

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Density of Indian Blue Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) At Thiruvudaimaruthur Areas, Thanjavur District

S. Micheltysen ^{a*} C. Subramanian ^{a*} and G. Kalaiyarasi ^b

^a PG & Research Department of Zoology, Government Arts College (Autonomous), Kumbakonam-612 002, Thanjavur (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli-24), Tamil Nadu, India.

^b PG & Research Department of Biotechnology, Rajagiri Dawood Batcha College of Arts and Science, Papanasam, Thanjavur-614 205 (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli-24), Tamil Nadu, India

*Correspondence: tysonselvaraj1551@gmail.com (S. Micheltysen)
csubramanian24@gmail.com (Dr. C. Subramanian)

ABSTRACT

The Indian blue peafowl abundance was studied in twenty locations (Transects) in Thiruvudaimaruthur Taluk, Thanjavur District. The sightings of overall peafowl abundance were found 585 (n). It was 260 cocks, 295 fowls and 30 chicks in all the study areas. The study was carryout from January 2025 to June 2025. The peafowl abundance was recorded in different area. A total of six months were studied for peafowl abundance in different area in and around Thiruvudaimaruthur Taluk, Thanjavur District. The monthly variation was noticed for peafowl abundance. The sightings of Indian peafowl were expressed in number density/km². The highest sightings were estimated in the March 2025 month (n=136). The minimum sightings was recorded in June 2025 (n=59). It was showed the moderate number of sightings of Indian peafowl in the other locations (Transects) in the study area.

Keywords: Density; Indian; Peafowl; Thiruvudaimaruthur; Thanjavur.

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian Peafowl (*Pavo Cristatus*) is under in the order Galliformes family Phasianidae, Genus *Pavo* and Species *cristatus*. The Family Phasianidae refers to three types of peafowl namely Indian Peafowl (*Pavo Cristatus*), Green Peafowl (*Pavo muticus*) and African Congo Peafowl (*Afropavo congensis*) [1]. India declared the Blue Peafowl (*Pavo Cristatus*) as National Bird of India in 1963. The Indian Peafowl is clearly unsurpassable and incomparable. No other bird can claim such a triple 'A' standing. Regal and resplendent, yet common and plebian, it stands in a class of its own, a true symbol of India in all its beauty and colorful splendor [2].

The Galliformes species are useful indicators of environmental quality and the assessment of their status is essential for management purposes [3]. Indian Peafowl is widely distributed in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Northern areas of Bangladesh [4]. Green peafowls are considered to inhabit dry forest of Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, China and Indonesia [5]. African Congo Peafowl mostly found in forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo [6]. Birds are the most essential part of our ecosystems and Indian Peafowl acts as a bioindicator of the changing climate [7]. Very few ecological studies have been conducted on the day long activities and different behaviours of Indian peafowls [8;9;10]. They are being used as tools for conservation and environmental impact assessment.

Illegal poaching for meat however continues and declines have been noted in parts of India [11]. Few survey studies on the status of Indian blue peafowl in the villages of Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu. In India, as mentioned above, no thorough studies have been conducted to estimate density and measure the extent of crops that peafowl damage [12]. The species is classified into three subspecies the Burmese

green peafowl (*P. muticus spicifer*), the Indochinese green peafowl (*P. muticus imperator*), and the Javan green peafowl (*P. muticus muticus*) [13]. Two subspecies occur in Thailand the Javan green peafowl (also known as the Southern green peafowl), and the Indochinese green peafowl (Northern green peafowl). Overall, the green peafowl is extinct across several countries while surviving in fragmented, small populations in others [14].

