

Sri Lanka 2007 October

Part holiday, part recce and part pursuit of lifers by Bo & Maggie Crombet-Beolens...

The trip had been long planned with Bours & Co; the most well-established of all the birding tour outfits in Sri Lanka and was guided by its most well-known driver guide Sunil de Alwis.

Background

This was the first trip that Maggie and I had taken by ourselves for some years, ever since I began to organise trips for the disabled birders association. We were looking forward to being able to please ourselves, go at our own pace and not make any of the numerous small compromises we all take when we travel as a group.

Moreover, it was planned to cater for our peculiarities; my poor mobility and Maggie's arachnophobia... it turned out that it needed lots of changes as we went along to meet these needs despite many emails and meetings over the course of a year. Nevertheless, we had a very enjoyable trip and managed to see over 200 birds including around two thirds of the endemics and the majority of the endemic subspecies – however, timing was against us as we had not realised we were not only travelling in advance of the mass migration but also on the cusp of the main Monsoon! We did see a few early migrants such as waders, Brown Shrike and some flycatchers but were at least a couple of weeks too early and dipped out on many birds we had hoped to see such as Indian Pitta, Indian Blue Robin, Kashmir Flycatcher and Orange-headed Thrush.

However, as the following shows, we did manage to see a good proportion of the endemic species and many of the endemic races that abound. 200+ species was, given my lack of mobility, pretty good and as more than a quarter of these were new to me we certainly feel we had a successful trip.

Sri Lanka is unusual in that it has not one but two monsoons. The north and east is affected by just one and is, therefore, the dry zone, but the south west quadrant is subjected to two monsoons and thoroughly deserves its designation as the wet zone. Most of the best birding spots are in the wet zone.

The infrastructure of the island is greatly improving but minor roads, especially those that suffer most inundation in the wet zone are often in a poor state of repair. For anything other than the major routes do not expect to exceed 30 MPH en route. So, given the terrain, topography and erosion even short distances take time to cover. In the wetter higher areas roadsides have to be constantly attended to as mud and rocks slide and slip. When you see a rock the size of a washing machine tumble down a hill without any apparent prompting it does bring home to you how difficult it is for a relatively poor nation to maintain good transport links. I have to say we were impressed with the health, education and transport systems supported by government as well as the very friendly nature of all the people we met.

We present this report as a guide for those who either cannot, or do not choose to, walk very far and those who like us have found that middle age calls for a bit more comfort than youth!

Diary

Day 1 – 08th October 2007 – Arrival – Kithulgala

We arrived at Bandaranaike International Airport, Katunayake early in the morning and were met by our driver and guide, Sunil, who drove us on to our first stop at Kithulgala. This was a two and a half hour drive on a fairly poorly surfaced road and en route we started to get used to some of the birds we were to see in virtually all locations and on most days such as White-throated Kingfishers on every wire, Red-vented Bulbuls, Common Mynas, Yellow-billed Babblers [and exciting lifer the first time and a charming daily visitor for the rest of the trip], White-breasted Waterhen, Indian Pond Heron, Little Cormorant and Cattle, Little & Intermediate egrets in every wet paddy field or poolside, as well as Magpie and Indian Robins, House and Large-billed Crows etc. As we gained elevation paddy fields gave way to rubber plantations covering the hillsides.

We spent the late afternoon birding in Kithulgala at Sisira's River Lodge... the grounds there hold special birds and we saw Black-backed Dwarf Kingfisher and heard Chestnut-backed Owlet as well as seeing Layard's and Hanging Parakeets to kick off our tally of endemics there was a strong supporting cast of Stork-billed Kingfisher, Hill Myna, White-bellied Drongo etc. Most birds were seen over the river or flying up and down – including the only Forest Wagtail of the trip. [Thanks to S M Amarakoon MD of the Lodge for his hospitality and his staff for trying to call in some of the special birds]

We spent the night at Kithugala Resthouse.

