with a long curved bill, often seen in wetlands.

18. A large, dark water bird with a hooked bill, often seen drying its wings after diving for fish in lakes or coastal waters.

ACROSS 1. Woodshrike, 2. Hornbill, 3. Starling, 4. Drongo, 5. Kite, 6. Magpie, 7. Parakeet, 8. Rufous Treepeep, 9. Hoopoe, 10. Kingfisher, 11. Kingfisher, 12. Ashy Prinia, 13. Hoopoe, 14. Jungle Babbler, 15. Ibis, 16. Cormorant, 17. Kingfisher, 18. Kingfisher, 19. Kingfisher



BEYOND BIRDS...

The AAETI campus has a few other residents and visitors as well, of the non-winged variety. Mongoose, civet cats, butterflies, common rhesus monkeys, geckos and a variety of snakes, ranging from rock pythons to cobras, have been seen at various times.

*If you don't bother them,
they will not bother you.*

GALLERY

BIRDS THROUGH THE LENS



Upload here the pictures of birds that you click on your birdwatching forays in the campus. We will put them up on our virtual wall, with the appropriate credit line.

AAETI

ANIL AGARWAL ENVIRONMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE

Nimli, Tijara, Alwar, Rajasthan, India