



Research Article

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Ornithofauna Diversity of Tehsil Pakpattan, Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract

Tehsil Pakpattan is situated in the Doab region of Punjab Pakistan along the river Sutlej. The Current study was intended to evaluate the avian biodiversity of Tehsil Pakpattan. The study included the evaluation of species diversity, IUCN Red List status, migratory description, and feeding habits of the bird populations of Tehsil Pakpattan. Regular surveys were conducted at 10 different localities of Tehsil Pakpattan including Islam Colony, Kanipur, Farid Kot, 14 S/P, Chak Khagga, Musewal, 8 S/P, Noorpur, Green Town, and Bonga Niaz Khan from January 2022 to April 2023. The Shannon Wiener Diversity index value ($R'=3.41$) evidenced the eminent diversity of bird populations in the study area. A total of 1884 individuals representing 41 species, 30 families, and 12 orders were recorded. The Highest diversity was of Order Passeriformes. The most abundant birds in the observed population were the Cattle egret (n=160), House crow (n=150), Asian green bee-eater (n=100), Rock pigeon (n=100), Bown rock chat (n=98) and House sparrow (n=90). Among all species, 34 were the resident, 2 were summer breeders, and one was a winter visitor. 37(75.60%) of the bird species belonged to the Least Concern (LC), 2(4.87%) Nearly Threatened (NT), and 2(4.84%) Vulnerable (VU) categories of the IUCN Red List.

Keywords: Aves, Ornithofauna, Pakpattan, Birds of pakistan, Bird diversity

Introduction

Birds belong to the Class Aves making it the only group of Phylum Chordata to have feathered vertebrates. Class Aves has more than 10,000 bird species conferring it as the most diverse group of vertebrates [1]. Pakistan has a fantastically diverse avifauna comprising of more than 790 bird species [2,3]. Class Aves is the most diverse and best studied among all other vertebrate groups. Undoubtedly, birds are eye-catching and permeating creatures of nature [4]. High agility makes their presence global approximately in all habitats [5]. Birds are highly diverse, widely recognized, and valuable living creatures that serve as valuable indicators for tracking global biodiversity patterns. They are easily observable and provide useful insights into biodiversity. A flourishing bird population indicates environmentally friendly and sustainable growth and better environmental health. Birds have eminent ecological, biological, and financial contributions including pollination, seed dispersal, nutrient cycling, pest control, and scavenging [6,7].

Unfortunately, over the past few decades, the human population has been increasing at an exponential rate, as per the projected numbers the world population will reach a gigantic number of 9.7 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion by the end of the 21st century [8]. Substantial growth in the human population, unplanned expansion of urban settings, and lack of knowledge about wildlife are posing various bewildering threats to the precious bird species including illegal hunting and shooting, habitat destruction, environmental pollution, and illegitimate trade. Due to these astonishing menaces, bird diversity is declining expeditiously [9,10].

The area of Tehsil Pakpattan is situated along the bank of river Sutlej in the Bari Doab Region of Punjab. The climate of Tehsil Pakpattan is dry, damp, and sizzling in summers and winters are dry, cool, and short in duration. Around the year, the temperature varied from 42°F to 105°F and barely less than 38°F or above 112°F (GOP, n.d.). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that there is no study conducted



so far in the area of Tehsil Pakpattan regarding the estimation and assessment of bird diversity. However, studies regarding the impact of deforestation and avian population dynamics have been carried

out in adjoining areas like District Okara [3,11]. Hence, the present study is conceived for the evaluation of IUCN status, migratory behavior, and feeding habits of the avifauna of Tehsil Pakpattan.

Materials and Methods

Study Area

Table 1: Description of survey sites of study area.

Sr.	Survey Site	Coordinates		Type of Survey Site	Elevation (ft)
		E	N		
1	Islam Colony	30.35	73.39516	Urban	589
2	Kani Pur	30.40291	73.51485	Agri-Rural	652
3	Farid Kot	30.37803	73.54669	Rural	665
4	Bunga Niaz Khan	30.18992	73.45135	Rural	612
5	Arif Abad	30.33394	73.34321	Rural	561
6	Malik Bahawil	30.2863	73.43802	Agri-Rural Forest	605
7	Chak 25 SP	30.43691	73.40486	Agri-Rural Forest	592
8	Noor Pur	30.49354	73.24533	Agri-Rural Forest	552
9	Green Town	30.36158	73.37733	Urban	570
10	Bonga Hayat	30.49569	73.52083	Agri-Rural	633

The study was conducted in the 10 urban, agri-rural Forests, agri-rural, and rural localities of Tehsil Pakpattan, Punjab Pakistan (Table 1). Pakpattan is one of the two tehsils of district Pakpattan. Tehsil is a term for the sub-administrative. Branch in the Provincial governing setup of Pakistan. Tehsil headquarters of Pakpattan are located in the city of Pakpattan. It has a population of 0.9 million majority of living in rural vicinities.

