

## Status and conservation of water birds in Panamaram heronry, Kerala and implication for management

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(Accepted June 25, 2015)

### ABSTRACT

A study was carried out to assess the status of breeding birds in Panamaram heronry of northern Kerala during June 2010 to November 2010. The study revealed that 9 species belonging to 3 families prefer to breed in the heronry. Family Ardeidae had the highest number of species (n=7) followed by Threskiornithidae and Phalacrocoracidae with one species each. A total of 442 nests were recorded during the course of the study in which *Mesophoyx intermedia* outnumbered all other species followed by Near Threatened *Threskiornis melanocephalus*. The *Bubulcus ibis* was found nesting for the first time from the district. Among the birds, *Casmerodius albus* showed the maximum breeding success (100%) with smaller sample size, followed by *Phalacrocorax niger* (92.9 %) and *Ardeola grayii* (88%). Over the six month period 81 birds were found dead, where *Mesophoyx intermedia* accounted for the highest mortality rate.

**Key words:** Breeding, conservation, mortality, Panamaram heronry, population, threats