Day 2 – 09th October 2007 – Kithulgala

We spent the early morning and late afternoon watching the Kithulgala Forest Reserve from our viewpoint at Sisira's River Lodge. Once more we heard but did not see the owlet and had more views of four species of kingfisher, both parrots, and heard but did not see Brown-capped Babbler. The morning was started with views of a tape-lured Green-billed Coucal and a party of Orange-billed Babbler, another highlight being a Besra preening for half an hour at the top of a palm. The highlight of the afternoon was a male Ceylon Junglefowl in the grounds.

We spent the night at Kithugala Resthouse and saw Loten's & Purple-Rumped Sunbird here and our only Purple Sunbird of the trip.

Day 3 – 10th October 2007 – Kithulgala

Another day spent watching the forest from afar being physically incapable of the uphill trek into the reserve in search of the famed Serendib Scops-Owl.

However, we did manage both male and female Ceylon Junglefowl, Ceylon Green-Pigeon, Ceylon Hanging-Parrot, Layard's Parakeet, more views of Black-Backed

Dwarf Kingfisher, Ceylon Swallow, Ceylon Grey Hornbill, Legge's Flowerpecker, Ceylon Hill-Myna and Ceylon Crested Drongo. Once more we heard but did not see Brown-capped Babbler – a species we heard on many more occasions but never got a glimpse of!

Overnight once more at Kithugala Resthouse.

Day 4 – 11th October 2007 – Kithulgala – Ratnapura – Sinharaja

After breakfast we took the long drive to Sinharaja via Ratnapura, breaking the day by birding in the garden of Ratnaloka Tour Inn and having lunch there. This pleasant interlude turned up our only Lesser Yellow-nape of the trip as well as Greater Flameback, Small Minivet, Brown-backed Needletail, Changeable Hawk-Eagle and other commoner species.

The trip up into the high ground and through numerous tea plantations afforded many spectacular views in hills and valleys.

Having had a look at the Blue Magpie Eco-Lodge we spent the night at the Rock View Motel overlooking a deep cultivated valley with many babblers, Black-hooded Orioles and Little Green Bee-eaters.

Day 5 – 12th October 2007 – Sinharaja

We left before first light for our excursion to Sinharaja World Heritage Wilderness Area. A 4x4 vehicle had been arranged for us so we could venture into those parts of the park where one might confidently predict the major endemics. However, the vehicle turned out to be a clapped out jeep with no doors... this was a problem because I have no movement in my spine... I am unable to 'ride' bumps and as the route was uphill [1 in 4 incline] on an incredibly rocky trail I had two choices, brace myself so as not to fall out of the vehicle and suffer constant pain, or fall out! It quickly became obvious that we were not destined to enter the park proper. So we returned to the large dining room at the Blue Magpie Lodge which overlooks a clearing. We spent the morning here seeing around 28 species including several new birds for the trip such as White-browed Bulbul, Black Eagle, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Crested Treeswift, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike, White-rumped Munia and early migrant Brown Shrike. It was good to be able to see a close nesting pair of Changeable Hawk Eagle too. Layard's Striped Squirrels and Indian Palm Squirrels were also in evidence and, on leaving the park we also had good views of Purple-Faced Leaf Monkey.

We saw no point in returning to the same spot and staying frustrated by not being able to see the specialty birds so we decided to move on early to the dry zone. We spent the afternoon undertaking the long drive over and through the beautiful Sri Lankan scenery and through the edge of the Udawalawe National Park with its large tank sporting Spot-billed Pelicans and the only Great White Egret and Long-tailed Cormorants of the trip and Indian Elephants which gave us a brief photo-opportunity. Through the park every wire seemed to have Blue-tailed and Little Green Bee-eaters,

Indian Rollers, Brown Shrike and other typical birds... but, it was not possible to stop and scope the tank.

Overnight stay in Priyankara Hotel Tissamaharama – our base for five days.

