

Myanmar 01/03 - 29/03/2005

Itinerary

Myanmar

- 01.03.2005 Flight Frankfurt – Kuala Lumpur with Malaysian Airlines. After 4 hours onwards to Rangoon. Airport Pick-up to our very friendly Ocean Pearl Inn (15 US/Double).
- 02.-04.03 Rangoon
- 04.-05.03 Bus Rangoon – Bagan (15 hours)
- 05.-06.03 Bagan. Hotel Eden, Nyauk U. (12 US)
- 07.-11.03 Mt. Victoria, Kanpetlet with Tony Ohnmar in a Jeep.
- 11.-12.03 Bagan
- 13.-16.03 Bus Mandalay (9 hours). Mandalay, Hotel Silver Star (19 US)
- 16.-20.03 Bus Kalaw (7 hours), Hotel Winner (12 US)
- 21.-25.03 Taxi via Pindaya Caves to Inle Lake (35 US). Hotel Aung Mingalar, Nyaung Shwe (13 US after bargaining, nice and quiet).
- 25.-28.03 Bus Rangoon (18 hours). Hotel Ocean Pearl Inn.
- 28.-29.03 Flight to Kuala Lumpur. Night in luxury Hotel due to cancelled flight to Jakarta. Next morning Jakarta.
Find flight to Manado in the evening with difficulties (Lion Air), did not have ticket. Arrival Manado tired at night.

Introduction

This report is based upon a trip taken by Ralf Jahraus together with his wife Erma from 1st March to 25th May 2005. It was mainly a birding trips, combined with family visit on Java (Erma is native from Solo/Java) and some cultural interest. Especially some cultural sites in Myanmar should not be missed.

Flights

Booked my flights through Airways Travel in Frankfurt who offer special fares to Asians and their families. Indonesia was difficult to combine with Myanmar. Flew with Malaysia Airlines to Rangoon via Kuala Lumpur. Back from Yogyakarta via KL to Frankfurt. All other flights were bought in Indonesia.

Documents

A visa for Myanmar was valid for 30 days (could nowadays possibly be extended?).

Money

Easy to exchange US Dollars anywhere (most Hotels), but no way to use Cheques or Credit Cards. Heard of travellers who`s holiday ended first day cause they did not know ! So bring enough cash ! For 1 US you do get the equivalent of about 5500 Kyatt (1 Euro = 7000 Kyatt).

Language

English is widely spoken in Myanmar.

People

To us, Myanmar was one of the friendliest countries we have ever been. A country you don't want to leave.

Literature

Used Craig Robson's Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia for Myanmar. Also used Ian Sicklebills report on Mt. Victoria and Where to watch birds in Asia from Nigel Wheatley.

Weather

Had nice, sunny and dry weather in Myanmar. Bagan was getting rather hot during the day.

Transport

Public Transport was very cheap. Buses do reach most places, but most buses are very slow and uncomfortable. Had to rent bicycles or charter boats and taxis several times.

Accommodation

Accommodation was rather inexpensive in most places (between 5 and 30 US for a double room). Because we travelled outside the main tourist season it was often possible to bargain, esp. in Myanmar, if we stayed few nights.

Guides

Though we usually do our birding on our own, on this trip it is very advisable to make use of a guide. In some places it is simply necessary.

Sites

Myanmar

Bagan:

Based ourselves in Nyauk U. Rented bicycles in our Hotel for easy birding around the temples and pagodas. Birded mainly left and right from the road to Old Bagan and further to New Bagan (around Sasa-Nar-Stupa) and from NyaukU towards the railway station.

To find goodies like Hooded Treepie or White-bellied Minivet we asked for the guidance of Ko Thet whom you may find in an office next to Golden Express Hotel (ask for him). Hired boat at the Old Bagan Jetty for 5 hours (8000Kyatt – 8 Euro) south towards some sandy islands that hold Sandlark and White-tailed Stonechat. Saw Small Pratincole and Black-bellied Tern on the river.