Surveying and Data Collection

For data collection, regular surveys were conducted from January 2022 to April 2023 on a weekly basis. Birds were observed using binoculars (10×50mm) and the direct vision method (naked eye) while some of the birds were identified using the sound capture feature of the Bird NET mobile application developed by Cor-

nell Lab of Ornithology, Cornell University, USA. The identification was confirmed by Books and field guides of ornithology including "Birds of Pakistan" and "Ornithology in laboratory and field" [12-14]. The bird count for population density estimation was carried out using the transect count method devised by *Emlen, et al.*, [15].

Statistical Analysis

For the statistical analysis of data, Shannon Wiener's Diversity Index (H'), Species evenness index, Simpson's diversity index (I_{simpson}), Simpson's dominance index (I_{simpson}), and Margalef's index (I_{Margalef}) were applied using Microsoft Excel (MS Excel) version 2019 Table 2. Graphical representations, tables, and graphs were generated using MS Excel version 2019.

Table 2: Various Diversity indices used in the study their formulae and outcome values.

Sr	Index	Formula	Value
1	Shannon Wiener Diversity Index	$H' = -\sum_{i=1}^s p_i \ln p_i$	3.418538
2	Species Evenness Index	$E = H' / \ln S$	0.453318
3	Margalef's Index	$I_{\text{Margalef}} = (S-1) / \ln N$	5.304229
4	Simpson's Dominance Index	$D_{\text{simpson}} = \frac{\sum n(n-1)}{N(N-1)}$	0.039809
5	Simpson's Diversity Index	$I_{\text{simpson}} = 1 - D_{\text{simpson}}$	0.960191

Results

Composition of Avian Diversity

Preponderantly, 1884 individual birds belonging to 41 species, 30 families, and 12 orders were sighted in the study area. Results revealed that Order Passeriformes is the most diverse among all orders. Out of 41 species, 19 species were belonging to order Passeri-

formes, 4 to Coraciiformes, 4 to Charadriiformes, 3 Columbiformes, 2 Cuculiformes, 2 Bucerotiformes, 2 Galliformes, one each from Pelecaniformes, Piciformes, Ciconiiformes, Strigiformes, and Accipitriformes Figure 1. The percentage of individual bird count that the order Passeriformes is richest in diversity amongst other orders in the study area (Figures 1,2).

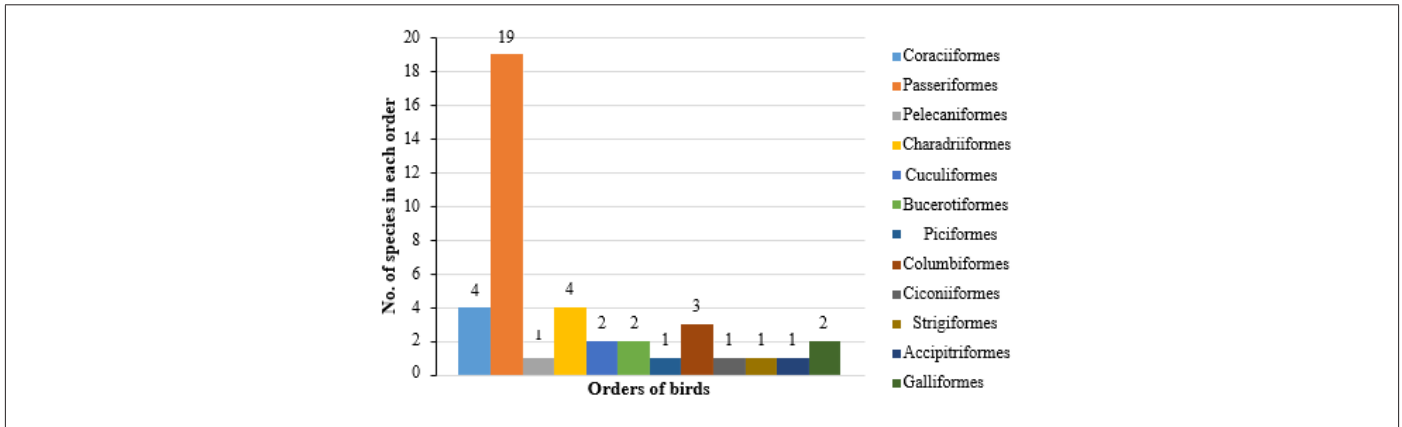


Figure 1: Species diversity among various orders exhibiting bird species in each order.