Day 6 – 13th October 2007 – Tissamaharama

As we had longer than normal in the area we decided to have a slightly later start than normal and breakfasted before setting off for our first visit to the tanks and gardens, paddy fields and woodland of the area around 'Tissa'.

So we had time to scope the tanks and see Spot-Billed Pelican, Black-Crowned Night-Heron, Lesser Whistling-Duck, Cotton Teal, Oriental Darter, Purple Heron, Brahminy Kite, Stork-Billed Kingfisher and many of the common dry zone species.

We also birded around some urban areas and found some great birds in people's gardens including Indian Scops-Owl and Blue-faced Malkhoha.

Day 7 – 14th October 2007 – Tissamaharama

The morning and evening was spent Birding around Tissamaharama wetlands which produced White-naped Woodpecker, Brown-headed Barbet, Clamorous Reed-Warbler, Baya and Streaked Weaver [most easily told apart by the shapes of their nests] and excellent views of hundreds of roosting Flying Foxes.

The afternoon session also produced no less than three Pied Crested [Jacobin] Cuckoos.

Day 8 – 15th October 2007 – Tissamaharama

Before breakfast we set off for a jeep safari in Bundala National Park – the ride around in a high vehicle was one of the highlights of the tour as it afforded such good views and we also saw a lot of birds including a number of lifers.

Among the birds we saw were Painted Stork, Black-Winged Stilt, Great Thick-Knee, Yellow-wattled & Red-wattled Lapwing, Pacific Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Little-Ringed, Kentish, Mongolian & Greater Sand Plover, Marsh, Wood & Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Brahminy Starling, Plaintive Cuckoo, Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Indian Silverbill, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Booted Eagle, Shikra and Besra & etc..

We also had great views of Toque Monkey, Grey Langur, Golden Jackal, Mongooses, Elephant, Sambar, Spotted Deer and Water Buffalo.

In the evening we birded an area near Yala consisting of sandy fields, scrub and tanks and saw Jerdon's Bushlark, Ashy-Crowned Finch-Lark, Hoopoe, Great Thickknee, and, the target species, India Nightjar. We also had the most unexpected tick of the trip – Isabeline Wheatear.

Day 9 – 16th October 2007 – Tissamaharama

At first light we were picked up at our hotel by one of the Yala guides in a high vehicle and made our way to our planned safari in Yala National Park.

This was the day the park was due to open for the season and when we arrived we found a number of other birding groups at the park entrance and an unusual number of soldiers. We quickly learned that there had been a LTTE attack on the army base which is in the part of the park not open to the public. Our disappointment at not being able to enter the park was nothing compared to the loss of life. Later we heard that during the course of the morning two of the guides had been wounded and a soldier died when their vehicle ran over an anti-personnel weapon. There is no question that the attack had been timed to disrupt tourism but also as clear was that there was never any threat to tourists. Despite the conflict still continuing in the northern and eastern parts of the country there is no targeting of foreign nationals and good advice should steer birders well clear of any problems.

We retained the vehicle and birded areas outside the park but still sufficiently wild to hold elephant, jackal and wild boar. Moreover, we saw some great birds and missed out very few of the birds on offer in the park proper.

We had Greater Sand Plover, Marsh, Wood, Terek & Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Caspian, Lesser-Crested, Gull-Billed, Saunders's & Little Tern, Oriental Skylark, and many others.

Day 10 – 17th October 2007 – Tissamaharama – Nuwara Eliya

After a leisurely breakfast we left for the long drive up to the highlands and Nuwara Eliya.

The route was being improved which meant quite a few hold-ups on the way but the beautiful countryside compensated for this. As we went up higher the weather became misty then wet and it steadily rained for the rest of the day with very low cloud precluding any hope of birding.

We checked in to the Galway Forest Lodge Nuwara Eliya. We were given a room on the third floor and we quickly followed the porter who carried our bags upstairs and I found myself totally out of breath. Nuwara Eliya is located at around 2250 meters above sea level and high enough for the air to have thinned a little. Newcomers need to take it a little slower than normal to start with. I have been at higher elevations before so was quite surprised to be affected, however marginally.

