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Bird Species Identification Using CNN

Mahadev Prabhu K M[1], Varun Kumar C[2], Dr. Manjunath B [3]

Students, Department of Master of Computer Applications[1,2]

Faculty, Department of MCA[3]

Maharaja Institute of Technology, Mysore

Affiliated to VTU, Belagavi, Karnataka, India

Abstract: *Bird species identification is an important task in wildlife conservation, ecological monitoring, biodiversity research, and environmental education. This paper presents a web-based Bird Species Identification System using Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs). The system allows users to upload bird images through a Flask application where images are preprocessed and classified by a trained CNN model. The application integrates preprocessing, prediction, and result visualization into a single platform.*

Keywords: Bird Species Identification, CNN, Deep Learning, Computer Vision, Flask, TensorFlow, Image Classification

1. INTRODUCTION

Birds play a significant role in maintaining ecological balance through pollination, seed dispersal, and pest control. Accurate identification of bird species is essential for biodiversity monitoring and wildlife conservation. Manual identification is challenging because many species share similar visual characteristics. Recent advances in deep learning, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), have enabled automated image classification with high accuracy. The proposed system uses a Flask-based web application integrated with a trained CNN model to classify bird species from uploaded images. The modular architecture includes image upload, preprocessing, model loading, prediction, and result visualization.

II. RELATED WORK

Recent research has shown that deep learning has significantly improved bird species classification compared to traditional image processing techniques. Earlier approaches relied on handcrafted features such as colour histograms, shape descriptors, texture analysis, and edge detection, which struggled to distinguish visually similar bird species. With the emergence of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), feature extraction became automatic, enabling higher classification accuracy. Researchers have successfully applied architectures such as VGG16, ResNet50, InceptionV3, MobileNet, and EfficientNet for fine-grained bird recognition. Public datasets including CUB-200-2011 and Kaggle Bird Species datasets have become standard benchmarks. Although these models achieve promising performance, challenges remain due to varying lighting conditions, complex backgrounds, image blur, occlusion, and limited training images for certain species. The proposed system addresses these challenges by employing CNN-based feature learning with image preprocessing and a user-friendly Flask web interface for automated bird species prediction.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Accurate identification of bird species through manual observation requires considerable expertise and is often time-consuming. Many species possess similar physical characteristics, making visual differentiation difficult for students, researchers, and bird enthusiasts. Existing manual identification methods are susceptible to human error and cannot efficiently process large collections of bird images. Therefore, there is a need for an automated system capable of accurately recognising bird species from digital images using deep learning techniques while providing a simple and accessible interface for end users.

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IV. OBJECTIVES

- Develop an automated bird species identification system using Convolutional Neural Networks.
- Build a web application that allows users to upload bird images for prediction.
- Improve classification accuracy through image preprocessing and deep feature extraction.
- Provide fast and reliable prediction results suitable for educational and conservation purposes.
- Design a scalable architecture that supports future expansion with additional bird species and advanced deep learning models.

V. SCOPE

The scope of the proposed system is limited to image-based bird species classification using a trained CNN model. The application accepts uploaded bird photographs, performs preprocessing, predicts the bird species, and displays the classification result through a web interface. The current implementation supports species available in the training dataset and is intended for educational, research, biodiversity monitoring, and wildlife conservation applications. Future enhancements may include mobile deployment, real-time camera recognition, cloud integration, multilingual support, and larger datasets covering additional bird species.

VI. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

The proposed Bird Species Identification System follows a modular architecture consisting of image acquisition, preprocessing, CNN-based feature extraction, species prediction, and result presentation. Users upload bird images through a Flask web application. The uploaded image is resized, normalized, and validated before being passed to the trained CNN model. The network automatically extracts hierarchical visual features including feather texture, body shape, wing structure, beak characteristics, and colour distribution. The extracted features are processed by fully connected layers to predict the most probable bird species. Finally, the prediction confidence and identified species are displayed to the user through an intuitive web interface. The modular design improves maintainability, scalability, and future integration with mobile or cloud-based platforms.

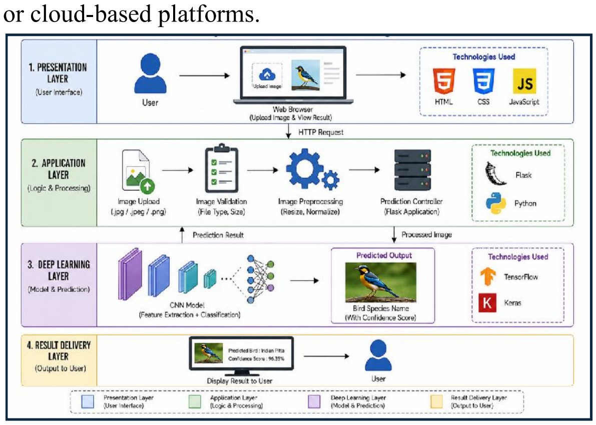

Figure 1. **System Architecture Bird Species Identification Using CNN**

VII. METHODOLOGY

The development methodology consists of six major phases: dataset collection, image preprocessing, CNN model development, model training, prediction, and performance evaluation. Initially, labelled bird images were collected from a publicly available dataset. During preprocessing, images were resized to a fixed dimension, normalized, and augmented to improve generalization. A Convolutional Neural Network was then designed using multiple convolution, pooling, activation, and fully connected layers. The model was trained using TensorFlow and Keras with categorical cross-entropy loss and the Adam optimizer. After training, the model was integrated with a Flask web application to

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enable image upload and real-time species prediction. Finally, model performance was evaluated using training accuracy, validation accuracy, test accuracy, and loss curves.