Blue /Indian peafowl (*Pavo Cristatus*) locally breed in to Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, it is locally known as Mor and its breeding season starts from April to October [15]. Indian peafowls mate with more than one female, so it is called polygynous [16]. The Indian peafowl can be found in semi-arid, dry, and damp deciduous areas, as well as close to water sources and agricultural fields. In some regions of its former range, the Indian peafowl has become locally extinct due to habitat loss and degradation, human population pressure, illegal poaching, intensive agricultural practices, pesticide use, retaliatory killing, collecting eggs for human consumption, and killing for medical reasons, among other threats to the bird's current population [17]. When pressed by a predator or fleeing to their evening roost, peafowl take flight. The scientific community has long been fascinated by and divided over the male's complex train and display, which is a visual cue aimed at females [18]. However, illegal hunting for meat is still going on, however some regions of India have seen a decrease in this practice [19]. Peafowl possess similar anatomical and physiological features to birds of the common order Galliformes, such as pheasants, but they also have unique anatomical and physiological characteristics [20]. The peafowl's great beauty makes it one of the world's most attractive animals. It is part of the Phasianidae family and falls under the order Galliformes within the class Aves, which includes 38 genera and around 138 species [21]. Very few ecological studies have been conducted on the day long activities and different behaviours of Indian peafowls [22;23;24]. Peafowl normally arrive at sexual maturity at two to three years old. The peahen lays between three to six eggs, which are buff white, one egg each day, with an incubation period of 28-30 days [25]. The present investigation, we aim to estimate the overall density of Indian Blue Peafowl in the Thiruvudaimaruthur Taluk study area.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study area Thiruvudaimaruthur Taluk, was chosen at Thanjavur District Tiruvudaimarudur is located at 10.98°N 79.47°E. This area has an average elevation of 20 m at sea level. In addition to having a large number of urbanized cities and agricultural areas, these districts are part of Tamil Nadu well-developed and modernized state. There is a significant amount of agricultural land in the areas. The majority of individuals relied solely on agricultural practices for their livelihoods. Sugarcane, vegetables, and paddy were the main crops grown here. Peafowl abundance was examined in all study locations and habitats between January 2025 and June 2025 (six months).

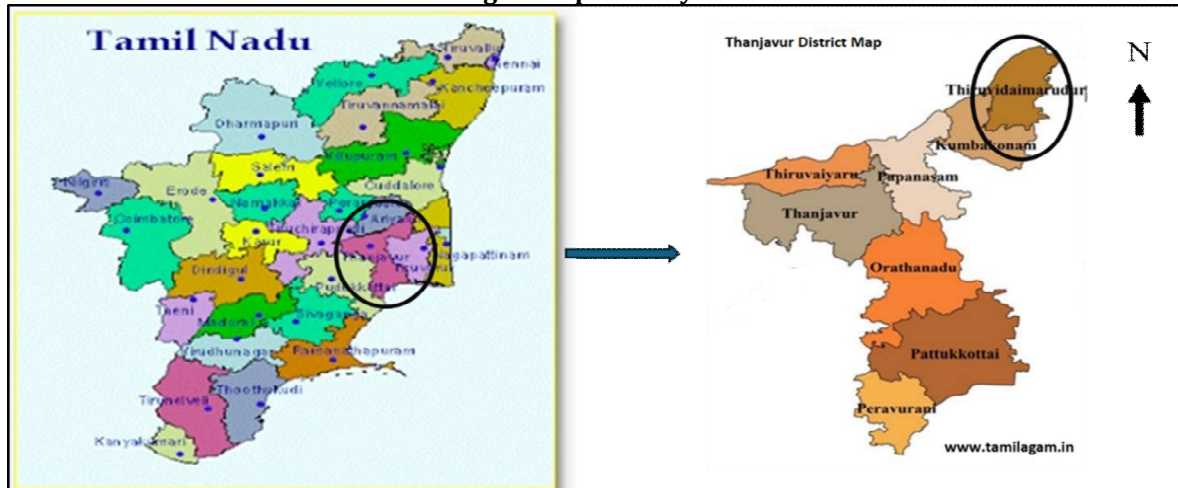
The study location such as Thiruvudaimaruthur, Vannakudi, Muthoor, Thirupanipettai, Govindhapuram, Aduthurai, Maruthuvakudi, Thiruneelakudi, Paruthikudi, Manjamalli, Thirumankalakudi, Thirumanthurai, Veppathur, Kalyanapuram, Thirupuvanam, Ammachathiram, Puliyampettai, Natuvakkarai, Ullur, Thirunageshwaram were sampled for current work. The objective of the present study was Peafowl abundance density and monthly fluctuation in the study area.

The Line transect method was adapted [26]. The length of each line transect was laid depends on the availability of habitats in study area. The data on sighting, number, perpendicular distance, date, time, habitat type and attitude were recorded.

Twenty transects in the chosen area were randomly used to gather the data. The Indian Peafowl population was estimated using the line transect approach [26;27]. The Transects of one kilometer in length were used to walk across the study areas, which were regarded as the sampling unit. A sampling effort of totally 20 km was made in each of the months by walking a total of Twenty permanently marked transects. The detection time, group size, age and sex class, and sighting from the transect line were all noted for every sighting of the peafowl species.

