

Indian Robin

Saxicoloides fulicala

Order: Muscicapidae

Family: Passeriformes

Genus: *Saxicoloides*

Species: *fulicala*



STATUS

Resident/ Common

MORPHOLOGY

- A sprightly little black bird with rusty-red under the cocked tail.
- There is a white patch on each wing, concealed or almost so in rest, but conspicuous in flight.
- The hen is ashy- brown with pale chestnut under the tail. Pairs, in open country

DISTRIBUTION

- Resident throughout India and Ceylon up to about 5,000 feet.
- Not in Assam or Burma. Four races are recognised: the typical or Ceylonese, a North Indian (*cambaiensis*), a South Indian (*ptymatura*) and an intermediate (*intermedia*)
- The last occupies a broad belt across the centre of the peninsula north and south of Ahmadnagar.
- They are separated on minor differences of size and colouration of the back

HABITS

- The Indian Robin is one of the most familiar and confiding birds of our countryside.
- It inhabits the drier and more open parts and is a frequent visitor to gardens and compounds.
- It loves the neighbourhood of villages where one may come across it perched on a thatch roof, cactus hedge or stone, switching its cocked tail up and down expressively as it turns one way then another, uttering its cheery notes.
- The tail is sometimes tossed so far forward as almost to touch the head.
- This is the case especially when a rival is being faced up to.
- The birds may be seen hopping along the ground, now mounting a bush or termite-mound, now descending at the sight of insect prey.
- They are by no means shy and will boldly enter verandahs of dwelling houses and tents in search of food

NESTING

- The season over the greater part of its range is from April to June; earlier in the south.
- The nest is a cup-shaped affair of grass and rootlets, lined with feathers or hair and often adorned with snake sloughs.
- It is placed in a hole in a wall, earth-cutting or rotten tree-stump.
- A derelict tin can or earthen chatty lying about is frequently used.
- The eggs two or three are white or cream coloured, sometimes with a greenish tinge, and are speckled and blotched with ruddy brown.
- Both sexes share in building and care of the young, but the female alone incubates