

# The diversity of mangrove-associated avian fauna of Korapuzha estuary, Kerala, India

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The present study documented 79 bird species in the Korapuzha mangroves, comprising 57 genera, 30 families, and 12 orders. Passeriformes (29.1%) and Charadriiformes (26.5%) were the dominant orders. Most species (65%) were local residents, with 30.9% being migratory. The Little Cormorant was the most frequently observed species. Four of the species are considered threatened, and about 94% are categorised as least concern. Several species are listed under Schedules I and V of the Indian Wildlife Act, indicating the region's conservation importance.

**Keywords:** Avian fauna, biodiversity, estuary, Korapuzha, mangrove

The highly sensitive nature of birds to sudden changes in habitat structure and composition makes the avian population an excellent indicator of acute or chronic environmental shifts. The rapid responsiveness of these avian populations to alterations in the ecosystem reflects their critical role in signalling environmental health status. Therefore, a comprehensive checklist of avian fauna in the Korapuzha mangrove ecosystem was prepared to assess the status of avian diversity in this unique environment.

## Materials and methods

### *Study area*

The sampling site was the Korapuzha mangrove forest (11°20'–11°22' N; 75°41'–75°44' E), situated 8 km north of