Mt. Victoria:

Mt. Victoria is situated west of Bagan, in Chin State. It's mountains, 3200m high hold plenty east Himalayan specialities

A place you are not allowed to visit on your own. You need to book with an agency who will also arrange the permit (allow 2-4 weeks). We went with Tony Ohnmar who has his own Lodge near the village of Kanteplet, together with a driver in a Jeep. Tony as well as his assistance Gideon are superb birdwatchers and did try very hard to see as many

species as possible and they did it in a very pleasant way. Tony also does all kind of projects and research. Birded all day at different altitudes, mainly higher than the Lodge. If you have more time than us, you should also bird lower altitudes. It's 100 US per person, per day and well worth the money. Fantastic birding with such friendly people in a beautiful environment. Contact: wildbirdtt@mptmail.net.mm Info: www.wildmyanmar.com

Kalaw:

Another excellent birding spot, south-east of Mandalay in Shan State. Pleasant climate on 1300m altitude. Did some birding around Kalaw on our own but mainly went with Ko Pan, who like Ko Thet works together with Tony and who knows the birds here like nobody else.

Did a 2 days hike in superb forest, as well as 2 half day walks (Myian Kha village), with him. The small forest holds an exciting number of species. Ko Pan counted 375 sp. in 4 years there. Contact: May Pa Restaurant, Kalaw. Phone: 951-666469 or through Tony.

Inle-Lake:

Along Inle-Lake, east of Kalaw, Myanmar's second largest lake with interesting culture and tribes, it is possible to do some easy birding in a very relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.

Stayed in the quite touristy town of Nyaung Shwe. To find the interesting birds like Jerdon's Bushchat you need to hire a boat. We did a usual day tour for 9000 Kyatt with a motorboat from the jetty and combined it with bird watching. The Bushchat are found along the canal that leads to the Lake. They are common there. At the beginning of the lake there are plenty of waterbirds and you can visit a kind of ranger station.

Also did an evening trip through small canals with an old man and his paddle boat.

Rented bicycles for a day and went slowly south to Maing Thauk on a bumpy road along fields and huge Banyan-Trees. Saw Lineated Barbet and Collared Myna.

Bagan (05/03/05 - 06/03 and 11/03 - 12/03/05)

| | |
|-----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Chinese Francolin |
| 3 | Rain Quail |
| 150 | Ruddy Shelduck (Boat) |
| fc | Green Bee-Eater |
| 2 | White-throated Kingfisher |
| 2 | Hoopoe |
| 5 | Indian Roller |
| c | Asian Palm Swift |
| f | House Swift |
| 6 | Spotted Owlet |
| c | Spotted Dove |
| 15 | Spotted Redshank (Boat) |
| f | Common Sandpiper (Boat) |
| 20 | Little Ringed Plover (Boat) |
| 8 | River Lapwing (Boat) |
| 14 | Small Pratincole (Boat) |
| 2 | Black-bellied Tern (Boat) |
| 2 | Eastern Marsh Harrier (Boat) |

2 Hen Harrier (Boat)
 3 Common Kestrel
 20 Great Cormorant (Boat)
 20 Little Egret
 f Grey Heron
 15 Great Egret
 50 Cattle Egret
 5 Indian Pond Heron
 f Brown Shrike
 f Burmese Shrike
 2 Hooded Treepie
 6 White-bellied Minivet
 Black Drongo
 1 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo
 10 Greater Iora
 4 Red-breasted Flycatcher
 2 Siberian Rubythroat
 2 White-rumped Shama
 5 White-tailed Stonechat (Boat)
 20 Vinous-breasted Starling
 Common Myna
 Jungle Myna
 c Plain Martin (Boat)
 1 Wire-tailed Swallow
 Red-vented Bulbul
 c Streak-eared Bulbul
 5 Zitting Cisticola (Boat)
 f Rusty-rumped Warbler (Boat)
 2 Brown Prinia
 f Grey-breasted Prinia
 6 Plain Prinia
 1 Thick-billed Warbler
 1 Dusky Warbler
 8 Tickells Leaf Warbler
 7 Yellow-streaked Warbler
 2 Yellow-eyed Babbler
 c White-throated Babbler
 2 Purple Sunbird
 c Burmese Bushlark
 15 Sandlark (Boat)
 3 Oriental Skylark (Boat)
 f White Wagtail
 f Plain-backed Sparrow
 House Sparrow

Mt. Victoria (7/03 - 11/03/05)

1: Oak Forest 2500m - 2750m 2: Evergreen Forest 3: Secondary Forest
 4: around Pinewood Villa 5: Bagan - Mt. Victoria

