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FEEDING HABIT OF SILVER PHEASANT (*Lophura nycthemera*)

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ABSTRACT: The silver pheasant belongs to a family “Phasianidae”, order “Galliformes”. The feeding behaviour of silver pheasant was studied for a period of twelve month duration. The silver pheasants are omnivorous birds. Their food habits depend upon the size & shape of their beaks & claws. The birds were provided with laboratory balanced diet with asset of protein content which contains wheat, soyabean, rice polish, groundnut cake, seeds, grains seeds, grains, meat meal, vitamins, minerals, grits etc. Each pheasant feeds about 100 to 150 gms. of food daily. Percentage of feeding is high during the morning time than the evening time. It was found that the diet of pheasants were more in winter seasons. Maximum feeding was recorded in the month of November and February; where as minimum feeding was recorded in June. In pheasants adequate food supply reflects increase in body weight, increased reproductive capacity and better survival.

KEYWORDS: -Feeding behaviour, silver pheasant.

I. INTRODUCTION

Pheasants belong to a family Phasianidae Order ‘Galliformes’. The western countries are having a very sophisticated poultry industry and careful research has resulted in balanced feeds of known protein, fibre & oil content which can be relied upon pheasant breeders over the past decade or more have found that in particular the feeds produced for turkeys provide almost all the basic requirements for most pheasant species.

The feeding of pheasant has undergone radical change in the last two decades, and properly balanced in pellet form are available in both Europe and America. In the absence of pellets produced specially for pheasant it is perfectly safe to use turkey breeders pellets manufactured by any of the large and reputable feeding stuff firm.

A female only with sufficient amount of food for its daily needs cannot start its breeding. They scratch the ground with their sharp claws to get seeds and insects to eat them.

Their food habits depend upon the size of shape of their beak and claws. Habit of searching food or grasping food of birds, is almost unknown. A blackbird was seen to dig soil for search of food with one foot, then with the other and on other hand a Reef Heron (*Demigretta Schistacea*) was observed to use right foot more of ten the left. The most of the Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*) which largely relies. For all bird species, their feeding habits have been declared as positive and negative. The positive feeding habits when they feed on carrion, insects, rodent, reptiles, mollusca and other invertebrates. On other hand, the negative feeding habit appears when they attack on human foods, although some foods are favored over others and individuals crows may have individual preference (Hothem *et al.*, 1988). From economic point of view, crows and sparrows can be categorized as useful and harmful birds. (El-Danasory 2006; Srivastava, 1977).

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

(I) **Study Area:** Feeding behavior of silver pheasant (*Lophura-nycthemera*) was studied monthly for a period of one year at Zoological garden, Kanpur (U.P.) India. The birds were kept in 100 Sq. feet wire net cages.

(II) **Study Methods:** During the course of study birds were provided with food (containing ingredients like maize, wheat, soyabean, grain, groundnut cake, rice polishing, meat meal, lettuce, salt, minerals & vitamins.) and water *ad-libitum*. Grit or limestone was available to the birds at all time. See table - IA. For feeding behaviour one pair of male & female bird were observed regularly in captivity. About 200 gm of food were given to them daily.

Observations : -Pheasants are omnivorous bird which feed upon different type of grains, seeds, in florescence grapes, a wide variety of plant and animal food, meat meal, Greenleaf, vegetable, insect, grits. Wheat was found to be good staple diet of pheasant. Daily observation reveals that one pair of pheasant feeds about 100 to 150 gm. of food daily. Corn was the most important diet of pheasant during Jan., Feb. & March. Percentage of feeding is high



during the morning time than the evening time. It was found that the diet of pheasant were more in winter seasons.

Maximum feeding was recorded in the month of November and February, whereas minimum feeding was observed in June. See table 2.A, Test Fig : 1.1.

It has been also observed that bird feed on their own faeces.

Table 1A: Percentage of Ingredients of meal in 100kg.

Ingredient	100kg.
Maize	17.00kg.
Wheat	17.500kg.
Soyabean	20.00kg.
Groundnutcake	10.00kg.
Ricepolishing	10.00kg.
Meatmeal	7.00kg.
Limestone	.40kg.
Salt	.22kg.
Minerals-Vitamins(Concitone&Concimin)	.38kg.
Gram	17.00kg.
Palak	.500gm.

Table 2A: Monthly-wise

Average of the Annual Feeding of one pair of silverpheasant(Laboratory Feeding)

Months	Averagefeeding
September	125.95
October	132.25
November	150.16
December	144.41
January	134.45
February	150.17
March	148.29
April	143.16
May	114.25
June	108.16
July	110.93
August	110.70

Discussion

The feeding behavior of different large land bird was studied by different workers like Barnese (1981) on number of birds, Rowley, *et al.*, (1989) on Cockatoos. It has been suggested that birds foraging on predictable resources postpone their feeding until late in the day as a tradeoff between starvation and predation (Olsson *et al.* 2002). Tieleman and Williams studied on effects of food supplement on behaviour of hoopoe-larks in (2002)

The feeding behaviours of different species of pheasant was studied by different workers like Beer (1989), Pyke (1989), Moreby (1993), Green (1983), Hill (1985), Hiron (1983), Ohlsson (2001), Craig and Ramos (1986).

The effect of feeding on body condition of captive-reared ring-necked pheasants were studied by Droycott, *et al.*, in 1998. Draycott, *et al.*, (1997) provide availability of weed seeds and waste cereals to birds on arable fields during spring.

According to Saeed Abbas *et al.*, the feeding habit of birds of Qurumbar National Park revealed that out of 83 species belonging to Borders of 30 families (between 2010 & December 2012), 43.4% (n=36) are omnivorous; 21.7% (n=18), Carnivorous, 22.9% (n=19) insectivorous, (n=07) granivorous, 2.4% (n=02) herbivorous and 1.2% (n=01) are frugivorous. Exactly like my experimental birds (Silver pheasant) some other birds like crow and sparrows feeds on maize, sunflower, peanuts, wheat. It was observed by Bonnah, 2007; Hassan, 2018).

The effects of fluctuating food availability on breeding Arctic terns (*Sterna paradisaea*) was reported by Suddaby and Ratcliffe in 1997. Wise (1994) made great study on weight, carcass composition and reproductive performance of pheasants (*Phasianus cochinchicus*). Wheat was eaten chiefly in March, at spring wheat sowing time. Animal Matter was mostly insects, which formed over 6% of food of the year.

They were going to eat less as it gets hotter, and when the temperature starts to drop, their eating habits will change again and they will feed more. Halata & Grim worked on sensory nerve in skin of quail.

Feeding pheasants is a science. Making sure you are offering your birds the correct protein percentage will help you to raise the highest quality pheasants and remember an abundant supply of freshwater is an extremely important component of any gamebirds diet.

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