The density of Indian Peafowl was analysed and estimated by using the data on DISTANCE software. The density of Indian Blue peafowl was obtained in different areas habitats (Upper and Lower confident level at 95% by using DISTANCE software).

Fig. 1. Map of study Area



Thiruvudaimaruthur Taluk, Thanjavur district, Tamilnadu



Fig. 2. Peafowl at the field

Table 1: Description of Transacts in the study area

Transect No	Name of the Area	Habitat Type	Latitude	Longitude
1	Thiruvudaimaruthur	Paddy	10.998185°N	79.459878°E
2	Vannakudi	Paddy	11.001081°N	79.464266°E
3	Muthoor	Banana tree	11.0222°N	79.4854°E
4	Thirupanipettai	Paddy	11.0021°N	79.4584°E
5	Govindhapuram	Paddy	11.008665°N	79.467592°E
6	Aduthurai	Paddy	11.019717°N	79.488868°E
7	Maruthuvakudi	Banana tree	10.9761°N	79.3268°E
8	Thiruneelakudi	Banana tree	11.0242°N	79.4699°E
9	Paruthikudi	Bamboo tree	11.017671°N	79.461792°E
10	Manjamalli	Banana tree	11.0123°N	79.5013°E
11	Thirumankalakudi	Paddy	11.025811°N	79.471417°E
12	Thirumanthurai	Sugar cane	11.0342°N	79.4858°E
13	Veppathur	Teak tree	11.005176°N	79.435158°E
14	Kalyanapuram	Sugar cane	10.9333°N	79.3500°E
15	Thirupuvanam	Teak tree	10.7711°N	79.2692°E
16	Ammachathiram	Bamboo tree	10.978915°N	79.415407°E
17	Puliyampettai	Teak tree	10.9599°N	79.3879°E
18	Natuvakkarai	Sugar cane	10.9599°N	79.3875°E
19	Ullur	Bamboo tree	10.9692°N	79.4071°E
20	Thirunageshwaram	Sugar cane	10.977463°N	79.440043°E

RESULTS

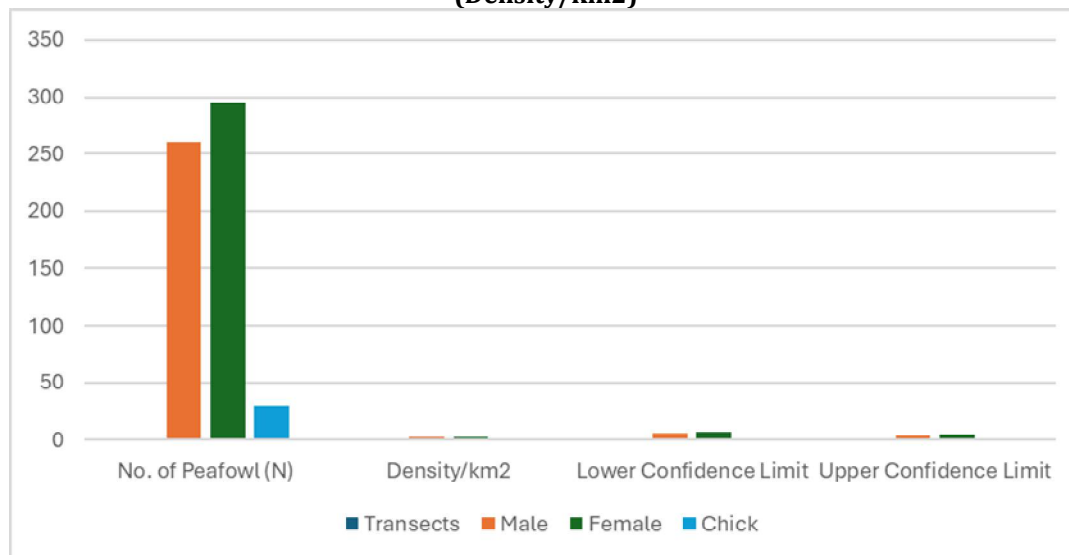
Overall Indian Blue Peafowl density in the Study Area

A total of Twenty line transects in all were sampled. The length of each transect was one kilometre. The duration of the trial was six months. The of the current study objective was to ascertain peafowl abundance in various areas. It was observed that the peafowl abundance in the research region varied on a monthly basis. The peafowl population from several research stations in the study area was investigated. 585 peafowl were found in the study region. Peacock 2.17/km² total (no. of individuals =260; LCL 6.42/km² and UCL 4.4/km²). Peahen have a density of 2.46/km² (no. of individuals =295; LCL 26.89/km² and UCL 4.51/km²), while chicks have a density of 0.25/km² (no. of individuals =30; LCL 1.78/km² and UCL 0.13/km²). Fig 2 and Table 2.