1 Hill Partridge (heard) 2
 1 Rufous-throated Partridge (Tony) 2
 1 Stripe-breasted Woodpecker 2
 4 Rufous-bellied Woodpecker 2
 1 Crimson-breasted Woodpecker 4
 1 Gray-headed Woodpecker 5
 1 Bay Woodpecker (heard)
 2 Greater Flameback 5
 6 Great Barbet 2 3
 6 Golden-throated Barbet 2 3
 3 Indian Roller 5
 2 White-throated Kingfisher 5
 f Green Bee-Eater 5
 2 Chestnut-headed Bee-Eater 5
 Large Hawk Cuckoo (heard) 4
 2 Green-billed Malkoha 4
 1 Greater Coucal
 50 Gray-headed Parakeet 5
 30 Red-breasted Parakeet 5
 1 Hodgsons Frogmouth 4
 3 Grey Nightjar 3 4
 1 Collared Owlet 2
 Spotted Dove
 2 Oriental Honey Buzzard 3 5
 2 Common Buzzard
 2 Black Eagle 2 4
 1 Changeable Hawk Eagle 5
 1 Crested Serpent Eagle 2
 3 Shikra 3 5
 2 Northern Goshawk 2
 2 Common Kestrel 5
 1 Golden-fronted Leafbird 5
 1 Blue-winged Leafbird 5
 3 Eurasian Jay 4
 10 Red-billed Blue Magpie 3
 2 Rufous Treepie 5
 2 Grey Treepie 4
 Black-naped Oriole (heard)
 2 Maroon Oriole 2
 3 Large Cuckooshrike 5
 2 Small Minivet 5
 2 White-bellied Minivet 5
 6 Long-tailed Minivet 2

4 Short-billed Minivet 2 5
5 Scarlet Minivet 5
c Yellow-bellied Fantail 2 3 4
3 White-throated Fantail 3
fc Ashy Drongo 2 3 5
1 Black-naped Monarch 5
1 Large Woodshrike 5
4 Common Woodshrike 5
2 Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush 1 2
3 Blue Whistling Thrush 4
2 Long-tailed Thrush 2
12 Grey-sided Thrush 2
1 White-browed Shortwing 2
4 Slaty-backed Flycatcher 2
2 Snowy-browed Flycatcher 2
7 Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher 2 4
4 Little Pied Flycatcher 2 4
fc Verditer Flycatcher 2 3 4
2 Large Niltava 4
1 Rufous-bellied Niltava 4
1 Pygmy Blue Flycatcher 2
8 Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher 3 4
1 Pale Blue Flycatcher 3
f Orange-flanked Bush Robin 2
2 Blue-fronted Redstart 1
f Grey Bushchat 1 2
4 Chestnut-vented Nuthatch 2
2 White-tailed Nuthatch 2
6 White-browed Nuthatch 1
1 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch 5
2 Bar-tailed Treecreeper 2
4 Brown-throated Treecreeper 4
3 Black-bibbed Tit 2
1 Great Tit 5
8 Green-backed Tit 2 3 4
3 Yellow-browed Tit 2
3 Black-browed Tit 2
10 Crested Finchbill 2 3
fc Striated Bulbul 2 3
Black-crested Bulbul 5
Red-vented Bulbul 5
15 Flavescent Bulbul 3 4
10 Mountain Bulbul 2
Hill Prinia (heard)
2 Chestnut-headed Tesia 2
1 Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler 4
1 Aberrant Bush Warbler 3
1 Brown Bush Warbler 3

1 Russet Bush Warbler 4
 1 Dusky Warbler 5
 c Buff-barred Warbler 2
 5 Ashy-throated Warbler 2
 4 Blyth Leaf Warbler 2
 1 Grey-crowned Warbler 2
 1 Whistlers Warbler 2
 4 Grey-hooded Warbler 3 4
 1 Broad-billed Warbler 2
 5 Striped Laughingthrush 4
 4 Brown-capped Laughingthrush 2
 13 Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush 2 3
 2 Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler 4
 3 Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler 3 4
 1 Scaly-breasted Wren Babbler 1
 2 Long-tailed Wren Babbler 3
 6 Golden Babbler 2
 2 Chinese Babax 2
 1 Silver-eared Mesia 4
 4 Black-headed Shrike Babbler 2
 2 White-browed Shrike Babbler 2
 7 Black-eared Shrike Babbler 2
 3 Green Shrike Babbler 2
 3 Rusty-fronted Barwing 2
 2 Streak-throated Barwing 2
 4 Blue-winged Minla 2
 10 Chestnut-tailed Minla 2
 7 Red-tailed Minla 2
 20 White-browed Fulvetta 2
 1 Rusty-capped Fulvetta 2
 1 Nepal Fulvetta 2
 c Grey Sibia 2 3 4
 21 Whiskered Yuhina 2
 11 Stripe-throated Yuhina 2
 2 Spot-breasted Parrotbill 2
 1 Chestnut-flanked White-eye 1
 3 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker 2
 1 Purple Sunbird 5
 2 Mrs. Goulds Sunbird 3
 12 Green-tailed Sunbird 2
 18 Fire-tailed Sunbird 2
 20 Olive-backed Pipit 2 3 4
 8 Brown Bullfinch 2
 5 Little Bunting 2