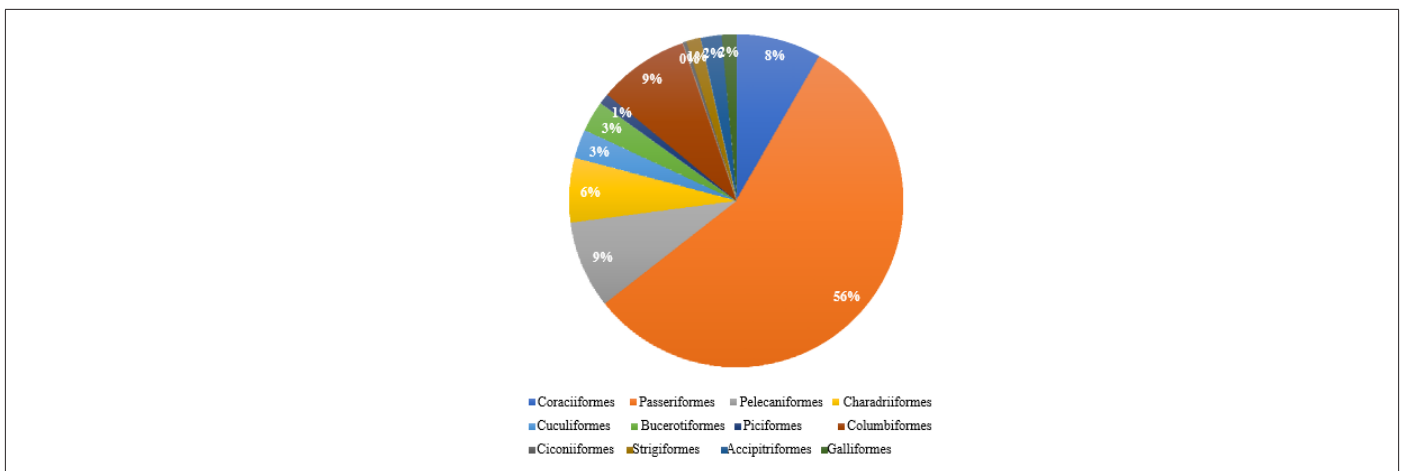


Figure 2: Percentage of individual birds among different orders.

Diversity Indices

The outcomes for various diversity indices were recorded as Shannon Wiener’s Diversity Index (R’) 3.4185, Species Evenness

index 0.4533, Simpson’s Diversity Index (I_{simpson}) 0.9601, Simpson’s dominance index (D_{simpson}) 0.0398 and Margalef’s index 5.30422906 (Tables 2,3).

Table 3: Detailed description of avifauna observed in Tehsil Pakpattan.

Sr.	Common Name	Scientific Name	Order	Family	Description	IUCN STATUS	Feeding Habits	N
1	Asian Green bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis Latham, et al., (1801)</i>	Coraciiformes	Meropidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	100
2	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Sylvia juncidis Rafinesque, et al., (1810)</i>	Passeriformes	Cisticolidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Insectivores	20
3	Common myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis Linnaeus, et al., (1766)</i>	Passeriformes	Sturnidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	70