Table 2: Overall Indian Blue Peafowl density in the Study Area (Density/km²)

S.No	Overall Transects	No. of Peafowl (N)	Density/km ²	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit
1	Male	260	2.17	6.42	4.4
2	Female	295	2.46	6.89	4.51
3	Chick	30	0.25	1.78	0.13

Fig. 2: Overall Indian Blue Peafowl density in the Study Area (Density/km²)



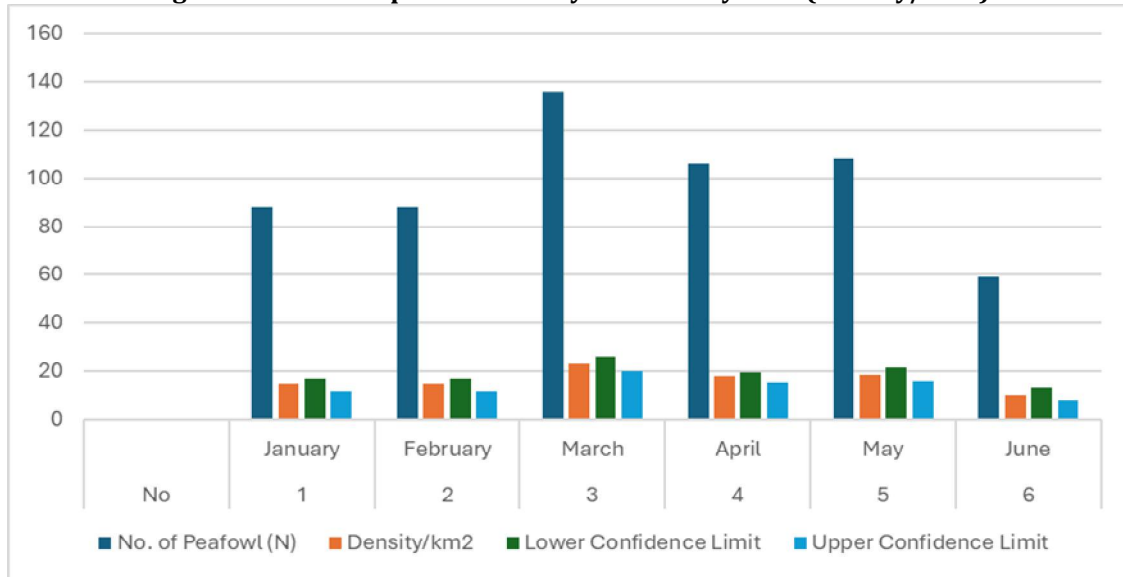
Month - wise peafowl density in the Study Area

The Peafowl density in month wise were studied in which the January 14.67/km² (no. of individuals =88; LCL 16.8/km² and UCL 11.35/km²), February 14.67/km² (no. of individuals =88; LCL 16.8/km² and UCL 11.35/km²), March 22.67/km² (no. of individuals =136; LCL 26.13/km² and UCL 19.6/km²), April 17.67/km² (N=106; LCL 19.35/km² and UCL 15.36/km²), May 18.00/km² (no. of individuals =108; LCL 21.34/km² and UCL 15.51/km²) and June 9.82/km² (no. of individuals =59; LCL 13.25/km² and UCL 7.86/km²).

A significant increase was observed in March, where the population rose to (n=136) individuals with the highest density of 22.67/km². This may be due to favorable environmental conditions, breeding activity, or better food availability. The lowest density was recorded in June, with only (n=59) individuals and a density of 9.83/km². This reduction may be associated with seasonal changes, local migration, dispersal, or reduced visibility during the monsoon period. Table 3 and Fig. 3.