Day 11 – 18th October 2007 – Nuwara Eliya

We had planned a trip to Horton Plains National Park but the day dawned as wet as the previous one and we were told that if it was raining where we were then Horton Plain was likely to be clad in mist. We debated as to what to do and decided that we would move on to Kandy at lunch time and use the morning to bird the local reserve

as this was just 20 minutes from the hotel. We made our way there and whilst it never stopped raining it was tolerable when under the cover of the trees.

On our way into the reserve we saw a familiar bird – a Grey Wagtail on a culvert. We stopped at several places listening for birds and eventually picked up the call of a Sri Lanka Woodpigeon, which we managed to locate and watch high in a tree where it was soon joined by another. Moving on we picked up movement and could see a small group of Sri Lanka White-Eyes moving through the tops of the trees and then a great view of a small party of Dark-fronted Babblers at eye level.

After our picnic breakfast among the dripping trees we lucked upon a wave of birds with Sri Lanka White-Eyes, a superb Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, a Sri Lanka Bush-Warbler, a Velvet-Fronted Nuthatch and a Dusky Blue Flycatcher.

No amount of searching turned up any thrushes or other goodies so we moved on to Victoria Park which is in the centre of town. Our [rather limited] walk around was not very productive but we did see more Grey Wagtails and Sri Lanka White-eyes and virtually tame Scaled-breasted Minias as well as some spectacular lizards.

After lunch we left the town for Kandy while looking for Hill Swallows, without luck, en route. However we did see our only Pied Bush Chat of the trip and a small group of Yellow-Eared Bulbuls.

We arrived in Kandy in the afternoon and decided to rest up in the Hotel Suisse.

Day 12 – 18th October 2007 – Kandy

We started the day after an early breakfast birding in Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya. Here we had good views of Alexandrine Parakeet, and brief views of Yellow-Fronted Barbet and Ceylon Small Barbets. There was a supporting cast of Edible-nest [Indian] Swiftlet, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Common & Stork-billed Kingfishers, and munias, white-eyes, minivets and other common species.

I spent the late afternoon sitting in the Hotel Gardens managing to find three barbet species in the same tree along with crows, mynas and Flying Foxes.

Day 13 – 20th October 2007 – Kandy

In the morning we were unable to do any birding at Udawattakele Sanctuary as this would have meant more walking than I was up to so, instead, we went up into the hills above Kandy and birded amongst the tea plantations. This proved quite productive with Brown-capped Babbler once more heard but not seen, but good views of Greater Flameback [down to 4 feet], Orioles, Drongos etc. and the best view yet of Sri Lanka Hill Mynas. It was an enjoyable afternoon despite the persistent drizzle.

After lunch we made our way down the main highway to Colombo and the Airport Garden Hotel.

Day 14 – 21st October 2007 – Kandy – 24th October

In our original plan we were due to fly on to Malaysia but unforeseen circumstances led us to re-arrange our flight home early. The earliest we could get the flights was for 24th October so, as we had ended our tour with Bours, we spent most of the rest of the time enjoying the five star facilities of the Hotel with its lush gardens, managing to clock up around 40 species from our Bedroom Window!

I had arranged to meet up with another guide – Amila Salgado of Birdwing Nature Holidays – on 22nd and we drove an hour east of Katunayake through the incredible deluge of the onset of the monsoon proper to a new forest reserve, Horagolla National Park, the smallest National Park with a mere 13.362 hectares. Whilst this NP has no birds that cannot be found elsewhere it does have some of the endemics such as Spot-winged Thrush and is easy access and close enough to Colombo to do as a day trip.

When the rain eased just a little we venture 100 yards into the forest with umbrellas up fighting off the mosquitoes in the secondary forest. We saw just one bird, but, as it was a lifer, a Brown-breasted Flycatcher, I was happy. Whilst playing scrabble in the park building we did catch a glimpse of a Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel. It was also most interesting to see snails the size of apples crawling about the trails.