4	House crow	<i>Corvus splendens Vieillot, et al., (1817)</i>	Passeriformes	Corvidae	Resident	Least Concern	Scavenger	150
5	Indian roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Coraciiformes	Coraciidae	Resident	Least Concern	Carnivores	10
6	Cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Pelecaniformes	Ardeidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	160
7	Red-vented bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer Linnaeus, et al., (1766)</i>	Passeriformes	Pycnonotidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	70
8	Rufous treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda Latham, et al., (1790)</i>	Passeriformes	Corvidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	25
9	Black drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocerus Vieillot, et al., (1817)</i>	Passeriformes	Dicruridae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	27
10	Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Passeriformes	Hirundinidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Insectivores	50
11	White-throated kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Coraciiformes	Alcedinidae	Resident	Least Concern	Piscivores	16
12	Red-wattled lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus Boddaert, et al., (1783)</i>	Charadriiformes	Charadriidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	75
13	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis Stephens, et al., (1815)</i>	Cuculiformes	Cuculidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	23
14	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Passeriformes	Passeridae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	90
15	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Bucerotiformes	Upupidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	36
16	Coppersmith barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala PL S Müller, et al., (1776)</i>	Piciformes	Megalaimidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Frugivores	20
17	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Cuculiformes	Cuculidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	30
18	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius Pennant, et al., (1769)</i>	Passeriformes	Cisticolidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	45
19	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Piciformes	Picidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	21
20	Jungle babbler	<i>Turdoides striata Dumont, et al., (1823)</i>	Passeriformes	Leiothrichidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	64
21	Brown Rock Chat	<i>Oenanthe fusca Blyth, et al., (1851)</i>	Passeriformes	Muscicapidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	98
22	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Passeriformes	Muscicapidae	Resident	Least Concern	Carnivores	56
23	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus Linnaeus, et al., (1766)</i>	Passeriformes	Ploceidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	42
24	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia JF Gmelin, et al., (1789)</i>	Columbiformes	Columbidae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	100
25	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala Pennant, et al., (1769)</i>	Ciconiiformes	Ciconiidae	Resident	Near Threatened	Piscivores	7
26	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama Temminck, et al., (1821)</i>	Strigiformes	Strigidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Carnivores	26
27	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Passeriformes	Motacillidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Insectivores	60
28	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Charadriiformes	Recurvirostridae	Resident	Least Concern	Omnivores	20
29	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans Boddaert, et al., (1783)</i>	Accipitriiformes	Accipitridae	Resident	Least Concern	Scavenger	38
30	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus Latham, et al., (1790)</i>	Passeriformes	Nectariniidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Nectarivores	12
31	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris Linnaeus, et al., (1758)</i>	Passeriformes	Sturnidae	Winter visitor	Least Concern	Omnivores	19

32	Indian Robin	<i>Copsychus fulvicatus</i> Linnaeus, et al., (1766)	Passeriformes	Muscicapidae	Resident	Least Concern	Carnivores	65
33	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i> Linnaeus, et al., (1766)	Columbiformes	Columbidae	Resident	Least Concern	Granivores	60
34	Grey Francolin	<i>Ortygornis pondicerianus</i> JF Gmelin, et al., (1789)	Galliformes	Phasianidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	10
35	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i> Leach, KD Koenig, et al., (1818)	Passeriformes	Hirundinidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Insectivores	80
36	Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundo</i> Sykes, et al., (1832)	Passeriformes	Oriolidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Frugivores	15
37	Red throated bee-eater	<i>Merops bulocki</i> Vieillot, et al., (1817)	Coraciiformes	Meropidae	Resident	Least Concern	Insectivores	30
38	Yellow-eyed pigeon	<i>Columba eversmanni</i> (Bonaparte, et al., 1856)	Columbiformes	Columbidae	Resident	Vulnerable	Granivores	5
39	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i> (Linnaeus, et al., 1758)	Charadriiformes	Scolopacidae	Resident	Near Threatened	Carnivores	12
40	River tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i> (JE Gray, et al., 1831)	Charadriiformes	Laridae	Resident	Vulnerable	Carnivores	10
41	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> (Linnaeus, et al., 1758)	Galliformes	Phasianidae	Summer breeder	Least Concern	Insectivores	17

IUCN Red List Status of Avifauna

The results disclosed that 2 species (*Sterna aurantia*; *Columba eversmanni*) were Vulnerable (VU) and 2 (*Limosa limosa*; *Mycteria*

leucocephala) Near Threatened (NT) and the rest of the species (N=34) belonged to Least Concern (LC) category of IUCN Red List (Figures 3-8).

