

Project Update: May 2021

Executive Summary of the Project

Lesser adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) is sparsely distributed in South and South East Asia, and its population is declining rapidly in its range due to anthropogenic activities. Little is known on its distribution, breeding and habitat requirements in lowland Nepal. Also, there is need for understanding knowledge and attitudes of people towards the species, and continuous interaction with local people to minimise the existing anthropogenic threats. The findings can be used for the government and conservation agencies to develop site specific long-term plans and policies for lesser adjutant conservation in human-dominated landscapes of lowland Nepal.

Short Report II (Till May 2020)

Nest monitoring

By the end of February 2021, we finish the nest monitoring of lesser adjutant in lowland Nepal. The surveys were conducted in seven districts of lowland Nepal; three eastern districts: Siraha, Saptari, Dhanusa; two central districts: Chitwan and Nawalparasi; and two western districts: Bardia and Kanchanpur. Besides Bardia, where we could not locate the nesting colony of the species, we recorded the nesting colonies from all six districts. All together, we recorded 35 colonies with 87 nests having 100 chicks. During the monitoring, we also recorded the tree characteristics of the nesting trees, like tree height, diameter of the breast height and tree species used by the lesser adjutant for nesting. Around 90% of the tree used for nesting was the Simal (*Bombax ceiba*), while remaining in Karam (*Haldina cordifolia*), Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) etc. More results will be updated after the final data analysis of the nest data.

Poster preparation

We also prepared the poster of lesser adjutant (1500 copies). Please find the attached poster of the lesser adjutant. We have distributed the posters to most of our local partners. This poster will be used during the awareness programs for the children and the local people.

खेतबारीमा पाइने विश्वमै दुर्लभ भुँडीफोर गरुडको संरक्षण गरौं

**Save the Globally Threatened
Lesser Adjutant from Extinction**



यसले खेतबारीमा
पाइने मुसा, सर्प र
विभिन्न किराहरु खाएर
किसानलाई सहयोग
पुऱ्याउँछ

**Benefits farmer by
controlling rat, snake
and different insects**

खेतबारीमा पाइने ठूलो रुखहरु र सिमसारहरुको संरक्षण गरौं
Save Large Trees and Wetlands in Farmlands

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Photo: Yam Mahato
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Semi-structured interviews

We are also performing semi-structured interviews to the farmers about the knowledge and the threats to the lesser adjutant in our study area. Till now we have finished 250 interviews. The interview survey is currently stopped due to second COVID-19 wave and the associated lockdown. We will continue after the lockdown.



Interview survey about the Lesser Adjutant in Dhanusa

Conservation awareness activities

Besides doing interviews survey, we also performed awareness programs to the farmers. As in this condition, it was difficult to gather a lot of people, so we decided to aware people after the interviews. However, when the situation of the COVID gets better, we will also perform the school awareness and other awareness programmes.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacts the survey

COVID-19 had affected all our activities. It affected during the nest monitoring and even in the interviews and the awareness activities. However, we are taking precaution and conducting our activities. We will continue our work after reducing the wave of the pandemic.

Ongoing work

- Complete semi-structured interviews with farmers about the knowledge and threats.
- Awareness programmes in some areas.
- Overall data analysis.
- Final report.

Publication of the manuscript

We recently published one manuscript in Global Ecology and Conservation Journal about "Assessment of farmers' knowledge and perceptions towards farmland birds show the need of conservation interventions" which was supported by the Rufford Small Grant Foundation (1st Grant_ 26446-1).