Table 3: Month - wise peafowl density in the Study Area (Density/km²)

S. No	Month	No. of Peafowl (N)	Density/km ²	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Lim
1	January	88	14.67	16.8	11.35
2	February	88	14.67	16.8	11.35
3	March	136	22.67	26.13	19.6
4	April	106	17.67	19.35	15.36
5	May	108	18.00	21.34	15.51
6	June	59	9.83	13.25	7.86

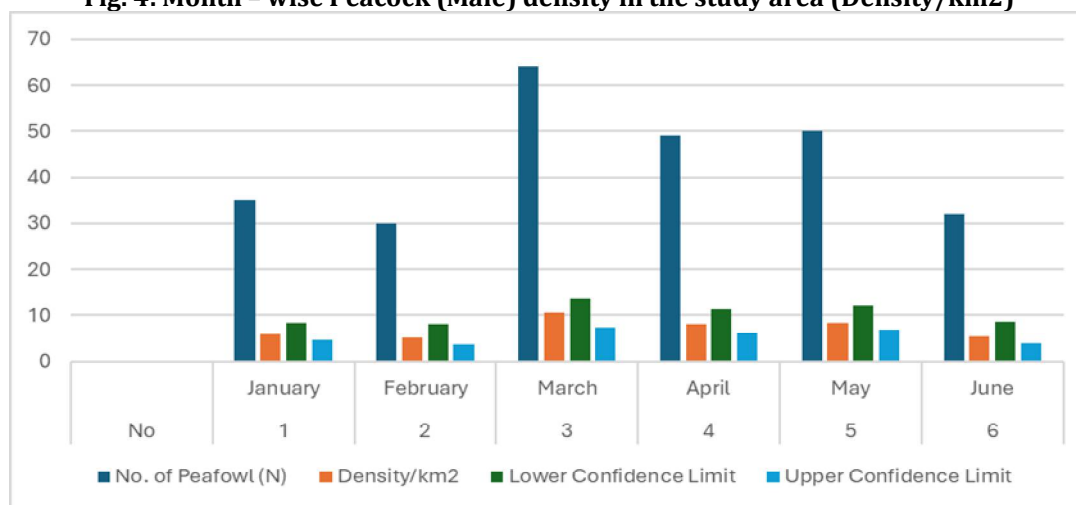
Fig. 3: Month - wise peafowl density in the Study Area (Density/km²)**Month - wise Peacock (Male) density in the study area**

The Peacock density in month wise were studied in which the January 5.83/km² (no. of individuals =88; LCL 8.3/km² and UCL 4.7/km²), February 5.00/km² (no. of individuals =30; LCL 8.00/km² and UCL 3.5/km²), March 10.67/km² (no. of individuals =64; LCL 13.52/km² and UCL 7.36/km²), April 8.17/km² (no. of individuals =49; LCL 11.36/km² and UCL 6.2/km²), May 8.33/km² (no. of individuals =50; LCL 11.97/km² and UCL 6.8/km²) and June 5.33/km² (no. of individuals =32; LCL 8.51/km² and UCL 3.9/km²). The highest density was recorded in March, with (n=64) individuals and a density of 10.67/km². This increase may be associated with favorable climatic conditions, breeding season activity, or better food availability. The lowest density was observed in February, with (n=30) individuals and a density of 5.00/km². Overall, the results indicate that the peafowl population was highest in March and lowest in February, with moderate fluctuations in the remaining months. These variations are likely influenced by seasonal and environmental factors. Table 4 and Fig. 4.

Table 4: Month - wise Peacock (Male) density in the study area (Density/km²)

S.No	Month-wise	No. of Peafowl (N)	Density/km ²	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit
1	January	35	5.83	8.3	4.7
2	February	30	5.00	8	3.5
3	March	64	10.67	13.52	7.36
4	April	49	8.17	11.36	6.2
5	May	50	8.33	11.97	6.8
6	June	32	5.33	8.51	3.9

Fig. 4: Month - wise Peacock (Male) density in the study area (Density/km²)



