

# Koel MELODIES

## Did You Know?

The song of the koel, music to our ears, is sung by the male. The female koel does not sing. She's a relatively quiet bird, and she is often on a mission.

You must have seen a koel around, but I bet you've never seen its nest. That's because it doesn't make one!

Between the months of March and August, when a female koel is ready to lay her eggs, she searches for a crow's nest with eggs in it. When the owners are away, she lays one or more of her own eggs in the crow's nest.

Koels don't build their own nests, nor do they bring up their own little ones. The poor crows end up doing that for them!



## For Your Field Diary

Step outside and listen for the sounds of a koel singing. Use the calls to try and spot the koel. Koels are not very easy to spot as they usually perch among the leaves of a tree and are well-hidden. Look out for their bright crimson eyes!

Observe the bird for 10 minutes and jot down the following in your field diary:

- How frequently did the male sing in 10 minutes?
- Was there a female nearby?
- Were you able to find a crow's nest near the koel?
- Did you see any crows chasing away koels?
- Call out to the koel, does it 'kuoo' back at you?

Visit NCF at [www.edu.ncf-india.org](http://www.edu.ncf-india.org).

## Cuckoo In The Nest

Koels are a member of the cuckoo family. Other cuckoos found in India are the Common Hawk Cuckoo (or the "Brainfever Bird"), Indian Cuckoo (that sings "one more bottle"), and the Pied Cuckoo (harbingers of the monsoon). These and cuckoos over the world lay their eggs in the nests of other birds. The phrase "cuckoo in the nest" has been coined based on this behaviour of theirs, to refer to an unwelcome visitor.



*Common  
Hawk Cuckoo*



*Indian Cuckoo*



*Pied Cuckoo*

## WRITE TO US!

You may have heard someone say that you know when spring is here when the koel sings from the mango tree. Do you think that's true? Ask elders in your family for more beliefs and stories about koels. Share your stories and observations with us at [edu@ncf-india.org](mailto:edu@ncf-india.org)!