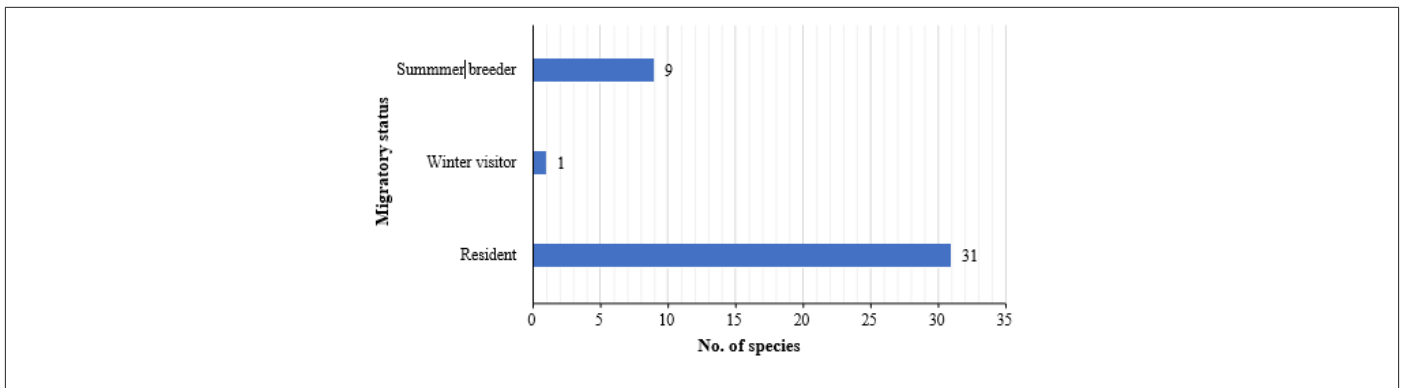


Figure 3: Migratory status of the ornitho-fauna indicating the abundance of summer breeder, winter visiting, and resident species.

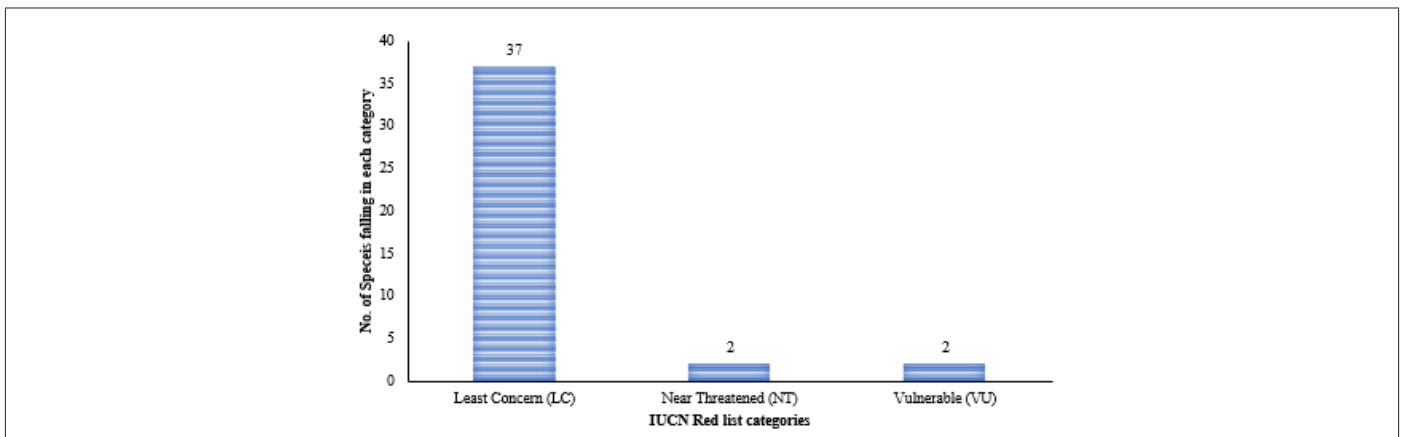


Figure 4: Distribution of the avifauna as per their IUCN Red List status.

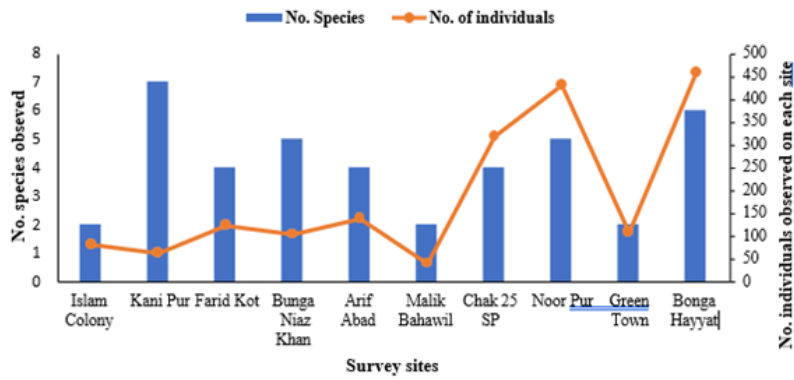


Figure 5: Relative number of species and individuals observed at each survey site.