Month - wise Peahen (Female) density in the study area

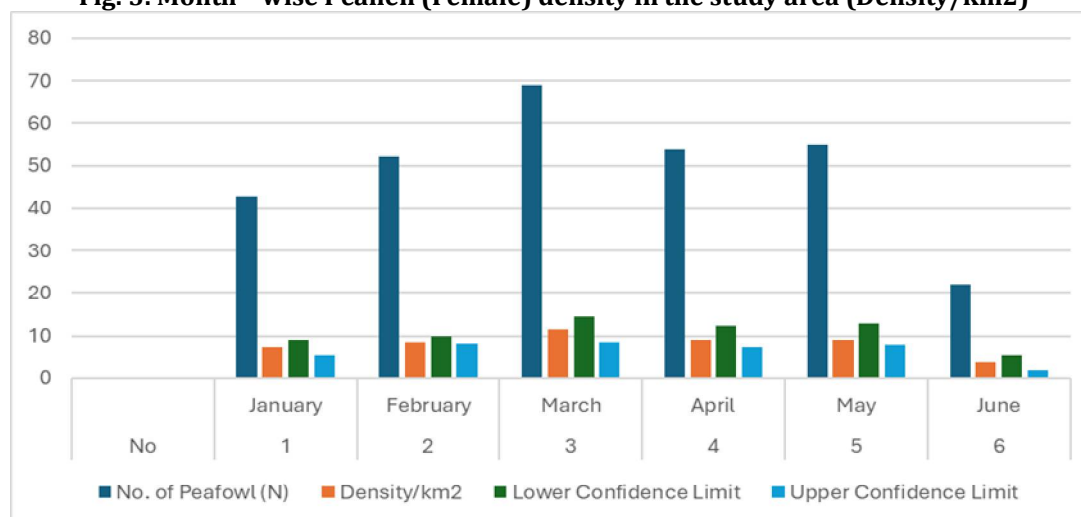
The Peahen density in month wise were studied in which the January 7.17/km² (N=43; LCL 9.13/km² and UCL 5.28/km²), February 8.67/km² (no. of individuals =52; LCL 9.92/km² and UCL 7.91/km²), March 11.50/km² (no. of individuals =69; LCL 14.32/km² and UCL 8.65/km²), April 9.00/km² (no. of individuals =54; LCL 12.38/km² and UCL 7.12/km²), May 9.17/km² (no. of individuals =55; LCL 12.92/km² and UCL 7.8/km²) and June 3.67/km² (no. of individuals =22; LCL 5.21/km² and UCL 1.89/km²).

The highest population density was recorded in March, with (n=69) individuals and a density of 11.50/km². This increase may be related to favorable environmental conditions and breeding season activity. The lowest density was recorded in June, with only (n=22) individuals and a density of 3.67/km². Overall, the results indicate that the peafowl population was highest in March and lowest in June, with moderate densities observed in the remaining months. Seasonal changes and environmental factors likely influenced these fluctuations.

Table 5: Month - wise Peahen (Female) density in the study area (Density/km²)

S.No	Month-wise	No. of Peafowl (N)	Density/km ²	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit
1	January	43	7.17	9.13	5.28
2	February	52	8.67	9.92	7.91
3	March	69	11.50	14.32	8.65
4	April	54	9.00	12.38	7.12
5	May	55	9.17	12.92	7.8
6	June	22	3.67	5.21	1.89

Fig. 5: Month - wise Peahen (Female) density in the study area (Density/km²)



Month – wise Chick density in the study area

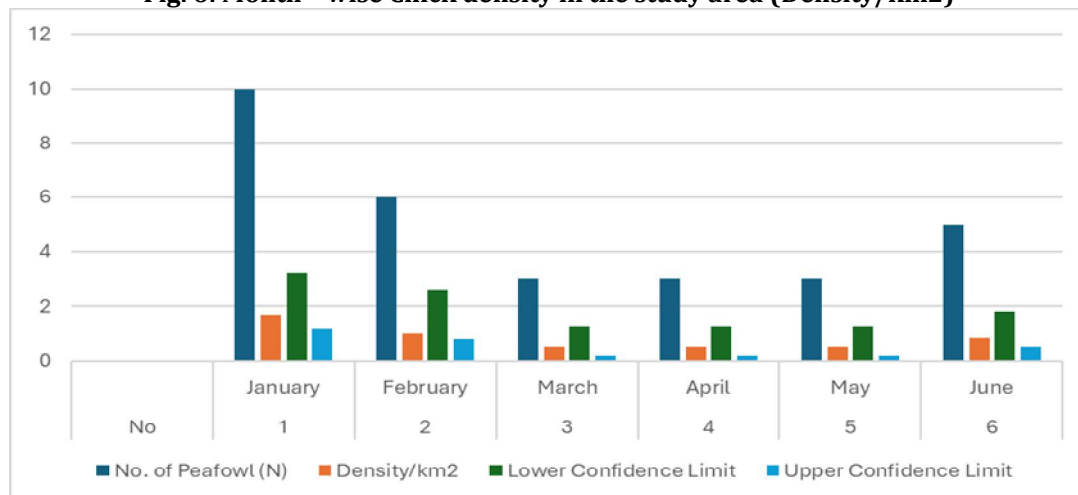
The Chick density in month wise were studied in which the January 1.67/km² (no. of individuals =10; LCL 3.21/km² and UCL 1.21/km²), February 1.00/km² (no. of individuals =06; LCL 2.59/km² and UCL 0.8/km²), March 0.50/km² (no. of individuals =03; LCL 1.3/km² and UCL 0.21/km²), April 0.50/km² (no. of individuals =03; LCL 1.3/km² and UCL 0.21/km²), May 0.50/km² (no. of individuals =03; LCL 1.3/km² and UCL 0.21/km²) and June 0.83/km² (no. of individuals =05; LCL 1.79/km² and UCL 0.53/km²).

