

Weekly magazine

PRAKRITI



Quest For Nature

Photographed & designed by Vikas Mahore (SFS-BATCH 2019-21)

Bird of the week

Oriolus xanthornus
or
Black-hooded Oriole

Flora of the week

Santalum album
or
Indian Sandalwood

Fauna of the week

Euthalia nais
or
Baronet

Officers' Club

Central Academy for State Forest Service, Dehradun

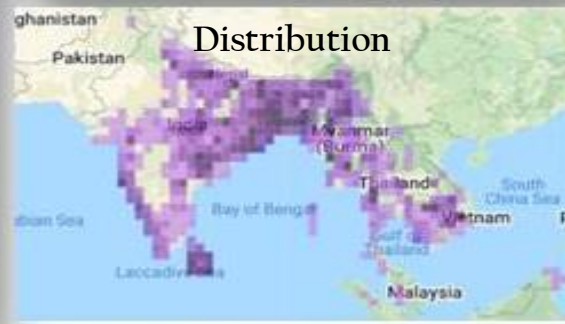


Central Academy for State Forest Service
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BIRD OF THE WEEK

Oriolus xanthornus

Black hooded Oriole



The black-hooded oriole (*Oriolus xanthornus*) is a member of the oriole family of passerine birds. Distribution in tropical southern Asia from India to Sri Lanka & from Myanmar to Indonesia. It has least concern IUCN conservation status.

It is a bird of open woodland and cultivation. The nest is built in a tree, and contains two eggs. Its food is insects and fruit, especially figs, found in the tree canopies where they spend much of their time.

A medium-sized (25 cm) yellow bird with a black head and breast, black flight feathers, and a red bill. In flight, the black band towards the tail tip is visible. Adult female similar, but has olive-yellow mantle. Juvenile is duller overall with a white streaked throat and a darker bill.



Kingdom:	Animalia
Order:	Passeriformes
Family:	Oriolidae
Genus:	<i>Oriolus</i>
Species:	<i>O. xanthornus</i>

The song is rich, fluty, and mellow. Calls include raspy, nasal notes that can sound like a croak.



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FLORA OF THE WEEK

Santalum album

Indian Sandalwood

Santalum album, or Indian sandalwood, is a small tropical tree, and the traditional source of sandalwood oil. It is native to southern India and Southeast Asia. It is considered sacred in some religions, and some cultures place great significance on its fragrant and medicinal qualities.

Description: Description: Sandalwood is a evergreen, small, very slow-growing, elegant, evergreen shrub or tree, growing from 4 - 20 metres tall. The bole can have a diameter of around 20cm. They may live to one hundred years of age.

Size: It can grow to a height of 20 m; girth of up to 2.4 m, with slender drooping branchlets. Bark is tight, dark brown, reddish, dark grey or nearly black, smooth in young trees, rough with deep vertical cracks in older trees, red inside.

Leaves thin, usually opposite, ovate or ovate elliptical, 3-8 x 3-5 cm, shining green above, glaucous and slightly paler beneath; tip rounded or pointed; stalk grooved, 5-15 cm long, venation noticeably reticulate.

Fruit a globose, fleshy drupe; red, purple to black when ripe, about 1 cm in diameter, with hard ribbed endocarp and crowned with a scar, almost stalk less, smooth, single seeded.

Distribution-*Santalum album* L. is indigenous to the tropical belt of the peninsular India, eastern Indonesia and northern Australia. The main distribution is in the drier tropical regions of India and the Indonesian islands of Timor and Sumba.

S. album is recognized as a "vulnerable" species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It is threatened by over-exploitation and degradation to habitat through altered land use, fire (to which this species is extremely sensitive), Spike disease, agriculture, and land-clearing.



Fruit

Uses-

- ✦ *S. album* has been the primary source of sandalwood and the derived oil.
- ✦ Fragrance Sandalwood oil has a distinctive soft, warm, smooth, creamy, and milky precious-wood scent. When used in smaller proportions in a perfume, it acts as a fixative, enhancing the longevity of other, more volatile, materials in the composite.
- ✦ Sandalwood oil has been widely used in folk medicine for treatment of common colds, bronchitis, skin disorders, heart ailments, general weakness, fever, infection of the urinary tract, inflammation of the mouth and pharynx, liver and gallbladder complaints.
- ✦ The oil is also used as a flavour component in different food items, including candy, ice cream, baked food, puddings, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, and gelatin



Leaves



Bark

Conservation status



Vulnerable (IUCN 2.3)^[1]

Scientific classification

Domain:	Eukaryota
Kingdom:	Plantae
Clade:	Tracheophytes
Clade:	Angiosperms
Clade:	Eudicots
Order:	Santalales
Family:	Santalaceae
Genus:	<i>Santalum</i>
Species:	<i>S. album</i>

Binomial name

Santalum album

INTERESTING FACTS:

- ✦ It is a semi-parasitic plant, it depends on the presence of certain other tree species, especially nitrogen-fixing species, in order to obtain part of its nutrition.
- ✦ Sanskrit चन्दनं *chandanam*, meaning "wood for burning incense", and related to *candrah*, meaning "shining, glowing"
- ✦ The bark is sometimes chewed as an alternative to betel nuts (*Areca catechu*)
- ✦ Viable seed production occurs when the tree is 5 years old.
- ✦ There is still debate as to whether *S. album* is endemic to Australia and India or was introduced by fishermen, traders or birds from southeast Asia centuries ago



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FAUNA OF THE WEEK

Euthalia nais Baronet butterfly

The larva is light green with the purple spots on the dorsal. The sides of the larva contain row of ten horizontal spines covered with fine green hair. The pupa is short broad and triangular. It is green and has gold spots and lines.



It is widely found in India and Sri Lanka. In India its distribution ranges from lower Himalayas to southern India.



Kingdom:	Animalia
Order:	Lepidoptera
Family:	Nymphalidae
Genus:	<i>Euthalia</i>
Species:	<i>E. nais</i>

The upper side is bright orange. The white colour of its cilia is distinct due to the contrasting black border on the outer margins of both wings. The spots on the submarginal row of its hindwing convert into an irregular line on the forewing. The other black markings on forewing vary. Its underside is more variable than the upper surface. The purplish tinge on its hindwing also varies. The white oblique band is entirely absent on its hindwing and is reduced in the forewing of some individuals. Each cell has two red patches outlined in black which are circular on the hindwing. The tips of its antenna and proboscis are yellowish in colour.



The Baronet eagerly feeds on juice of fruits. Dozens attracted to fallen berries can be seen under *Drypetes sepiaria* trees. They are also attracted to human sweat. Males engage in mud puddling. These butterflies tolerate disturbances to a great extent when they are feeding.

This is purely a savannah grassland species. It is quite common in those habitats during the rainy season but diminishes in numbers due to excessive man-made forest fires. Its sole larval food plant is *Shorea robusta* & *Diospyros melanoxylon*.