

Aich A., Mukhopadhyay S.K. 2008. *Comparison of avifauna at the edges of contrasting forest patches in Western Ghat Hills of India*. Ring 30, 1/2: 71-79.

### **Abstract**

Avifauna of shola and semi-evergreen forest patches belonging to three different sanctuaries and National Parks in the southern part of Western Ghat range of Tamil Nadu and Kerala was studied. Altogether 36 species from 17 families were recorded. One globally threatened species (A1), two restricted range species (A2) and one Palearctic-Asian migrant species have been recorded from forest edges during the relatively short study period. The highest population density of 47.59 ind./ha at Varagaliar Shola was followed by 43.69 ind./ha at Anapaddy, 27.53 ind./ha at Karian Shola, and 23.25 ind./ha at Punnumalai Shola. As Punnumalai Shola is least disturbed by human activity it got the highest number of avian families (15) and was followed by Karian Shola (9) and Vargaliar Shola and Anapaddy - 8 in both cases. Punnumalai Shola having varied bird families showed lower dominance (0.075) and higher evenness value (0.957). In contrast, the edge of semi-evergreen forest at Anapaddy, although very much disturbed by various human activities, showed almost comparable diversity value (2.890) to that of Punnumalai Shola (2.913). More open canopy and much vegetational intergradations at the ecotone of semi-evergreen biotope inherently shelter avian community of high diversity. Conversely, the edges of Karian Shola and Varagaliar Shola having much anthropogenic interferences and with edges showing much lower intergradations of vegetations, exhibited a low avian diversity.

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**Key words:** shola, edge species, Western Ghats, hotspot, EBA 123, Biome 10, Palearctic-Asian migrant