



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Observations on rare nesting site of Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) in District Udhampur, J&K UT, India

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Abstract

Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) generally build their nest on tree cavities, rock scarps, vertical earth banks, crevices in walls of houses, ventilators between ceiling and roof of buildings, utility poles, and sewage and gas pipes; occasionally inside canopy of trees and rarely on open trees. In this study we documented the pictorial data on nesting site of Common Myna during March 2023 to August 2023 in Seyal Sallan village of district Udhampur JK, UT (32°91'N, 75°14'E; 704m SL), India. During investigations 3 nos. of open nests of Common Myna were found on the Phulai tree (*Acacia modesta*) in the study area. It was also found that the open nests of Common Myna turned to be unsuccessful one due to the predation by the predatory animals like Common Crow and Rufous treepie.

Keywords: Common Myna; Nesting site; Open nest; *Acacia modesta*; Udhampur

1. Introduction

The Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) a member of the starling family, it is one of the common birds found all over tropical the Asian countries (Ali and Ripley 1983). They too build nests in roofs of houses and even old wells, in the earthen riverine banks that in some parts, the natives hang out for their use though very rarely (Pell et al.1997). Nests or nest-building of Common Myna were observed within fronds of queen palms (*Arecastrum romanoffianum*) and royal palms (*Roystonea regia*), and in cavity of African tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata* (Bancroft 1984d). They build bulky nests in tree cavities, pockets in buildings, and in heavy vegetation. Nests also found in any place that will hold a large pile of leaves, twigs, paper, and the like: e.g., air-conditioners, drain pipes, open-ended steel rafters, narrow ledges, traffic lights, palm trees, under eaves of buildings, and even under engine covers of airplanes (Berger 1972b, Cousilman 1974, Berger 1977a). Readily uses nest boxes (Telecky 1989). In India and other parts of native range, sites similarly varied, includes tree cavities, rock scarps, vertical earth banks, crevices in walls of houses, ventilators between ceiling and roof of buildings, utility poles, and sewage and gas pipes; occasionally inside canopy of trees, or old crow (*Corvus*) or stork (*Ciconia*) nests; where brick buildings rare, nests frequently in trees (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1954a, Ali and Ripley 1972, Sengupta 1982, Dhanda and Dhindsa 1993). Once reported using nest of Pied Myna (Kirkpatrick 1950). Also recorded nesting commonly amidst haystacks (Toor and Dhindsa 1980).

2. Material and Methods

Periodic surveys were conducted to record the nesting sites of Common Myna. During the study the intensive nest searching was done in every week during the breeding period of Common Myna from March 2023 to August 2023. Binoculars of 10 x 50 and Nikon D5300 camera with 100mm-300mm zoom lens were used to record the nest and nesting site of Common Myna.

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3. Results and Discussion

During the mating season, Common Mynas were territorial and monogamous. Only during the six-month breeding season, the nesting sites were defended by the birds, which ran from March to August. In the first week of March, the Mynas began building their nest. It was observed that they tried to enter in the chimney pipes by continuously pecking the pipe cap for many days. Natural nests were found to be preferred in various locations, including trees, walls, fall ceiling (Fig. 1), and other structures, during the course of this study. Common Myna shared nests with species such the Oriental Magpie Robin, Rose-ringed Parakeet, and Spotted Owlet. While Spotted Owlet forbids mynas from nesting in their occupied nests, Rose-ringed Parakeets breed sooner than mynas, therefore Common Mynas reuse their plentiful nests. It has been noted that Common Mynas live in House Sparrow nests. The main reason Common Myna built their nests in the cavities was to protect the nestlings from predators.