Hotels

Most reports do not give much info on accommodation but, as we most often travel with those needing wheelchair access we do take notes on accessibility, and, in any event, we wanted accommodation free of spiders and offering a little comfort. There follows a brief description of the places we stayed in and also, in some cases, note of the alternatives.

It does seem that the term 'eco-lodge' can often be used as an excuse for poor facilities trying to make a virtue out of the fact that there are no mains supplies etc. I totally support good conservation practices and ways of reducing the carbon footprint etc. but this most certainly does not mean that one has to have poor facilities.

Kithugala Resthouse

Kithulgala Rest House was used by the principle actors when making the film of The Bridge Over The River Kwai which was filmed here and the famous bridge built across the Kelani River before it was dramatically blasted at the end of the 1950s film. It is a small and unpretentious place with just half a dozen well-appointed air-conditioned rooms and a large restaurant which was well used by visitors and locals offering very good food at dinner accompanied by ice-cold Lion Beer, nice snack lunches and also an excellent breakfast served by friendly and attentive staff. The rooms were very clean and were completely accessible too. Of all the places we stayed this would pose least problems to wheelchair users there was a generously sized shower with no lips and sills and an accessible WC too. As can be seen there was a deep step up to the rooms from the garden but this could easily be ramped if needed.

We were due to stay in another place – Sisira's River Lounge a kilometre away on the river and with a very good 'garden' area of trees and shrubs where we had some

excellent birds. However, the rooms there have walls which do not reach up to the roof – a form of natural air-conditioning, and had bathrooms open to the elements having no roofs at all. The cabanas are adequately if simply furnished and a ceiling fan provides some cooling. Maggie took one look and said ‘no way’ assuming that she would be sharing the rooms with arachnids. This is a fair assumption as, when we were birding sitting by the dining room enjoying a cold drink a very large spider did walk along the path – it had an egg sack below it the same colour and size of a flattened golf ball! Maggie can cope with such encounters but not the thought of one encroaching upon her personal space whilst slumbering!

Rock View Motel

The Rock View Motel was chosen as an alternative to the Blue Magpie Eco-Lodge once we had seen the rooms at the latter. It was an adequate basic motel with air-con and an en suite if very small bathroom. Whilst there were very large air vents into the rooms these were easily blocked off with newspaper making it relatively ‘spider safe’ from the spiders on the balcony. Fortunately there was still ingress for the several geckos which made it their business to ensure that any mossies that found their way in were soon despatched. All the accommodation was on the first floor up a flight of stairs rendering the motel very inaccessible for wheelchair users... had the rooms been accessible the bathrooms would still have been unsuitable as the entry was narrow although the shower was open and would have been suitable.

The main drawback of the motel is that it is a drive of at least 30 to 40 minutes from Sinharaja thus necessitating a very early start to be at the National Park for first light, but that seemed a small price to pay for such an improvement over the Eco-Lodge.

Meals were as basic as the hotel with the ‘village curry’ being the least appetising of those eaten on the trip.

Our booked accommodation was at the Blue Magpie Eco-Lodge but inspection of the non air-conditioned rooms proved a deterrent to Maggie as they had open air vents, were very stuffy, damp and smelly and poorly furnished with a tiny shower room. The main room was good for observing birds at close quarters and the National Park guides were knowledgeable – they are not, incidentally, paid wages relying on whatever tourists give them for their services.

Priyankara

The Priyankara Hotel in Tissamaharaha was the nicest overall accommodation experience of the trip. The rooms were well appointed with very efficient air-con, good bathrooms and a balcony overlooking rice paddies and areas of palm trees that attracted literally thousands of Ring-necked Parakeets to roost overnight as well as a good scattering of other birds such as Peafowl, Egrets, Ibis, Openbill etc. In the grounds of the hotel beneath the balconies is a pond with terrapins and Common Kingfisher etc. For those who enjoy such things the hotel also sported a brand new swimming pool. Dining was excellent with a quick positive response to food not on the very restricted set menu... and I enjoyed the local vegetarian curried dishes very much.

