
Letters to The Editor

**COMMENTARY ON "BIRDS OF
LAHORE CANTT" IN *PAKISTAN J.
ZOOLOGY*, VOL. 39(4) BY MOHAMMAD
ZAHID IQBAL *ET AL.***

Dear Professor Shakoori,

Since I am listed among the foreign sub-editors of your Journal, I feel I have a responsibility to comment on the above article. It has been well written and the information given is carefully researched, but there is one error in identification in the list of birds given. This relates to the Chestnut-headed Tit-babbler—*Alcippe castaneiceps* which is recorded as summer visitor, on the basis of Salim Ali and Ripley's (1987) "Compact Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan", and they further point out that Roberts (1991) is in error excluding it from his checklist. This 1987 edition published in Delhi is in fact a reprint of the original 1983 Edition and was published posthumously but with no alterations or additions, and I can quote from it. Distribution of Chestnut-headed Tit-babbler" It is distributed in Nepal, Bhutan, North East Indian States, Chittagong Hill Tracts of East Pakistan (as it then was), and extra-limital, Thailand, Vietnam, and Malay Peninsula". It is also worth adding that the two most recent authoritative books on the birds of the subcontinent, Grimmett, Inskipp and Inskipp, (1998) "Birds of the Indian Subcontinent" and Kazmierczak (2000) "A Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent" both of which include distribution maps for every species, show the Chestnut-headed Tit-babbler as occurring only

in North East corner of the Himalayas. I do not know what Editorial policy your Journal follows, whether there is any peer review of specialist articles, but at least there should be some provision for comments on previous articles if other readers find something noteworthy, possibly included as an appendix.

The authors of that article on the Birds of Lahore also list the White-backed Vulture as resident, but without any comment on its present status (possibly extinct ?), as a result of the widespread toxic effects of the veterinary product Diclofenac used on domestic animals, which persists in their carcasses and when consumed by Vultures causes renal failure.

Yours sincerely

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