The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir covers 55,538 sq. km across two administrative divisions (Jammu and Kashmir). Its diverse topography ranges from 247 m to 7,135 m in elevation, with forests covering 39% of the region. Human-modified habitats include farmlands and urban parks. Jammu & Kashmir has a vast protected area network—comprising four national parks, 14 wildlife sanctuaries, 16 conservation reserves, and 16 wetland reserves (including five Ramsar sites)—which accounts for 11.31% of the geographical area of the UT. Using eBird data, the region's common birds have been classified into five categories:

WETLAND BIRDS
Lakes, ponds, rivers, reservoirs and marshy areas are important habitats used by wetland birds for breeding, nesting, feeding, and as water sources. Most birds in this group are seen at wetlands, while some (Ibisbill, Common Snipe, Green Sandpiper) may be seen along the banks of rivers and streams.

GROUND FEEDING BIRDS
From colourful pheasants to dull brown pipits, ground feeders are a diverse group of birds that forage on the ground. Some species like wagtails are seen at wetlands, while many are forest dwellers (e.g., Himalayan Bluetail, finches). Others like Laughingthrushes, Babblers, and Buntings may perch low in a bush, but hunt small insects or other prey on the ground.

ARBOREAL BIRDS
These birds can be found in trees and shrubs, in forests, open woodland, and gardens. Many feed on fruits and berries (e.g., bulbuls, barbets, parakeets), while others feed on insects from bark (e.g., woodpeckers), in foliage (e.g., cuckoos, warblers) or in the air (e.g., flycatchers, drongos). Some like sunbirds feed on nectar from flowers.

AERIAL FEEDERS
Aerial Feeders like swifts are insectivorous birds that hunt and feed on the wing. They glide gracefully on curved, pointed wings or perform acrobatics to catch flying insects. Fast in flight, these birds prefer open areas, and some are also seen above forests and cliffs. They usually perch together in groups on wires at dawn and dusk.

BIRDS OF PREY
Birds of Prey or Raptors hunt other animals and small birds. They have excellent eyesight, strong feet, sharp talons, and a hooked beak for tearing into flesh. Some raptors (e.g., Himalayan Buzzard) are found in open habitats, while scavengers such as the Himalayan Griffon and Bearded Vulture are entirely dependent on dead bodies of cattle or wild animals and they never hunt.

♂ Male
♀ Female
Gender symbols indicate where the male and female of the species look different. If no symbols are shown, it means that they look alike.

Migratory birds that visit Jammu & Kashmir during winter (October-March), from their northern breeding grounds in Europe or Central/East/North Asia.

Migratory birds that visit Jammu & Kashmir during summer (April-June) to breed.

(J) Birds that are seen in Jammu and not Kashmir.
(K) Birds that are seen in Kashmir and not Jammu.
Birds not marked with either icons are found in both Jammu & Kashmir.

Size of each bird indicates the length from beak tip to tail tip. (br) indicates breeding plumage.

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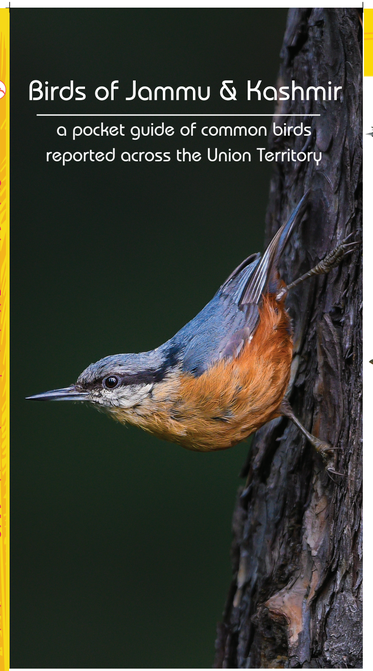
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COVER IMAGE Kashmir Nuthatch by Reyan Sofi
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Birds of Jammu & Kashmir

