Birds in the Backyard

Come winter, and it is the season for migratory birds from high latitudes to be observed in the tropics. While there are many patterns of migration, the most common one in the northern hemisphere involves birds flying north to breed in temperate or Arctic areas that have long day lengths and returning south during autumn or winter. While birds such as swallows, many waders, and seabirds undertake long-distance migration, some birds show short-distance or altitudinal migration, in response to local weather conditions or resources rather than seasonality.

Indian Golden Oriole (Oriolus kundoo)
The Indian golden oriole is a yellow bird of the crown family with a black eye-stripe that extends beyond the eye. It breeds across many parts of central and northern India, visits the Himalayan foothills in summer, and southern India in winter. The male is bright yellow, while the female is yellowish-green with a streaked off-white underside. They feed on insects and fruits.

Bluethroat (Luscinia svecica)
The bluethroat is an Old World flycatcher seen in northern Eurasia and western Alaska during the breeding season. It migrates south to north Africa and southern Asia, including India, in autumn. Males and females are brown overall with a white eyebrow. Males have a bright blue bib with a rufous patch and a black, white, and rufous band below that. Females have a whitish throat and brown neck band.

By T N C Vidy

Photo credits: Shubha Bhat (Oriole), Jain P K (Bluethroat)