The one problem is that there were few, if any, ground floor rooms and no lift. On our first evening there was a hatch of beetles which were attracted by the lights with the stairs to the rooms having thousands of the small beasts and several hundred managed to find their way into our room... but were easily cleaned away. The showers were open and well designed making it a shame that there could be no access for wheelchair users as everything about the rooms, apart from being on the first floor, was perfect.

Galway Forest Lodge

The Galway Forest Lodge in Nuwara Eliya was another well appointed hotel with good facilities, showers etc. The only thing about it that was disappointing was the food – a small set menu of western style food badly prepared and presented as was often the case in many places. From the tourists point of view it is far nicer to have local dishes than what one is used to at home.

We changed out itinerary and only stayed one night because of the poor weather and found it really quite cold. I also found myself briefly affected by the altitude as I had climbed the stairs too rapidly. At around 2200 metres it is just high enough to have such an effect.

Hotel Suisse

The Hotel Suisse in Kandy is a triumph of pretention over substance and can best be described as 'shabby chic'. It has been a hotel for many years but was the HQ for Lord Mountbatten during WWII. It is furnished in colonial style and owes much of its character to a bygone era. The suite was comfortable with a good air-conditioner and an adequate but not luxurious bathroom having a shower over the bath. One of the tiles under the sink, presumably left loose to allow plumbing maintenance would fall off with a clatter at any time of the day or night. The built in soap dishes were a great example of how poor maintenance lets down such a place... if you put a small bar of soap on it, it tipped up! Whilst pretty flowers were left on your sheets when they were turned down nightly, and fruit greeted you on arrival the hotel lift did not work for the entire time we were there. As the hotel is on a hill it was possible to access the second floor direct from a side gate and we were dropped off here which did mean I didn't have to struggle up the stairs... so it could have been suitable for a wheelchair user, had not the bathroom door been too small and narrow and the shower completely inaccessible.

Moreover, when we had the temerity to try and order off the a la carte menu, as the buffet had nothing to tempt us, we were at first told that the chef said no! It took the intervention of the very sweet manager to sort this out. I had a debate with him and some of his staff at my astonishment that a country whose population is largely Buddhist or Hindu, did not offer any vegetarian dishes as part of their buffet or set meals. My breakfast was the least appetising of the trip simply because the art of frying an egg had not yet been mastered.

On the positive side the hotel has a very nice outlook over the lake and the Temple of the Tooth and a small but pleasant garden – one large Rain Tree did hold three types of barbet and the view of the lake edge with its Flying Foxes and Black-crowned Night Herons etc. was very pleasant.

Taj Airport Garden Hotel

The Taj Airport Garden Hotel was undoubtedly the best hotel we stayed in, moreover it has excellent grounds and we clocked up nearly 40 species from our viewpoint on the fifth floor including two species [Stone Curlew & Common Hawk Owl] that we did not see elsewhere on the trip. Many common species were easily and well seen here and it would make an excellent place to start one's tour if you fancy a couple of nights recovering from your international flights. We had altered flights home and stayed here for four nights three of which we had not anticipated.

The meals were the best we had too with very nice a la carte meals and an expensive buffet style alternative at each meal. Breakfast gave a choice of Full English, Continental, Sri Lankan and Chinese or any combination thereof.

All rooms were accessible via operating lifts and the rooms were large, well appointed and with nice bathrooms which might not have been fully accessible... I was remiss in not checking to see if they had 'handicapped' rooms as they are internationally known.