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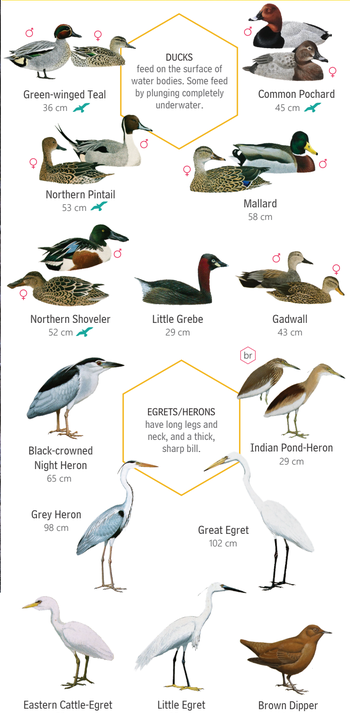
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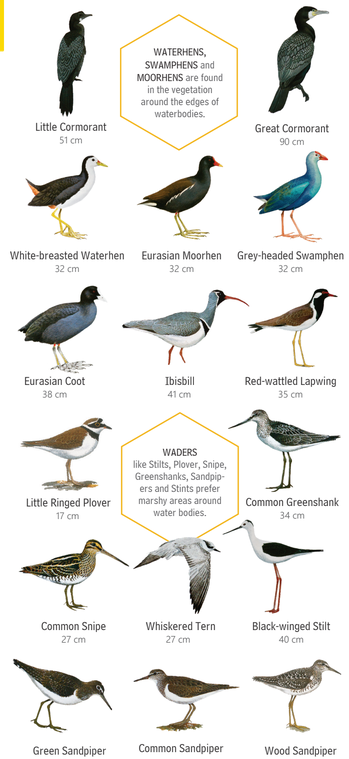
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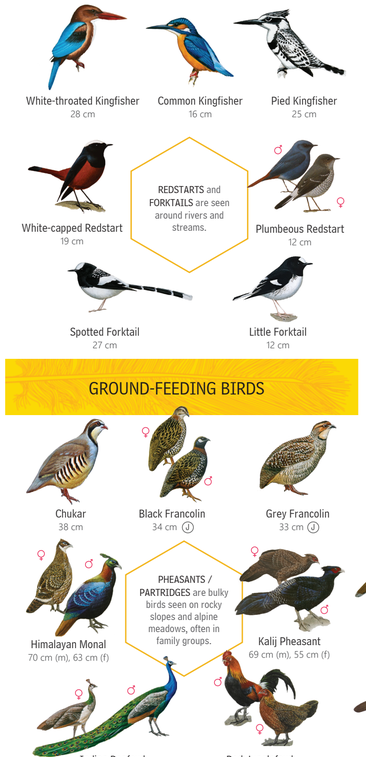
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BIRDS SEEN NEAR WATER