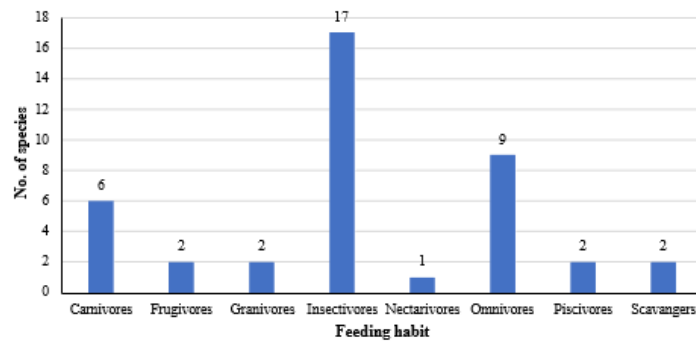


Figure 6: Feeding habits of different bird species.

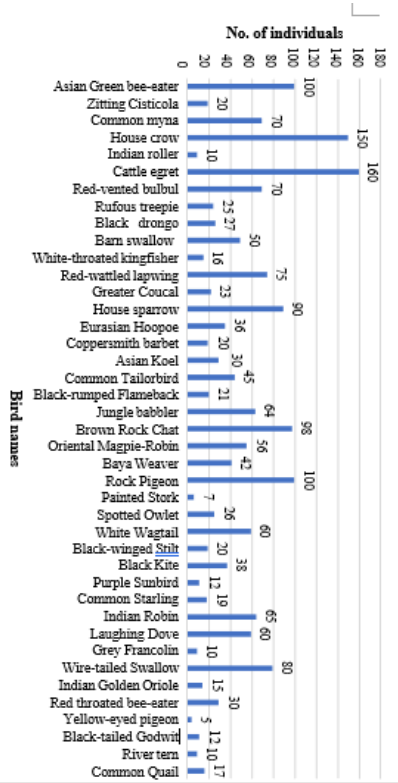


Figure 7: Birds belonging to each respective species.

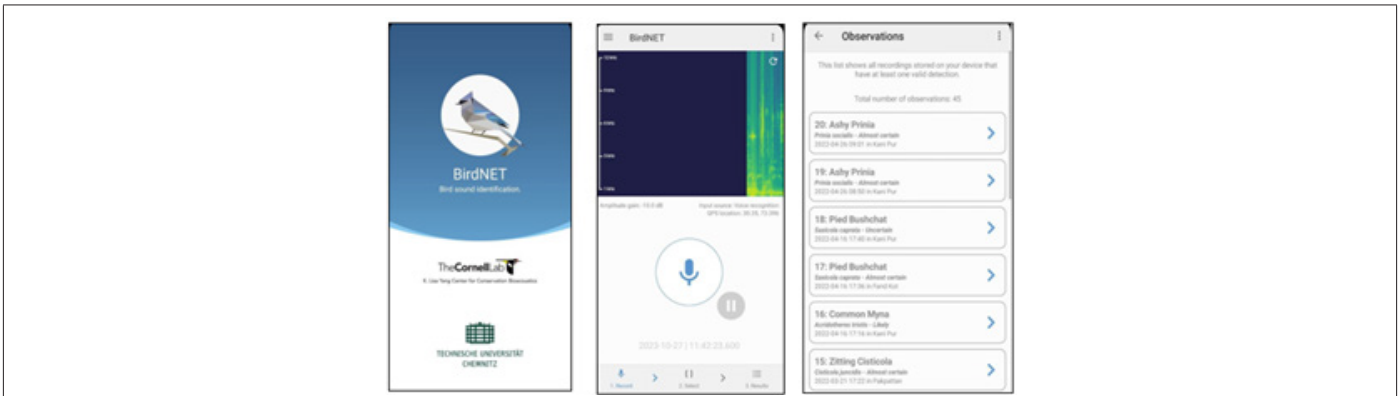


Figure 8: Interface of BirdNET mobile application for sound capture identification of birds.

