



Soaring Low? Shrilekha V

NAME

The White Rumped Vulture (local name in Tamizh – Rajali).

DESCRIPTION

Measuring 75-85 cms with a wing span of 260 cms and weighing 3.5 to 7.5 Kgs, these vultures are medium-sized with a tinged pink head. The adults have a blackish plumage, white neck-ruff, rump, short tail and mostly silver bill. They do not have feathers on their head and neck. Juveniles are largely dark and take about four or five years to acquire the adult plumage. They are known to fly up to 9000 ft.

HABITAT

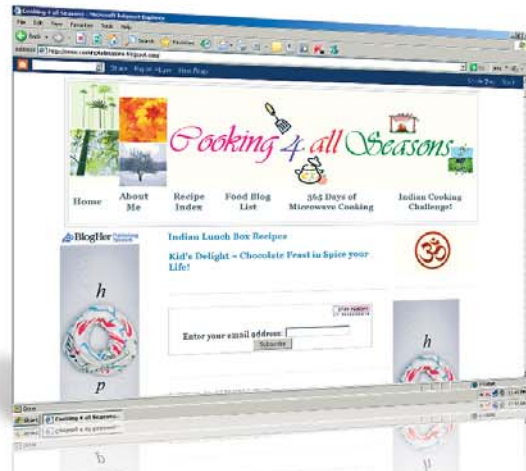
These birds are usually inactive until the morning sun has warmed up the air with sufficient thermals to support their soaring (flying high above in circles). Where water is available these birds bathe regularly and also drink water. These vultures socialize in flocks. White-rumped Vultures breed from October to April and nest in tall trees or cliffs. Usually, the male gathers the twigs and the female arranges them to build the nest.

DIET

When a kill is found they quickly descend and feed voraciously and will perch on trees nearby. Sometimes, they descend even after dark to feed on a carcass. When feeding on carcasses they are dominated over by Red-headed Vultures.

INTERESTING FACT

It qualifies as 'Critically Endangered' species because it has suffered an extremely rapid population decline primarily as a result of feeding on animal carcasses treated with the veterinary drug called diclofenac. Experiments showed that vultures are highly susceptible to Diclofenac (a livestock painkiller) and are killed by kidney failure within a short time of feeding on the carcass of an animal. In the year 2005, the Government of India announced that it intended to phase out the veterinary use of diclofenac.



Cooking For All Seasons

Blogging consistently since 2007, Srivalli is a passionate author of cookery as well, with her work titled Simple Quick Indian Recipes just getting ready to be on print. The USP lies in easy hassle free cooking which reflects in the recipes as well. Check out her other blog <http://spicingyourlife.blogspot.com> for its diabetes friendly recipes (her doctor dad authors it) and a superb collection of kid friendly cooking that only makes the kids ask for more. This writer also handles her full time profession and her three kids. Her third blog is <http://BeyondCurries.blogspot.com> has an enormous list of recipes with index, glossary and pictures. This blog aims to clarify the myths and misconceptions about Indian cooking.

www.cooking4allseasons.blogspot.com



I Make Robots

Balaji is a self confessed Robotics geek. A Madras IIT product, he is always doing something different. He conducts robotics classes for junior college students, school kids and the regular enthusiast. One look at the robotic self rocking arm he has made for IPL Chennai Cricket team's support is evidence enough for his brilliant crazitivity. A visit to his blog is a must, even if you are not a Science person. He widens our perspectives by showing all of us how robotics can be fun, every day, in everything we do, to make our lives easier.

<http://balajitechnology.wordpress.com/>