The monthly population data of peafowl from January to June shows low overall density with slight fluctuations during the study period. The highest density was recorded in January, with (n=10) individuals and a density of 1.67/km². The indicating that January had comparatively higher population levels than the other months. The lowest density was observed in March, April, and May, where only (n=3) individuals were recorded in each month, with a density of 0.50/km². The indicate very low population levels during these months. Overall, the results indicate that the peafowl population was highest in January and lowest during March, April, and May, with minor variation in February and June. The generally low densities suggest limited population presence in this area during the study period, possibly influenced by seasonal or environmental factors. Table 6 and Fig. 6.

Table 6: Month – wise Chick density in the study area (Density/km2)

S. No	Month-wise	No. of Peafowl (N)	Density/km2	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit
1	January	10	1.67	3.21	1.21
2	February	6	1.00	2.59	0.8
3	March	3	0.50	1.3	0.21
4	April	3	0.50	1.3	0.21
5	May	3	0.50	1.3	0.21
6	June	5	0.83	1.79	0.53

Fig. 6: Month – wise Chick density in the study area (Density/km2)



DISCUSSION

The goal of the current study was to determine the number of sightings and density of peafowl in the study area throughout different months. During the study period, there were a lot of peafowl sightings in the study region. The peafowl density fluctuated on a monthly basis, demonstrating its density throughout every month. March was the month with the highest rate of density. June was the month with the lowest density. Peafowl populations from several locations were examined, and the density was evident in every habitat. The Indian Peafowl's range was found in every habitat within the research area.

Monthly Variation in Overall Density

The month-wise analysis shows that the overall population density was highest in March and lowest in June. January and February showed moderate densities indicating stable winter population levels. The sharp increase in March may be associated with the onset of the breeding season, increased activity, and better visibility of birds during courtship displays.

After March, the density slightly declined in April and May but remained relatively high. The significant drop in June may be due to seasonal changes, dispersal, dense vegetation growth during early monsoon,

or reduced visibility of birds. In related to our study [28] have reported The density of Indian peafowl was highest in the summer and lowest in the autumn.

Monthly Variation in Male Density

Male density was highest in and lowest in February. The peak in March likely corresponds to the breeding season when males become more active and conspicuous due to courtship displays. The decline in June may indicate reduced display activity and possible movement to sheltered areas.

Monthly Variation in Female Density

Female density was highest in March and lowest in June. The increased number in March suggests aggregation during breeding periods. The decline in June could be due to nesting behaviour, where females remain concealed to protect eggs or chicks, thereby reducing their visibility during surveys.

Monthly Variation in Chick Density

Chick density was highest in January and lowest from March to May. The low chick density during these months may be due to higher mortality rates, predation, or concealment behaviour. The slight increase in June may indicate new hatchlings emerging during the early monsoon season.

Additionally, this study demonstrated that Indian Peafowl numbers were higher in some habitats than others, and they were primarily found in the study area's open forest areas. Indian Peafowls may be more common in scrub jungles because there are enough food plants, insects, roosting trees, and healthy ground cover for nesting and protection. When compared to southern subtropical hill forests, peafowl prefer scrub jungle, which may be the cause of ground litters and fruiting plants [29]. The prevalence of Indian Peafowls in scrub jungle may be due to the presence of sufficient food plants, insects, roosting trees, and proper ground cover for nesting and protection [30]. The Indian blue peafowl was high density in paddy fields than sugarcane fields [31]. Similar patterns were found in investigations undertaken by previous study [32] in the Karur district and in Tamil Nadu [33] in the rural parts of Annur and Avinashi in the Kongu district.

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