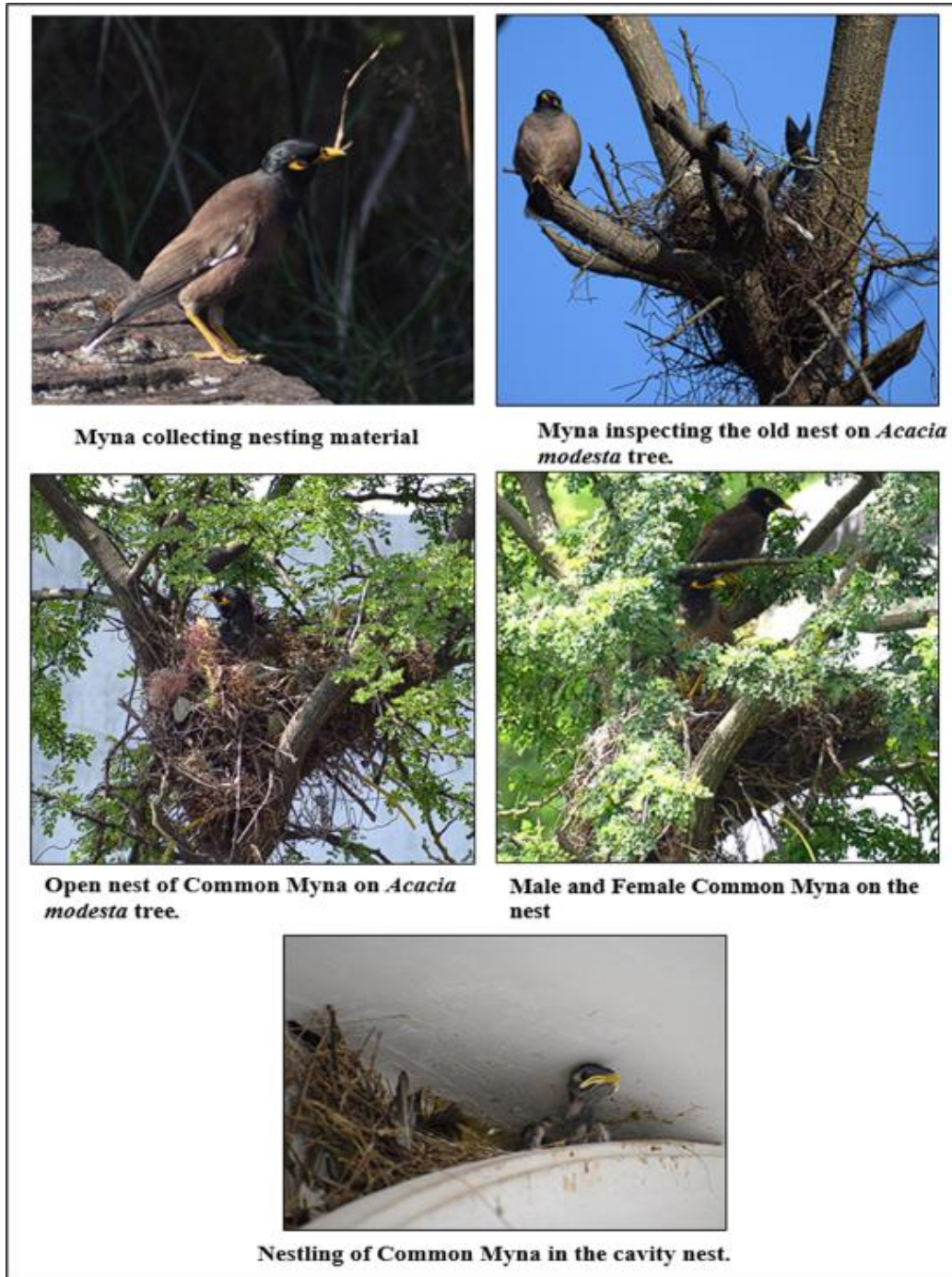


Figure 1 Open nesting site of Common Myna on *Acacia modesta* (Phulai tree)

In this study we documented the rare nesting site (open nest) of Common Myna on Phulai tree (*Acacia modesta*). (Fig. 1). A total of 3 open nests were found at the top of the Phulai tree (*Acacia modesta*) at a height of average 21.2 feet above the ground near the human habitation in Seyal Sallan village of district Udhampur JK, UT (32°91'N, 75°14'E; 704 m SL). Both the parents have been noticed to incubate the eggs. Even after two months both the parents remained in and around the nesting area, but there were no signs of hatching or nestlings have been observed in the nest. Due to the dominance of Common Crow and other predatory birds in the nesting area, the eggs or nestling might be hunt by these predatory birds. So, the open nest of Common Myna resulted into an unsuccessful nesting site. When breeding activities were finished, nest materials were removed from the nest. Nesting materials were sorted into various categories, including grass, bird feathers, plastic, cloth, metal wire, Cobra snake slough, and twigs from *Acacia* and *Cocos nucifera* that were discovered inside the nest cavity.

In conclusion, this note documents a photographic observation of rare open nesting site of Common Myna on the Phulai tree (*Acacia modesta*) in Seyal Sallan village of Udhampur district J&K UT, a new addition to the open nesting site of the species.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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