

K. Selvaganesh, December eBirder of the Month

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Please join us in congratulating [K. Selvaganesh](#) of Saravanampatti, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India, winner of the December 2017 [eBird Challenge](#), sponsored by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics. Our December winner was drawn from eBirders who submitted at least 15 eligible checklists in December with tracks from [eBird Mobile](#). Selvaganesh's name was drawn randomly from the 1,443 eligible eBirders who achieved the December challenge threshold. Selvaganesh will receive new [ZEISS Conquest HD 8x42 binoculars](#) for his eBirding efforts. Read more to see Selvaganesh's full story!

I am an English teacher working in Cinchona Government High School, Valparai. During a trek in college I saw Great Hornbill and Green Bee-eater. That was the first time I saw birds through binoculars and since then I've been watching birds. Later when I went to work in Cinchona Govt. High School, students watching me birding asked me what I was doing. I showed them the birds around our small campus, and since then they're also into it.



Bay-backed Shrike by K. Selvaganesh/Macaulay Library

I learned about eBird in 2015. Later, with my school students, I started a group account for our school and made our school campus a hotspot. We have been birding and listing from this location continuously since then. Together with my students (age group 11-16) I have now recorded 124 species from our school campus. Submitting lists regularly from my school campus helps me know the number of resident and migrant species (and arrival and departure dates) in this region. This learning helps not only to improve my knowledge about birds but is also useful while answering the questions asked by my curious students.

I have regularly contributed for GBBC, **Endemic Bird Day** (Global Big Day), **Pongal Bird Count** and **Kerala Bird Atlas** project. I enjoy taking up the monthly eBirding challenges announced by **Bird Count India**. I learned a lot about birds through participating these bird surveys as well as by interacting with fellow birders. Attending various sessions on bird identification at the **Tamil Birders Meet** was also helpful.

Our school is situated at an altitude of about 1000m in southern Western Ghats, Anamalai Hills. There I get to see several rainforest birds, and when I go home (in Coimbatore) during the weekend I regularly go to [Chinna Vedampatti Lake](#) where I can see lot of waterbirds. Whenever possible I also conduct workshops on birding and on eBird for the school teachers and take students on birding trips.



Selvaganesh with his students

December 2017 was fantastic. I started the month birding with my students from my school and ended with trips to Perambalur and Namakkal Districts which are less birded districts in Tamil Nadu. In Namakkal District I visited the Kolli hills (part of the Eastern Ghats) and was excited to see the

Nilgiri Flowerpecker

Dicaeum concolor

which is an endemic to Western Ghats. End of December I took my friend around to show him various rainforest species as well as the

Isabelline Wheatear

Oenanthe isabellina

which is a rare migrant to south India. I had a resolution of submitting 1000 complete checklists for 2017 and I managed reach the target in the last week of December so felt quite happy about it.

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