

NORTHERN INDIA: TIGERS, BIRDS AND THE HIMALAYAS TRIP REPORT OCTOBER 2017

By Andy Walker



A gorgeous Indian endemic, the Painted Spurfowl, was seen well during the tour.



This was a customized version of our usual northern India tour, scheduled for January. This tour for Charley and Paul commenced on the 16th of October 2017 at Ranthambhore and concluded in New Delhi on the 30th October 2017. Prior to the tour Charley and Paul took a pre-tour exploring New Delhi and Jaipur and had a one-day extension in New Delhi for some birding there. The tour visited the world-famous Ranthambhore, Keoladeo Ghana (formerly known as Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary), Corbett, and Sultanpur National Parks and spent time in the breathtaking scenery of the Himalayan foothills at Pangot and Sattal. A visit to this part of India would not be complete without taking in the majestic UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Fatehpur Sikri and the Taj Mahal, and so we visited these also. India is well known for its amazing food, and we sampled a great deal of interesting and tasty local dishes throughout the tour. The above combined makes for a perfect Indian birding tour.

The tour connected with many exciting birds, such as Indian Skimmer, Indian Courser, Kalij, Koklass, and Cheer Pheasants, Painted Spurfowl, Indian Spotted Eagle, Bearded (Lammergeier), Red-headed, Indian, and Himalayan Vultures, Collared Falconet, Sarus Crane, Black-necked Stork, Small Pratincole, Painted Sandgrouse, Brown Fish Owl, Oriental Scops Owl, Black-bellied and River Terns, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Great Hornbill, Spotted Forktail, Grey-winged Blackbird, Long-billed and Scaly Thrushes, Himalayan and Siberian Rubythroats, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Striated and Rufous-chinned Laughingthrushes, Grey-crowned Prinia, White-browed Bush Chat, and over 1,600 Red-headed Buntings.

A total of 368 bird species were recorded (362 seen), along with an impressive list of other animals, including Bengal tiger (male and female), jungle cat (three), Asian elephant, Himalayan goral, gharial, and mugger. We also found the less well-known but equally exciting Indian gerbil, common wolf snake, Indian rock python, and red sand boa, as well as a range of beautiful butterflies. Species lists are at the end of this report.

India Pre-Tour: New Delhi and Jaipur Cultural Tour

Days 1 – 3, 13th – 15th October 2017. Cultural Tour

Charley and Paul arrived in New Delhi early on the 13th, and after a quick hotel check-in ventured into the city with a monument guide to visit some of the city's sights. During the afternoon they visited the India Gate, Humayun's Tomb, and Qutub Minar and also took a walk and rickshaw ride through Old Delhi, where they visited the spice market and took in the local sights and smells (also finding their first **White-throated Kingfisher** here!). After meeting Birding Ecotours guide Andy Walker in New Delhi they then transferred to Jaipur on the 14th, having that afternoon and the whole of the 15th to explore this ancient city, taking in the Amber Fort, City Palace, Hawa Mahal Wind Pavilion and the Jantar Manta observatory, as well as enjoying a variety of local entertainment from their hotel's rooftop restaurant.



India Tour: Tigers, Birds and the Himalayas

Day 1, 16th October 2017. Ranthambhore National Park

Charley and Paul arrived at the hotel near Ranthambhore National Park with our excellent local guide Shyam at lunch time after exploring New Delhi and Jaipur for their pre-tour. Here they again met up with Andy, and the main tour commenced.

We took a short afternoon drive around the national park to see what we could find. It was exceedingly hot as we set off in the mid-afternoon, but we had some great looks at sambar and chital (spotted deer) and several southern plains gray langurs. One langur in particular was making an alarm call that indicated a Bengal tiger was about, but despite our best efforts in the growing dusk it remained out of sight in a ditch. Rather frustrating! However, there was one bird highlight that made the day for us all, a day-roosting **Brown Fish Owl**; covered in dappled sunlight this large owl looked very impressive. A few other brief stops as we were driving around yielded (a brief) **Painted Spurfowl**, **Indian Peafowl**, **Grey Francolin**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Rufous Treepie**, **Large Grey Babbler**, **Jungle Babbler**, and a pair of secretive **Brown Crakes**, which showed well (as did a rather large mugger). As the sun set we drove back to our hotel, stopping to watch several small groups of **Painted Sandgrouse** fly to a small waterhole to drink.