Kalaw (17/03 - 21/03/2005)

1: around Kalaw 2: trek/2 days 3: Myiankha village

4 Chinese Francolin 2 3
1 Mountain Bamboo Partridge 3
 Red Junglefowl (heard) 2
 Yellow-legged Bittenquail (heard) 1
4 Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker 2
2 Greater Yellownap 2
2 Grey-headed Woodpecker 2
 Bay Woodpecker (heard)
2 Great Barbet 2
2 Golden-throated Barbet 1
5 Blue-throated Barbet 2
1 Coppersmith 3
1 Hoopoe 3
1 White-throated Kingfisher 1
2 Red-headed Trogon 2
1 Eurasian Cuckoo (heard) 2
 Plantive Cuckoo (heard) 2
1 Asian Emerald Cuckoo 2
 Asian Koel (heard) 2
3 Green-billed Malkoha 2 3
 Greater Coucal (heard) 3
f Grey-headed Parakeet 2
f Asian Palm Swift 2
1 Fork-tailed Swift 2
 House Swift
7 Silver-backed Needletail 2
 Hodgsons Frogmouth (heard) 2
 Rock Pigeon
 Spotted Dove
fc Oriental Turtle Dove 2
5 Thick-billed Green Pigeon 2
10 Pin-tailed Green Pigeon 2
 Yellow-footed Green Pigeon (heard) 2
10 Common Moorhen 2
1 Eurasian Woodcock 3
3 Red-wattled Lapwing 2
1 Oriental Honey Buzzard 2
1 Besra 2
1 Crested Goshawk 2
f Common Buzzard 2
15 Common Kestrel 2 3
1 Intermediate Egret 2
1 Indian Pond Heron 3
6 Burmese Shrike 1 2 3

4 Long-tailed Shrike 2 3
 2 Orange-bellied Leafbird 2
 1 Silvery-breasted Broadbill 2
 3 Eurasian Jay 3
 2 Red-billed Blue Magpie 2
 2 Grey Treepie 2
 2 Common Green Magpie 2
 House Crow
 f Large-billed Crow 1 3
 f Ashy Woodswallow 1 2 3
 2 Slender-billed Oriole 2
 1 Black-naped Oriole 2
 15 Maroon Oriole 2 3
 4 Large Cuckooshrike 2 3
 2 Large Woodshrike 2
 4 Indochinese Cuckooshrike 2
 f Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike 2
 3 Grey-chinned Minivet 2
 10 Scarlet Minivet 1 2
 f White-throated Fantail 2
 fc Ashy Drongo 1 2 3
 f Bronzed Drongo 2
 1 Crow-billed Drongo 1
 1 Spangled Drongo 3
 f Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo 2
 3 Black-naped Monarch 2
 f Common Iora 2 3
 3 Blue Rock Thrush 1 3
 f Black-breasted Thrush 2
 3 Asian Paradise Flycatcher 2
 f Red-breasted Flycatcher 2
 1 White-gorgetted Flycatcher 2
 1 Little Pied Flycatcher 2
 6 Verditer Flycatcher 1 2 3
 1 Tickells Blue Flycatcher 3
 1 Hainan Blue Flycatcher 2
 2 Hill Blue Flycatcher 2
 2 Blue-throated Flycatcher 2
 f Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher 2
 2 White-tailed Robin 2
 2 Siberian Rubythroat 1 3
 fc Oriental Magpie Robin 1 2 3
 f White-rumped Shama 2
 2 Daurian Redstart 2
 1 Common Stonechat 1
 fc Pied Bushchat 1 2 3
 fc Grey Bushchat 1 2 3
 18 Chestnut-tailed Starling 1 2 3