VIII. CNN MODEL

The proposed system employs a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) for fine-grained bird species classification. The network consists of convolutional layers for feature extraction, Rectified Linear Unit (ReLU) activation for introducing non-linearity, max-pooling layers for dimensionality reduction, dropout layers for reducing overfitting, and fully connected dense layers for final classification. During training, the CNN automatically learns representative visual patterns from thousands of bird images without requiring handcrafted feature extraction. Transfer learning techniques using pre-trained architectures such as VGG16 or ResNet50 may also be employed to improve classification accuracy and reduce training time. The final softmax layer generates probability scores for each bird species, and the class with the highest probability is selected as the prediction.

IX. DATASET

The CNN model was trained using a publicly available bird image dataset containing 200 bird species. The dataset consists of thousands of labelled colour images collected under varying environmental conditions, including different lighting, backgrounds, poses, and viewing angles. The dataset was divided into training, validation, and testing subsets to ensure unbiased performance evaluation. Data augmentation techniques such as rotation, horizontal flipping, zooming, and random brightness adjustments were applied during training to increase dataset diversity and improve model robustness. This dataset enables the CNN model to learn generalized visual representations that perform effectively on previously unseen bird images.

X. IMPLEMENTATION

The Bird Species Identification System was implemented using Python and the Flask web framework to provide a lightweight and interactive web application. TensorFlow and Keras libraries were used for developing and training the Convolutional Neural Network (CNN), while OpenCV and Pillow were employed for image preprocessing operations such as resizing, normalization, and format conversion. The trained deep learning model was saved in H5 format and loaded dynamically during prediction to reduce application startup time. Users upload bird images through the web interface, after which the image is preprocessed and forwarded to the CNN model. The predicted bird species and corresponding confidence score are displayed instantly on the results page. The modular implementation separates image preprocessing, model loading, prediction, and user interface components, improving maintainability and allowing future integration with cloud platforms and mobile applications.

XI. TESTING AND VALIDATION

The developed system was evaluated using separate training, validation, and testing datasets to ensure unbiased performance measurement. Model performance was assessed using metrics including classification accuracy, validation accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and loss values. Throughout training, validation loss was monitored to detect overfitting, while early stopping and model checkpoint techniques were employed to retain the best-performing model. Additional testing was performed using previously unseen bird images collected under different environmental conditions to verify the model's robustness. Experimental evaluation demonstrated that the CNN model consistently achieved high prediction accuracy while maintaining low inference time, making it suitable for practical bird species identification applications.

XII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Experimental results indicate that the proposed CNN-based Bird Species Identification System effectively classifies bird species from uploaded images with high accuracy. The image preprocessing pipeline improved model performance by ensuring consistent image quality and reducing unnecessary background variations. Training and validation accuracy increased steadily over successive epochs, while loss values decreased, indicating successful model convergence. Although the model performed well for most bird species, minor classification errors occurred when visually similar species shared comparable feather patterns, colours, or body structures. Variations in lighting conditions, occlusions, and image resolution also influenced prediction accuracy. Nevertheless, the proposed system provides reliable, efficient, and user-friendly bird species classification suitable for educational, research, biodiversity monitoring, and wildlife conservation applications. Future improvements involving larger datasets, attention mechanisms, and advanced transfer learning architectures are expected to further enhance recognition accuracy.

XIII. CONCLUSION

This research presented a Bird Species Identification System based on Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) for automated image classification. The developed application integrates image preprocessing, deep feature extraction, and species prediction into a Flask-based web platform that enables users to identify bird species from uploaded photographs. Experimental evaluation demonstrated that CNN-based learning effectively captures discriminative visual features such as feather patterns, wing structure, body shape, and colour distribution, resulting in accurate bird species recognition. The proposed system reduces dependence on manual identification, improves classification efficiency, and provides a practical tool for students, researchers, bird enthusiasts, and wildlife conservation organizations. The modular architecture also facilitates future improvements and deployment across multiple platforms.

XIV. FUTURE SCOPE

Although the proposed system achieves satisfactory classification performance, several enhancements can further improve its capabilities. Future work may include expanding the dataset to include additional bird species collected from diverse geographical regions, integrating advanced transfer learning architectures such as EfficientNet, Vision Transformers (ViT), and ConvNeXt, and implementing attention mechanisms to improve fine-grained classification. Real-time bird recognition using webcams and mobile devices can enhance field usability, while cloud deployment can improve scalability and accessibility. Additional features such as multilingual support, bird information retrieval, GPS-based species mapping, and offline mobile inference can transform the system into a comprehensive wildlife conservation and educational platform.

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