Brown Fish Owl soaking up some late-afternoon sun



Day 2, 17th October 2017. Ranthambhore National Park

We spent the morning and afternoon taking jeep game drives around the beautiful Ranthambhore National Park. Driving around as the sun was rising gave us some very nice light on the impressive fort near the entrance, and we had an enjoyable drive in our allotted zone, despite not seeing any tigers. Most of the birds we found were near one of the large lakes, and some highlights included Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Plum-headed Parakeet, Coppersmith Barbet, Black Redstart, White-naped Woodpecker, Great Stone-curlew, River Tern, Painted Stork, Asian Openbill, Black-headed Ibis, and Pied Kingfisher. We also watched a Crested Honey Buzzard attempting to raid a bee hive, but it was soon seen off by the hive's owners!

As our final game drive started in the afternoon there was nervous anticipation: would we see the tiger here or would we have to wait until we got to Corbett National Park next week? As we were driving through the entrance we found a ruddy mongoose. Shyam told us of the local belief that the sighting of a mongoose was good luck – we'd take whatever luck we could get! A few kilometers further along the road we were enjoying cracking views of a pair of **Painted Spurfowl**, soon followed by a **Tickell's Thrush**, and **Grey Francolins** seemed to be everywhere along the road. A lone, regal **Black Stork** stood on a rock in the river and gave fantastic close views. A short while later the excitement levels went through the roof as we came across a gorgeous Bengal tigress lying in the road! She stayed there for a few minutes, allowing us all to get great views and photos/videos. She then got up and walked into the undergrowth, and we continued to get repeated glimpses of her as she meandered into the forest, stopping briefly to intensely sniff at a tree along the way.



The gorgeous Bengal tigress taking a rest in the road



During a pause in tiger activity we looked up and noticed a small group of the Critically Endangered (IUCN) **Indian Vulture** circling overhead, coming back to their nesting/roosting cliffs for the night.

As if that wasn't enough we got a tip-off about another tiger bathing in a river pool, so we quickly made our way toward the area. On reaching the spot we arrived just in time to see a huge male Bengal tiger stepping out of the water, with water dripping off him. He sat out in the open, briefly giving a decent view before disappearing into some grass. What an amazing creature! After this we were on cloud nine, so we started our drive back out of the park, seeing a few of the same species that we'd seen previously, but also finding a pair of roosting **Indian Scops Owls**. Back at our hotel for a rather nice sunset we watched a flock of **Painted Sandgrouse** come in to drink, and an **Indian Stone-curlew** appeared out of nowhere too, ending what had been a great day in India.



The huge male Bengal tiger drying out after a cooling dip in the river

Day 3, 18th October 2017. Ranthambhore, Soorwal Lake, and travel to Bharatpur

We took a pre-breakfast walk through the scrub near our hotel before the heat started. We hoped to see **White-naped Woodpecker** again after a brief glimpse the previous day while we were chasing tigers; however, luck was not on our side (no mongoose?), so we had to be satisfied just hearing it fly away. We did, however, get nice looks at three **Black-rumped Flamebacks**, a **Spotted Owlet** looking rather nice in the first rays of morning sun, several **Shikra**, a migrating flock of **Eurasian Hoopoe**, and a high-up flock of migrating **Black-tailed Godwits**. We had very good views of a flock of **Plum-headed Parakeets**, mainly male birds, as well as better looks at **Alexandrine Parakeet** too.

