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ABSTRACT

The breeding behaviour of Common Myna (Acridotheres tristis) a case study was done in village Barri (Doda) of Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir in June 2020. During the course of study it was observed that female bird lays 3 eggs in the nest and hatching success was found to 100/.The incubation period was 12-14 days and nestling period was observed 18-23 days. Both male and female fed their young ones and take care of them. The fledgling success was found to be 100/.

Keywords: *Breeding, incubation, nestling and fledgling*

INTRODUCTION

Birds are warm blooded animals which can maintain their body. These are considered as master of air (Feathered Biped). This description is apt and precise and cannot apply to other animal groups. These being the master of air have been viewed as an indicator of environmental quality. The colour pattern of feathers is one of the important taxanomic diagnostic tool used for their identification. The good colour vision enables them to located food to recognize other members of the species and to distinguish sex of each individuals.

They perform a variety of function in a natural ecosystem. The prey birds which hunt during day and night. Vultures, Kites and Crows act as scavengers and efficiently dispose the animal carecasses, decaying matter and thus preventing epidemics.

In agricultural, the role of birds is complex yet it is interesting and varied. It depends upon number of factors like their feeding nature and the extent to which they depend on crops, their age and physical conditions. As aves appear to be a climax group at the height of their evolutionary career.

The common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) is a dominant component of avifauna at village Barri (Doda) of Jammu and Kashmir, along with House Sparrow,Jungle Crow. It is a member of family Sturnidae native to Asia and is well adopted to the urban environment. According to the IUCN species survival commission declared it one of the world's most invasive species and one of only three bird species listed among "100 of the world's worst invasive species " that pose threat to agriculture, biodiversity and human intrest (Lowe et al; 2004). It is having brown body, black hooded head and the bare yellow patch behind the eyes. There is white patch on the outer primaries and underside of wing lining is white. The legs and bill are bright yellow. There is no sexual dimorphism and are seen in pairs (Rasmussen et al; 2005).

Its distribution range, ranges from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Iran, Bangladesh, Srilanka to Japan and China (i.e most of Asian countries) (Ali et al; 2001), where as it has been introduced in many other parts of the world such as South Africe, Newsland, New Caledonia, Canada, Australia, Isreal, Kazakhistan etc. (Auduban Feild guide 2016). This passerine bird is found in open wood and agricultural land and human habitation. The range of the common Myna is increasing to the extent that in 2000 the IUCN special survival commission declared it among the world's 100 worst invasive species (Lowe etal; op cit). This bird is omnivores and feeds on reptiles, insects, grains, seeds, fruits or waste from human habitation. It forges on the ground among grass for insects, especially for grasshoppers from which it gets the generic name *Acridotheres* "grasshoper hunter".

STUDY AREA:

The study regarding the breeding behaviour of common Myna (*Acridotheres tritis*) was carried out at Barri village which is approximately 40km from district headquarter Doda of Jammu and Kashmir at The study area has subtropical type of climate with

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the upper reaches of the area are cooler during summer season. The observation was carried with the objective to study the breeding behaviour of the common Myna *(Acridotheres tristis)* whose nest was found in the roof of houses under the iron sheet. It is located in Pir Panchal range of middle Himalayan Chain of North West Himalayas and is having a typical terrain. The lower parts of erstwhile district Doda experience a subtropical climatic condtion which is characterized by hot and dry season, while upper reaches the Bhaderwah, Kalash Kund, Marmat, Padder, Marwah, Dachan etc. are comparatively coler in summer with temperate type of climate. The mean maximum and minimum temperature during summer ranges from 36^0 C and 14^0C respectively where as during winter ranges between 6^0 C and -2^0 C respectively.

The study area falls between 32^0-53' and 34^0-21' north latitude and 75^0-1' and 76^0-47' east longitude with an elevation ranges between 900m to 4200m above sea level. The forest is of temperate type including predominant ever green tree species comprises of *Pinus roxburgii, Cedrus deodara* and *Quercus sps.* Where as predominant deciduous tree species comprises of *Alunus nitida, Aesculus indica, Ficus sps*. Besides large no. of shurbs such as *Princepia utilis*, *Rhodendron arboreum*, *Puncia granatum*, *pyrus pashia* etc., and herbs species such as *Clematis bacbellata*, *Lepidium sativum, Desmodium triflorus*, *Allium graffithianum,* etc. were reported from the study area Identificaion of Plant species was made in the museum of Botany Department, university of Jammu, help was also taken from the Thesis "Flora of Distt. Doda" (Lal 1997).For identification and field diagonisis of birds, colourful plates of Ali and Repley (1968-74), and Grewal et al; (2002) proved quite helpful.

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The present observation regarding breeding behaviour of common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis)* reveals that Myna constructed nest in the roof of house which is having the iron sheets as cover at a height of 9 feet from ground. The myna breeds from March to September. Both the male and female contributed in the formation of nest. During the courtship behaviour the male mounted on the back of the female and make clocal kiss, and this was completed in 14 to 25 seconds. The common Myna in the area also nested in cavities of trees or roofs of the houses whenever Kacha house are there. The female lays 3 eggs in the nest. The eggs were incubated within 12-14 days and both male and female participated in the same. These sittings bouts lasted from 5 to 10 minutes. During the early phase of incubation the sitting was upto 10 minutes, during the mid phase it was between 4 to 8 minutes and during the last phase the sitting was 3 to 6 minutes. Thus in the early stage of incubation breeding Myna sat over the eggs for longer periods of time. There being no statistically significant difference between the duration of forenoon and afternoon sittings.

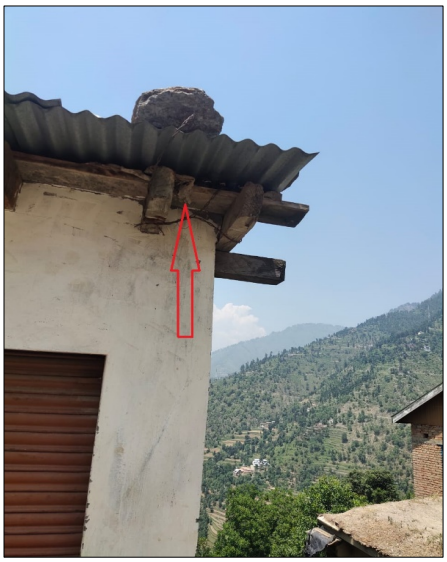

Fig1: Young ones of Common Myna in the Nest

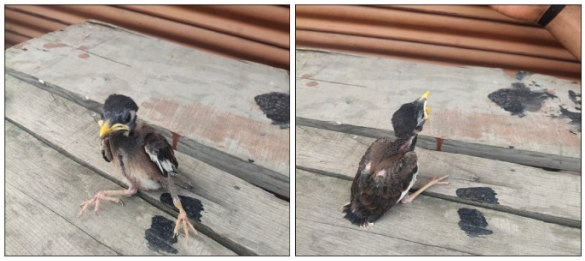

Fig2: Chicks Outside the Nest

Fig3:- Adult Common Myna

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After the hatching of eggs, the young ones were nidiculous and both the parents starts feeding the nestling. The food consist of insects, in the intitial days of nestling , besides animal food, other food is also provided to the nestling at the fledgeling stage. The feeding continued from dawn to dusk everyday, and it was observed that approximately 104 visits were made for bringing food for the nestlings during 13 hours of day light and the nestling period was 17-23 days.All the young ones fled away within 23 days and fledgling success was found to be 100%.

It was also found that during the course of observation as the fledgling time approaches, the Myna becomes more and more caring and protective towards the youngones from predator like cats, crows. Etc

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