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DIET AND THE DAILY ROUTINE



An omnivorous diet

Bustards will eat almost anything. The list of known food items consumed by bustards is extensive, reflecting a broad, omnivorous diet that includes seeds, fruits, leaves, flowers, green shoots, various invertebrates and small vertebrates (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). Bustards are highly opportunistic, and will gorge on favoured food items when available. To this end they may track or move to outbreaks of preferred foods such as locusts and mice, often into regions beyond their normal range. Their affinity for these foods has even had them hailed as effective biological control agents.

The good (bustards) do, especially in the farming districts, is hard to estimate. Grasshoppers are destroyed by them in thousands and