Migratory Status

The Majority of the recorded bird population was comprised of resident species. Results showed that 75.60% (N=31) of the bird species was resident, 21.95% (n=9) were summer breeder, and 2.43 % of species (N=1) were winter visitor.

Feeding Habits

The Plurality of the bird species was Insectivores (n=17) while other species were Omnivores (n=9), Carnivores (n=6), Frugivores (n=2), Granivores (n=2), Piscivores (n=2), Scavengers (n=2), and Nectarivores (n=1).

Discussion

Pakistan has a marvelous avifaunal diversity. Birds are regarded as valuable environmental indicators and help us to recognize the preeminent zones for conservation. Protection efforts are aided by metrics like the current species distribution, their historical distribution evidence, and the degree of threat to the species [16]. Birds are crucial for the continuance of ecological cycles, especially in the trophic hierarchies of food chains [17]. The current study was designed to get an insight into the species diversity, IUCN Red List status, feeding types, and migratory behavior of the ornithofaunal populations of Tehsil Pakpattan, Punjab, Pakistan. There has not been any survey conducted for the appraisal of bird diversity in this region so far. A total of 1884 birds were observed belonging to 41 species, 30 families, and 12 orders of Class Aves. A significant proportion (55.15%) of the bird population belonged to Order Passeriformes making it the most diverse group among all other groups and substantiating the previous findings from the adjacent areas of the study zone as well as from other areas of the country [3,18,19]. For the quantitative analysis of diversity various diversity indices were applied including Shannon Wiener Diversity Index ($R'=3.41853$), Species Evenness index, Simpson's dominance index ($I_{\text{simpson}}=0.039808$), Simpson's dominance index ($D_{\text{simpson}}=0.03980$), and Margalef's index ($IM_{\text{Margalef}}=5.30422$) outcomes of these were strongly suggesting a rich avifaunal population in Tehsil Pakpattan. The majority of survey sites are situated in Agri-farming and countryside settings which is why predominantly bird species are insectivores and omnivores relying on grains and

other herbaceous and carnivore feed sources. Nutritive habits of bird species suggested that the bird population is predominantly feeding on small insects and other arthropods viz. Insectivores. The observed population is dominantly comprised of resident avifauna as 75.60% (N=31) of the bird species were resident followed by 21.95% (N=9) summer breeders and 2.43% (N=1) winter visitors. As the study site comprised the region with low industrial and urbanization activities the results regarding the status of threat level indicated that the majority of bird population (90.24%, N=37) belongs to the least concerned (LC) category while 2 (4.87%) species were falling in the Near Threatened (NT) and 2 (4.87%) were in the Vulnerable (VU) categories of Red List of International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The findings of our study also ascertained that the conservation status of the avifauna of Tehsil Pakpattan is at a satisfactory level and there are no signs of environmental pressure driving population decline. Meanwhile, the highest number of individual birds and species were observed at (N=460) birds and (N=7) at Bonga Hayat and Kanipur respectively. The site where the lowest number of birds were observed was Bhaiwal (N=2) while the lowest number of species sighted was N=2 at Islam Colony, Malik Bhaiwal, and Green Town. The lowest species diversity and bird observance in these areas strongly suggested that the anthropogenic activities in urban areas are callously affecting the avifauna due to land use, environmental pollution, and habitat loss [20-22]. Moreover, the availability of plenty of dietary resources, habitat suitability, lower degree of urbanization, and natural habitat exploitation in the other parts of the study area procures a secure and flourishing habitat for the bird populations and results in a rich ornithofaunal glimpse in the study area [17].

Conclusion

The study concluded that the area of tehsil Pakpattan has a rich avifaunal diversity. A large number of (n=41) species is an unambiguous sign of a healthy and least exploited habitat. While the urban vicinities in the study area embodied the least proportion of bird population indicating a trend of non-ecofriendly anthropogenic activities in the urban setting causing the dwindling of avifauna in the region. Overall, the study suggested the study area is a healthy, less exploited, and stable habitat for the flourishing of bird pop-

ulations. Furthermore, efforts should be made to the awareness of masses through well-organized strategies through effective channels like social media, mass media, and publicity campaigns for the dispersal of information in rural areas regarding the protection and conservation of avifauna to mitigate the loss of avian diversity in defiance of upcoming environmental challenges in future.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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