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Bird images ©Amila Salgado Birdwing Nature Holidays

Sri Lanka Birding Areas Trip List

Little Grebe or Dabchick *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*
Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*
Little or Javanese Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*
Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea cinerea*
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea purpurea*
Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia intermedia*
Great Egret *Egretta alba modesta*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta garzetta*
Western Reef-Egret *Egretta gularis*
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis coromandus*
Indian Pond-Heron *Ardeola grayii*
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*
Asian Open-billed Stork *Anastomus oscitans*
Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*
Black-headed or Oriental Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia*
Lesser Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*
Cotton Pygmy-Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus coromandelianus*
Oriental Honey-Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus ruficollis*
Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus caeruleus*
Black Kite *Milvus migrans govinda*
Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus indus*

White-bellied Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Grey-headed Fish-Eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*
Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela spilogaster* **ER**
Shikra *Accipiter badius badius*
Besra *Accipiter virgatus besra*
Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis perniger*
Booted Eagle *Aquila pennatus milvodes*
Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus cirrhatus ceylonensis* **ER**
Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis kelaarti* **ER**
Sri Lanka Junglefowl *Gallus lafayetii* **E**
Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*
Barred Button-Quail *Turnix suscitator leggei* **ER**
White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus phoenicurus*
Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*
Grey-headed Swampfen *Porphyrio poliocephalus poliocephalus*
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus chloropus*
Common or Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra atra*
Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Eurasian Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus*
Great Thick-knee *Burhinus recurvirostris*
Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malarbaricus*
Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus lankae*
Pacific Golden-Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
Grey or Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius jerdoni*
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus seebohmii* **ER**
Mongolian or Lesser Sand-Plover *Charadrius mongolus mongolus*
Greater Sand-Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii leschenaultii*
Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus*
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa limosa*
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica lapponica*
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata arquata*
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus eurhinus*
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres interpres*
Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
Little Tern *Sternula albifrons sinensis*
Saunders's Tern *Sternula saundersi*
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica*
Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo longipennis*
Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis bengalensis*

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia feral* (introduced)
Rock Dove *Columba livia intermedia*
Sri Lanka Wood-Pigeon *Columba torringtoni* **E**
Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis ceylonensis* **ER**
Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica robinsoni* **ER**
Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon *Treron bicincta leggei* **ER**
Pompadour Green-Pigeon *Treron pompadora pompadora* **ER**
Green Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula aenea pusilla*
Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus beryllinus* **E**
Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria eupatria*
Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri manillensis*
Plum-headed Parakeet *Psittacula cyanocephala cyanocephala*
Layard's or Emerald-collared Parakeet *Psittacula calthropae* **E**
Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris lugubris*
Pied or Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus jacobinus*
Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus varius ciceliae* **ER**
Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus passerinus*
Asian or Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea scolopacea*
Blue-faced Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus viridirostris*
Green-billed Coucal *Centropus chlororhynchus* **E**
Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis parroti*
Indian Scops-Owl *Otus bakkamoena bakkamoena*
Chestnut-backed Owlet *Glaucidium castanonotum* **E H**
Brown Hawk-Owl *Ninox scutulata hursuita* **H**
Indian Nightjar *Caprimulgus asiaticus eidos* **ER**
Indian Swiftlet *Aerodramus unicolor*
Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus indicus*
Asian Palm-Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis balasiensis*
Crested Tree-Swift *Hemiprocne coronata*
Common or Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops ceylonensis*
Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis capensis*
White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis fusca*
Oriental Dwarf or Black Kingfisher *Ceyx erithacus erithacus*
Common or River Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis taprobana*
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis leucomelanurus*
Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis orientalis* **ER**
Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti leschenaulti*
Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis indica*
Sri Lanka Grey-hornbill *Ocyrceros gingalensis* **E**
Malabar or Indian Pied-Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus*
Brown-headed Barbet *Megalaima zeylanica zeylanica*
Crimson-fronted Barbet *Megalaima rubricapilla* **E**
Yellow-fronted Barbet *Megalaima flavifrons* **E**
Brown-capped Woodpecker *Dendrocopos moluccensis gymnophthalmus*
Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Dendrocopos mahrattensis mahrattensis*
Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus wellsi* **ER**
Golden-backed Flameback *Dinopium benghalense jaffnense* **ER**
Red-backed Flameback *Dinopium benghalense psarodes* **ER**
Crimson Flameback *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi* **E**

