

## Book Review

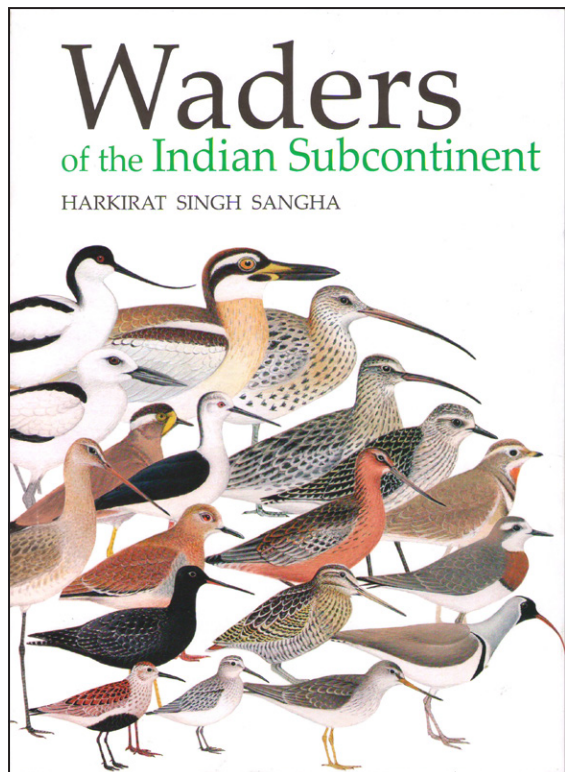
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**Title:** WADERS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT – 520 pp

**Authors:** Harkirat Singh Sangha

**Publisher:** Self published (partly supported by WWF – India).

**Format:** Hard Cover



This book, written by Harkirat Singh Sangha, covers the waders of the Indian Subcontinent. The author is an editorial board member of *Indian Birds* and has explored far-flung areas of the Indian Subcontinent. He has vast experience, having written numerous papers in peer reviewed journals over the years.

The book aims to be the 'most complete and up-to-date fact book' to the waders of the Indian Subcontinent and succeeds admirably in its aim. The format of the book is a preface, followed by chapters about waders, geographic range and species covered, studies on waders, wader migration, wader habitats, threats, using the book, colour plates, species accounts, references, index and about the author.

The book covers 83 species of waders recorded from the Indian Subcontinent till date. There are 22 colour plates, with more than 540 illustrations. The illustrations show the breeding and non-breeding plumages, flight and other important features for identification. Short descriptions are provided along with the illustrations. The species accounts are very detailed, covering local names, old names, taxonomy, range and distribution, field characters or identification, descriptions, measurements, racial or geographical variation,

moult, vocalizations, general habits, food/foraging, breeding, habitat, movements, status and conservation, map(s) and photographs. Photographs with captions are given for all species and the photos show the important identification features, which are well explained in the captions. A map is provided for each species, covering its present distribution in the Indian Subcontinent. The maps are colour coded for the season in which the species is seen. The author explains that he has generally followed the nomenclature and taxonomy as per Birds of the World (BoW) / eBird.

There is less information on waders in India and this book fills the gap well. Since each species is given a separate account, the information is very useful for identification as well as to understand its overall life history including migration, habitat in which the species occurs, its vocalizations, and general habits. The biometrics provided for each species is a useful addition. The captions given for photographs are succinct and explain the important features for identification. Of particular interest are comparison photos between similar species, which help in understanding the key identification features. For example, in the species account of Red Knot, comparison photos of Red Knot with Great Knot are given, in which the key differences between both species can be seen and are explained. Subspecific variation in some species like Lesser Sand Plover, Little Ringed Plover and a few others is given in detail, which is helpful. Similar attention to detail can be seen in many other species accounts which help the reader in understanding the variation seen in many waders.

Gujarat has an almost 1600 km coastline (the longest for any state in India) and our state has always been known for being an excellent destination for watching waders. Out of the 83 wader species given in this book, more than 60 are seen in Gujarat. Hence, this book will be of immense use for bird watchers in Gujarat. This book is a must have for the beginner, as well as the seasoned, bird watcher. The book is available for a price of Rs. 3500/- can be obtained from the author's website:

<https://www.harkiratsinghsangha.com>. It will be an important addition to one's literature collection, to be used for identification as well as a reference guide. □