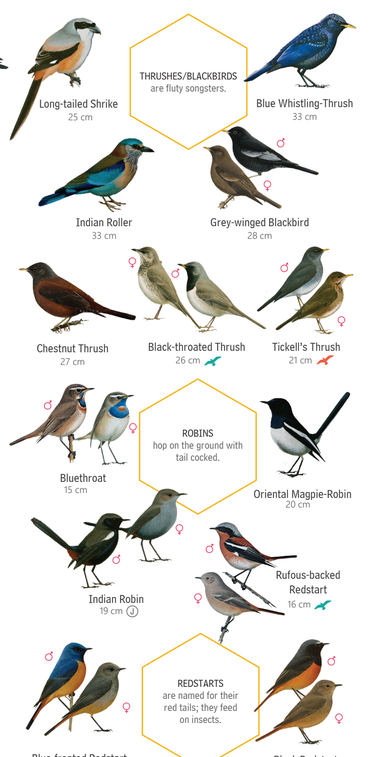


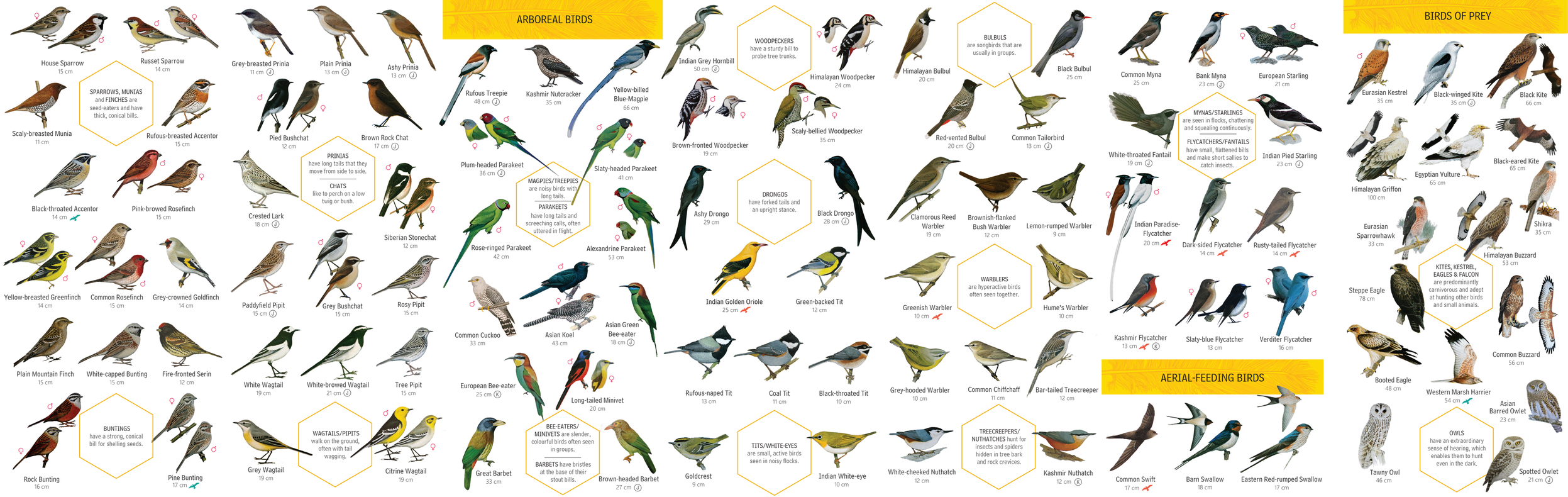




GROUND-FEEDING BIRDS






House Sparrow
15 cm
Russet Sparrow
14 cm
SPARROWS, MUNIAS and FINCHES are seed-eaters and have thick, conical bills.
Scaly-breasted Munia
11 cm
Rufous-breasted Accentor
15 cm
Black-throated Accentor
14 cm
Pink-browed Rosefinch
15 cm
Yellow-breasted Greenfinch
14 cm
Common Rosefinch
15 cm
Grey-crowned Goldfinch
14 cm
Plain Mountain Finch
15 cm
White-capped Bunting
15 cm
Fire-fronted Serin
12 cm
BUNTINGS have a strong, conical bill for shelling seeds.
Rock Bunting
16 cm
Pine Bunting
17 cm
Grey-breasted Prinia
11 cm J
Plain Prinia
13 cm J
Ashy Prinia
13 cm J
Pied Bushchat
12 cm
Brown Rock Chat
17 cm J
PRINIAS have long tails that they move from side to side.
CHATS like to perch on a low twig or bush.
Crested Lark
18 cm J
Siberian Stonechat
12 cm
Paddyfield Pipit
15 cm J
Grey Bushchat
15 cm
Rosy Pipit
15 cm
White Wagtail
19 cm
White-browed Wagtail
21 cm J
Tree Pipit
15 cm
WAGTAILS/PIPITS walk on the ground, often with tail wagging.
Grey Wagtail
19 cm
Citrine Wagtail
19 cm
ARBOREAL BIRDS
Rufous Treepie
48 cm J
Kashmir Nutcracker
35 cm
Yellow-billed Blue-Magpie
66 cm
Plum-headed Parakeet
36 cm J
Slaty-headed Parakeet
41 cm
MAGPIES/TREEPIES are noisy birds with long tails.
PARAKEETS have long tails and screeching calls, often uttered in flight.
Rose-ringed Parakeet
42 cm
Alexandrine Parakeet
53 cm
Common Cuckoo
33 cm
Asian Koel
43 cm
Asian Green Bee-eater
18 cm J
European Bee-eater
25 cm K
Long-tailed Minivet
20 cm
BEE-EATERS/MINIVETS are slender, colourful birds often seen in groups.
BARBETS have bristles at the base of their stout bills.
Great Barbet
33 cm
Brown-headed Barbet
27 cm J
Indian Grey Hornbill
50 cm J
WOODPECKERS have a sturdy bill to probe tree trunks.
Himalayan Woodpecker
24 cm
Brown-fronted Woodpecker
19 cm
Scaly-bellied Woodpecker
35 cm
Ashy Drongo
29 cm
DRONGOS have forked tails and an upright stance.
