Research Article

A survey of waterbirds of Khoh and Kohlu rivers of Lansdowne forest division (western Himalayas), Uttarakhand, India

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in the Khoh and Kohlu rivers, which are the tributaries of the principal river Ramganga of the lower Garhwal Himalaya. During this study, we recorded 26 bird species belonging to 12 families of waterbirds and associated species. A total of 18 species were recorded in Khoh and 24 species were recorded from the Kohlu out of a total of 26 species. Among these 14 species are commonly found in both sites. 18 avian species were residents (69%) and 8 were winter migrants (31%). Analysis of RDi (relative diversity) results indicated that the family Accipitridae was the most diverse family, with the highest RDi value of 15.38. The species diversity indices comparison between Khoh and Kohlu rivers showed that the Kohlu river had a maximum diversity value ($H' = 2.90$) in comparison to the Khoh river ($H' = 2.58$). Five threatened bird species recorded in the survey were Pallas's Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* (Endangered), River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii* (Near Threatened), these two species common in Khoh and Kohlu, while Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* (Near Threatened), Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* (Near Threatened), and River Tern *Sterna aurantia* (Near Threatened) seen only in Kohlu. These natural river stretches should be conserved to protect and enhance the abundance and diversity of waterbirds in their natural habitat.

Key words: Waterbirds, Lansdowne forest division, waterbirds conservation, Khoh river, Kolhu river