10 Vinous-breasted Starling 1 2 3
4 Black-collared Starling 2
Common Myna
7 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch 2
Giant Nuthatch (heard)
5 Great Tit 2 3
1 Yellow-cheeked Tit 2
5 Black-throated Tit 2
f Wire-tailed Swallow 2
Barn Swallow
Asian House Martin
1 Red-rumped Swallow 2
1 Crested Finchbill
7 Brown-breasted Bulbul 1 2 3
4 Ashy Bulbul 2
fc Black-crested Bulbul
c Red-whiskered Bulbul
c Red-vented Bulbul
fc Flavescent Bulbul 2 3
fc Black Bulbul 2
f Mountain Bulbul 2
1 Brown Prinia 2
f Hill Prinia 2
2 Rufescent Prinia 3
f Grey-breasted Prinia 1 2 3
1 Thick-billed Reed Warbler 2
1 Blunt-winged Reed Warbler 2
Common Tailorbird
3 Dusky Warbler 1 2
2 Buff-throated Warbler 2
2 Yellow-streaked Warbler 2
f Buff-barred Warbler 2
f Arctic Warbler 2
f Greenish Warbler 2
3 Grey-hooded Warbler 2
1 White-spectacled Warbler 2
4 Striated Grassbird 2 3
6 Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush 1
2 Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush 1
20 White-browed Laughingthrush 1 2 3
2 Red-faced Liocichla 3
4 Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler 1 2
2 Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler 1
7 White-browed Scimitar Babbler 2
1 Spot-throated Babbler 3
2 Rufous-fronted Babbler 1
5 Golden Babbler 2
5 Chestnut-capped Babbler 1 2

2 Yellow-eyed Babbler 2
 20 Silver-eared Mesia 2 3
 2 White-browed Shrike Babbler 2
 7 Black-eared Shrike Babbler 2
 9 Spectacled Barwing 2 3
 1 Blue-winged Minla 2
 1 Rusty-capped Fulvetta 2
 3 Grey-cheeked Fulvetta 2
 16 Dark-backed Sibia 1 2 3
 2 White-bellied Yuhina 2
 3 Burmese Yuhina 2
 2 Grey-headed Parrotbill 2
 f Chestnut-flanked White-eye 1 2
 f Oriental White-eye 2
 f Japanese White-eye 2
 2 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker 2
 1 Plain Flowerpecker 2
 1 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker 2
 1 Purple Sunbird 3
 10 Black-throated Sunbird 2
 c Tree Sparrow
 f Russet Sparrow 1 2
 1 White Wagtail 1
 1 Grey Wagtail 3
 1 Paddyfield Pipit 3
 fc Olive-backed Pipit 1 2 3
 10 Scaly-breasted Munia 2
 6 Black-headed Greenfinch 2 3
 15 Common Rosefinch 2
 f Little Bunting 2
 1 Yellow-breasted Bunting 3
 5 Crested Bunting 1 3

Kalaw – Pindaya Caves (21/03/05)

1 Oriental Honey Buzzard
 30 White-vented Myna
 1 Siberian Rubythroat

Inle Lake (22/03 – 25/03/05)

1: Lake 2: Bicycle Tour 3 : Kanue Tour

c Lesser Whistling Duck 1
 fc Spot-billed Duck 1

1 Lineated Barbet (more heard) 2
2 Blue-eared Kingfisher 1
1 White-throated Kingfisher 3
1 Large Hawk Cuckoo (more heard) 2
6 Asian Koel (plus heard) 2 3
3 Greater Coucal (plus heard) 1 3
Asian Palm Swift
f Grey-headed Parakeet 2
2 Asian Barred Owlet (Nyung Shwe Town)
1 Purple Swamphen 1
50 Pheasant-tailed Jacana 1
200 Black-winged Stilt 1 3
100 Brown-headed Gull 1
5 Black-shouldered Kite 1 3
5 Hen Harrier 1 3
fc Little Cormorant 1 3
Great Cormorant 1
Little Egret
Cattle Egret
Intermediate Egret
6 Purple Heron 1 3
Great Egret
Indian Pond Heron
1 Glossy Ibis 1
2 Brown Shrike 1
fc Ashy Woodswallow 1 3
Black Drongo
f Oriental Magpie Robin 2
20 Common Stonechat 1 3
19 Jerdons Bushchat 1 3
5 Collared Myna 2
f Vinous-breasted Starling 2 3
20 White-vented Myna 2
Common Myna
4 Black-collared Starling 2 3
c Barn Swallow
c Red-whiskered Bulbul
5 Zitting Cisticola 1
f Grey-breasted Prinia 1 2
Common Tailorbird
f Oriental Reed Warbler 1
f Greenish Warbler 2
2 Rusty-rumped Warbler 3
8 Striated Grassbird 1 3
Tree Sparrow
14 Citrine Wagtail 1 3
2 Yellow Wagtail 3

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Please contact me for more details or any questions about birding in Myanmar.