Black Drongo
28 cm J
Indian Golden Oriole
25 cm
Green-backed Tit
12 cm
Rufous-naped Tit
13 cm
Coal Tit
11 cm
Black-throated Tit
10 cm
Goldcrest
9 cm
TITS/WHITE-EYES are small, active birds seen in noisy flocks.
Indian White-eye
10 cm
Himalayan Bulbul
20 cm
BULBULS are songbirds that are usually in groups.
Black Bulbul
25 cm
Red-vented Bulbul
20 cm J
Common Tailorbird
13 cm J
Clamorous Reed Warbler
19 cm
Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler
12 cm
Lemon-rumped Warbler
9 cm
WARBLERS are hyperactive birds often seen together.
Greenish Warbler
10 cm
Hume's Warbler
10 cm
Grey-hooded Warbler
10 cm
Common Chiffchaff
11 cm
Bar-tailed Treecreeper
12 cm
TREECREEPERS/NUTHATCHES hunt for insects and spiders hidden in tree bark and rock crevices.
White-cheeked Nuthatch
12 cm
Kashmir Nuthatch
12 cm K
Common Myna
25 cm
Bank Myna
23 cm J
European Starling
21 cm
MYNAS/STARLINGS are seen in flocks, chattering and squealing continuously.
FLYCATCHERS/FANTAILS have small, flattened bills and make short sallies to catch insects.
White-throated Fantail
19 cm J
Indian Pied Starling
23 cm J
Indian Paradise-Flycatcher
20 cm
Dark-sided Flycatcher
14 cm
Rusty-tailed Flycatcher
14 cm
Kashmir Flycatcher
13 cm K
Slaty-blue Flycatcher
13 cm
Verditer Flycatcher
16 cm
AERIAL-FEEDING BIRDS
Common Swift
17 cm
Barn Swallow
18 cm
Eastern Red-rumped Swallow
17 cm
BIRDS OF PREY
Eurasian Kestrel
35 cm
Black-winged Kite
35 cm J
Black Kite
66 cm
Himalayan Griffon
100 cm
Egyptian Vulture
65 cm
Black-eared Kite
65 cm
Eurasian Sparrowhawk
33 cm
Shikra
35 cm
Himalayan Buzzard
53 cm
KITES, KESTREL, EAGLES & FALCON are predominantly carnivorous and adept at hunting other birds and small animals.
Steppe Eagle
78 cm
Common Buzzard
56 cm
Booted Eagle
48 cm
Western Marsh Harrier
54 cm
Asian Barred Owlet
23 cm
OWLS have an extraordinary sense of hearing, which enables them to hunt even in the dark.
Tawny Owl
46 cm
Spotted Owlet
21 cm J