We then started birding in a new area of scrub, which turned out to be incredibly productive. A small flock of **Indian Silverbills** greeted us here. A **Eurasian Wryneck** was brief and just seen



by Andy before it flew away. A young male Indian Paradise Flycatcher gave us the run-around for a little while before everyone got good looks, and then the real treat of the morning happened... Painted Sandgrouse! We accidentally flushed a pair while chasing some Rufousfronted Prinia. Luckily, the sandgrouse didn't go far, and with a bit of careful maneuvering we were able to get into a decent position and have full-frame scope views, which was rather impressive in the Swarovski ATX-95! We soaked these birds up for a fair while, impressed by how good their camouflage was as well as how beautiful they were. Painted Sandgrouse well and truly ticked! There was no letting up in the birding, however, as while watching the sandgrouse we noticed a chat further down the slope below us; this proved to be the uncommon White-browed (formerly Stoliczka's) Bush Chat. A brief interlude saw us admiring a small snake, the red sand boa. As we stepped away from the snake we flushed another half dozen or so Painted Sandgrouse from very close-range; they must have been watching us intently the whole while when we were watching the snake! Following these birds led us to discover several other exciting species, such as Grey-necked Bunting, Yellow-throated Sparrow, Green Bee-eater, two more Eurasian Wrynecks (seen well by everyone this time), Common Woodshrike, Long-tailed, Bay-backed, and Southern Grey Shrikes, Indian Bush Lark, Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, and Brahminy Starling. Not a bad haul before breakfast!



Painted Sandgrouse male (phone-scoped with iPhone 7 and Swarovski ATX-95 scope)

After a very satisfying breakfast we said goodbye to our friendly hotel staff and started our way to our next destination, Bharatpur. Along the way we stopped off at Soorwal Lake, after enjoying a field with a minimum of 33 **Indian Stone-curlews** loafing in it! It was by now the middle of the day and very hot, but the lure of lots of birds on the water drew us in. Shortly after a brief walk we were watching a host of new species, including some great birds and our main target, the bizarre-looking **Indian Skimmer**. It's always great to see this rare species, and we actually



had good scope views of three birds that flew in and rested on a sandy island in the lake, surrounded by River and Gull-billed Terns. As we scanned the nearby shoreline we found several Small Pratincoles, Temminck's and Little Stints, Spotted and Common Redshanks, Marsh and Common Sandpipers, Common Greenshank, Little Ringed and Kentish Plovers, Black-tailed Godwit (the most numerous species), Common Snipe, Great Stone-curlew, Pied Avocet, Ruff, and a single hulking Eurasian Curlew. Larger birds included Great White Pelican, Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Spoonbill, Western Osprey, and the usual raft of egrets and herons. A close flock of many White (Masked) and Western Yellow (Sykes's) Wagtails feeding in the irrigation runoff also contained at least two molting Citrine Wagtails.

The heat was getting up even more so after seeing the above (and more, e.g. **Barred Buttonquail!**). We continued our journey to Bharatpur where we arrived in the early evening.

Day 4, 19th October 2017. Keoladeo Ghana National Park

We spent the full day birding within Keoladeo Ghana National Park, one of the best-known birding sites in the country, making our way around this large reserve in cycle-rickshaws. We spent time birding within a variety of habitats, including scrub, woodland, lakes, and marshes to try to maximize species, and we recorded over 120 species for the day.

Birding in the scrub and woodland produced a surprise grey-phase **Oriental Scops Owl**, which was found roosting at close range.



A grey-phase roosting Oriental Scops Owl showed very well.

Other species enjoyed in this habitat included Grey Francolin, Indian Peafowl, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Indian Grey Hornbill, Jacobin Cuckoo (a young bird being fed by some



Jungle Babblers), Spotted Owlet, Blue-tailed and Green Bee-eaters, Eurasian Hoopoe (seemingly on migration), Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher, White-eared Bulbul, Sulphur-bellied, Greenish, Two-barred, and Eastern Orphean Warblers, Clamorous and Blyth's Reed Warblers, Pied Myna, Brahminy Starling, Indian Robin, