

tested. The incident occurred in a totally degraded forest patch, where the food sources are scarce. The bird's normal ground foraging habit might have driven it to attempt to get food in this unusual manner.

August 20, 1996

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11. GOLDEN ORIOLE *ORIOLOUS ORIOLOUS* PREYING ON FLYING LIZARD *DRACO DUSSUMIERI* DUM. & BIBR.

On 8 January, 1996, during one of my field trips in the Western Ghats of Kerala, in a riparian habitat at Poringal Kuthu Dam near Vazhachal, I observed flying lizards *Draco dussumieri* in good numbers. Several trees had one or two lizards moving around the tree trunks. I was amazed to see the lizards in abundance. In that area on one of the trees I saw a golden oriole *Oriolus oriolus* holding its prey in its bill and beating it on the branch to devour it. I found that the prey in the oriole's bill was a flying lizard. According to THE HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS

OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN, by Ali and Ripley (1983) the oriole is a frugivore, but occasionally eats insects. Whether the non-availability of fruits or the abundance of the lizard made the oriole go for the lizard is uncertain. In any case it is interesting to note that the flying lizard also forms an item of the golden oriole's diet.

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12. COMMON MYNA FEEDING A FLEDGELING KOEL

On 15 August, 1996, at about 1130 hrs I observed a common myna *Acridotheres tristis* feeding a fledgeling koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* in the compound of Girls High School at Mangaldoi, Darrang dist., Assam. The fledgeling flew down to the ground for feeding where the myna was waiting. Then in the afternoon, the same birds were seen again, this time on the tin roof of the school building. The fledgeling was very noisy, which in fact caught my attention on both occasions. While the type of food provided during the first observation could not be identified, the myna did not offer any food the second time, although the fledgeling flew down noisily and begged for food. Then the fledgeling flew back to a nearby tree.

The young koel was a female, as was evident from its plumage. The koel is a known brood-parasite, usually on the house crow *Corvus*

splendens and the jungle crow *C. macrorhynchos*. Eggs have also been recorded from the nests of Chinese magpie *Pica p. seriea*, red-billed blue magpie *Urocissa e. magnirostris* and black-necked myna *Gracupica nigricollis* (Editor's footnote in Smith 1950). Smith (1950: *JBNHS* 49[2]: 304-305) recorded a very interesting case of black drongos *Dicrurus macrocercus* fostering a koel. This observation of common myna and koel seems to be the second published instance, the first being eggs of koel recorded by Stuart Baker from a common myna's nest (Cuckoo Problems, p. 197).

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Balachandran, S. 1998. "Golden oriole *Oriolus oriolus* preying on flying lizard *Draco dussumieri* Dum. and Bibr." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 95, 115–115.

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