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**CP Singh**

PG Dept. of Zoology,  
Janta Maha Vidyalaya,  
Ajitmal Auraiya, U.P. 206121,  
India.

**RRS Chauhan**

PG Dept. of Zoology,  
Janta Maha Vidyalaya,  
Ajitmal Auraiya, U.P. 206121,  
India.

## A sight of Himalayan griffon vulture (*Gyps himalayensis*) at Kaswa Baberpur - Ajitmal Auraiya UP, India

**CP Singh, RRS Chauhan**

### Short Note:

#### 1. Introduction



**Fig 1:** Griffon Vulture (*Gyps himalayensis*) Photo by CP Singh

The **Himalayan griffon** (*Gyps himalayensis*) is an Old World vulture closely related to the European Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*). The species was present in large numbers, along the Himalayas and the adjoining Tibetan Plateau. In Southern and Southeastern Asia until the 1990s and declined rapidly in numbers since; up to 99.9% between 1992 and 2007 (Prakash, *et al.* 2003) [2]. In 1985 the species was described as "possibly the most abundant large bird of prey in the world and often considered a nuisance, but is now listed as critically Endangered species [1].

This vulture builds its nest on tall trees often near human habitations in northern and central India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Southeast Asia The preferred nesting trees were Banyan, Peepul, Arjun, and Neem.

Like other vultures it is a scavenger, feeding mostly from carcasses of dead animals which it finds by soaring high in thermals and spotting other scavengers. At one time, it was the most numerous of the vultures in India [3].

In the early stage of my life about 15 -16 years ago I have seen a number of vultures near my village, forest, road side and canal sides sitting on the trees of Neem, Sheesham, Peepal and Arjuna. Vultures were commonly selected large and high tree for their nests. They constructed their nests with small twigs of trees and straws of grasses. Their nests were present on forked twigs almost on trees. Unfortunately, we are now unable to see these scavengers since 1995 onwardly. Most of the new generation of human beings is unknown about Gidhya. Because their population declined from the natural habitat. When the people know of the presence of vulture near kasba Baberpur Ajitmal Auraiya (U.P.). They were coming to see curiosity it. Where people present, they were very interested know about the vulture.

**Correspondence:**

**CP Singh**

PG Dept. of Zoology,  
Janta Maha Vidyalaya,  
Ajitmal Auraiya, U.P. 206121,  
India.

Then I explained the significance of this critically endangered bird. I identified this bird (Ali. 1978) <sup>[4]</sup>. Most of the people and the children were eager to see it and we and we hope that is this critical bird will be back to the environment slowly but it will take some time due to slow breeding. They become mature in five years and our environment is cleaned by them. They also help to maintain our health.



**Fig 2:** Griffon vulture with Egyptian vultures Photo by CP Singh

27th Jan 2014, I reported about this Himalayan griffon vulture, (*Gyps himalayensis*) near kasba Babrepur Ajitmal (26° 34' N, 79° 18' 38" E) Auraiya district in U.P. It feeds on the carcasses of dead buffalo. This vulture was in the company of two other Egyptian vultures feeding on carcasses of dead a buffalo. In the company of this vulture there are thirty-four crows and two dogs also present. It was remain about 5 – 6 days on the same place. The presence of vulture means it searches its suitable habitat for living in this area.

This is the first record of the Himalayan Griffon vulture in this area to the best our knowledge. Further studies in the areda on this elusive bird may provide useful information on its ecology, and its conservation.

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