White-naped Woodpecker *Chrysocolaptes festivus tantus* **ER**
Oriental or Small Skylark *Alauda gulgula gulgula*
Jerdon's Bush-Lark *Mirafraga affinis*
Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix grisea*
Dusky Crag-Martin *Ptyonoprogne concolor concolor*
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica gutturalis* **ER**
Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii filifera*
Sri Lanka Swallow *Cecropis hyperythra* **E**
Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica erythropygia*
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea melanope*
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*
Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*
Paddyfield or Oriental Pipit *Anthus rufulus malayensis*
Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*
Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer haemorrhousus* **ER**
White-browed Bulbul *Pycnonotus luteolus insulae* **ER**
Yellow-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus penicillatus* **E**
Yellow-browed Bulbul *Iole indica guglielmi* **ER**
Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus flammeus*
Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus cinnamomeus*
Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis jerdoni*
Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons insularis*
Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia multicolor*
Indian or Black-backed Robin *Saxicoloides fulicata leucoptera* **ER**
Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis ceylonensis*
Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata atrata* **ER**
Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
Sri Lanka or Palliser's Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus palliseri* **ER**
Clamorous Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus meridionalis* **ER**
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis cursitans* **ER**
Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsonii leggei* **ER**
Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis brevicauda* **ER**
Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata insularis* **ER**
Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius fernandonis* **ER**
Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*
Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis ceylonensis*
Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae jerdoni* **ER**
Dull-blue Flycatcher *Eumyias sordida* **E**
Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azure ceylonensis* **ER H**
Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*
Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui muttui*
White-browed Fantail *Rhipidura aureola compressirostris*
Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus egregia*
Sri Lanka White-eye *Zosterops ceylonensis* **E**
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis frontalis*
Great Tit *Parus major mahrattarum*
Brown or Red-tailed Shrike *Lanius cristatus cristatus*
Sri Lanka Wood-Shrike *Tephrodornis paffinis* **E**
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus leggei* **ER**
Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus minor* **ER**

Sri Lanka Crested Drongo *Dicrurus ceylonicus* **E**
White-bellied Drongo *Dicrurus caerulescens insularis* **ER**
Dicrurus caerulescens eucopygialis **ER**
Yellow-eyed Babbler *Chrysomma sinense nasale* **ER**
Orange-billed Babbler *Turdoides rufescens* **E**
Yellow-billed Babbler *Turdoides affinis taprobanus* **ER**
Dark-fronted Babbler *Rhopocichla atriceps nigrifrons* **ER**
Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscocapillum babaulti* **H E**
Pellorneum fuscocapillum scortillum **H E**
Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii melanurus* **E**
House Crow *Corvus splendens protegatus*
Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos culminatus*
Southern Hill Myna *Gracula indica*
Sri Lanka Myna *Gracula ptilogenys* **E**
Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis melanosternus* **ER**
Brahminy Starling *Sturnus pagodarum*
Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile zeylonicum* **ER**
White-throated or Legge's Flowerpecker *Dicaeum vincens* **E**
Pale-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos ceylonense* **ER**
Purple-rumped Sunbird *Nectarinia zeylonica zeylonica* **ER**
Purple Sunbird *Nectarinia asiatica asiatica*
Long-billed or Loten's Sunbird *Nectarinia lotenia lotenia* **ER**
Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus ceylonensis* **ER**
Black-headed Cuckooshrike *Coracina melanoptera sykesi*
Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus*
White-throated or Warbling Silverbill *Euodice malabarica*
White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata striata*
Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata punctulata*
Black-headed Munia *Lonchura malacca*
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus indicus*
Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus philippinus*
Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar flaviceps*

205 Species

20 Endemic Species

44 Endemic Races

57 Lifers