

SILENT VALLEY BIRD SPECIES GOES UP TO 175

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(From left) Greyheaded canaryflycatcher, Nilgiri flowerpecker and Pompadour green pigeon spotted in the Silent Valley National Park in Kerala. Photo: Special Arrangement

A bird survey conducted at the Silent Valley National Park in the last week of December identified 141 species, of which 17 were new. So far, 175 species of birds have been spotted in Silent Valley.

The survey held on December 27, 28 and 29 marked the 30th anniversary of the first bird survey in Silent Valley. Although the first survey was held in the last week of December 1990, the anniversary could not be celebrated in 2020 December because of COVID-19 restrictions. Veteran birders such as P.K. Uthaman and C. Sushant were the only members in the 7th survey team who had attended the first survey held in 1990.

As many as 30 birders and forest staff took part in the bird survey by staying in seven camps inside the core area of the Silent Valley. Wildlife Warden S. Vinod said that another bird survey would soon be held in the buffer zone of the national park.

The survey was held in association with the Kerala Natural History Society.

Brown wood owl, Banded bay cuckoo, Malabar woodshrike, White-throated kingfisher, Indian nightjar, Jungle nightjar, and Large cuckooshrike were among the 17 species newly identified in the Silent Valley.

As many as 139 birds had been identified in a survey held in 2006, and the number species went up to 142 in the last survey held in 2014.

Birds such as Crimson-backed sunbird, Yellow-browed bulbul, Black bulbul, Indian white-eye and Indian swiftlet were found in abundance in Silent Valley.

Silent Valley officials said that several species endemic to high elevation areas were also identified during the survey. Among the birds they sighted were Nilgiri laughingthrush, Nilgiri flowerpecker, Brown-cheeked fulvetta, Black-and-orange flycatcher, Grey-headed canary-flycatcher, Greenish warbler, Common chiffchaff, Tytler's leaf warbler, Shaheen falcon, Nilgiri wood pigeon, and Malabar whistling thrush.

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