2. SHORTNOSED FRUIT BAT (*CYNOPTERUS SPHINX* VAHL) FEEDING ON THE LEAVES OF *CASSIA FISTULA* AT POINT CALIMERE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

To study the role of seed dispersal by mammals, the faecal samples and chewed-off remains dropped by Shortnosed fruit bat were collected from Point Calimere sanctuary during different seasons of the year. From the studies it was evident that fruits of nearly 25 plant species were eaten and dispersed by these bats. Apart from the fruits and seeds dropped under their roosting sites, I noticed one to many chewed-off leaflets of *Cassia fistula* during every collection trip (twice a week). The occurrence of only *Cassia fistula* leaves in their droppings throughout the year indicates that the *Cassia fistula* leaves form a supplement to the regular diet of the Shortnosed fruit bat.

The literature (Brosset 1962, Prater 1980) says that Shortnosed fruit bats feed on fruits and sip honey from flowers. So it will be worth noting that *Cassia fistula* leaves are also one of the food items of the Shortnosed fruit bat

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3. SCAVENGING HABIT OF FISHING CAT (*FELIS VIVERRINA*) IN KEOLADEO NATIONAL PARK, BHARATPUR

While returning from field work at about 6 p.m. on February 4, 1987 I was attracted by the noise of a carnivore feeding from a nearby bush. I searched and located the carcass of a cow with a fishing cat feeding on it. The cat slipped away with a piece of flesh on sighting me.

The larger cats (tiger) are known to feed on carrion (Prater 1965), but I am unaware of earlier records of scavenging by the fishing cat.

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4. MELANISM IN THE JUNGLE CAT, *FELIS CHAUS* GULDENSTAEDT (FELIDAE: CARNIVORA)

In connection with the revision of Indian Felidae, one of us (S.C.), while studying the material of Bombay Natural History Society, came across three melanistic specimens of the Jungle Cat, *Felis chaus* Güldenstaedt from India. Although Pocock (1939) and Roberts (1977) have earlier reported the occurrence of melanistic specimens of the Jungle Cat, *F. c. prateri* Pocock from Karachi, Tharparker and Thatta, all in Pakistan, there is no record of melanism in the Indian subspecies of this cat. It is being recorded in the present note. The details of the specimens are given below. External measurements were taken by the collector. The cranial measurements are taken after Pocock (1939). Measurements are given in millimetres and abbreviations used according to Chakraborty (1983).

BNHS Reg. No. 6044; study skin: loc. Arcadia Tea Estate, Tamil Nadu (?): 22 Feb. 1940; coll. P. N. Jackson.

No pattern could be marked; entire dorsum including tail dark brown, with some fine pale cream grizzling except in mid-dorsal region: undersurface similar but pale bands broader than those of dorsum, particularly on the chin, throat and belly, giving a somewhat speckled appearance on venter.

BNHS Reg. No. 6035; study skin and damaged skull; loc. Belgaum, Karnataka; 5 Dec. 1912; coll. T. J. Spooner.

Measurements: Hb 520; Tl. 292; Hf 119; E 57.

Partially melanistic; dorsum including tail dark brown; sides agouti; throat, a portion of chest and undersurface of forelimbs infused with dark brown hairs.

BNHS Reg. No. 6018; study skin (damaged) and skull; loc. Tikoli, 22.5 km from Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh; Feb. 1914; coll. W. E. Jardine.

Measurements: Gl. 111; cb 100; pm^4 11, M 9; M_2 7; Pw 33; Iw 19; Zw 72; Mw 24.

Entire dorsum including tail and limbs dark brown; sides of the body and cheek having some fine pale cream hairs.

Discussion: It is a known fact that melanin pigmentation is more strongly developed in the hot humid areas (Gloger's Rule). The two specimens from south India support this hypothesis, but the specimen from Gwalior and those reported from Pakistan are exceptions, being inhabitants of warm, dry areas.

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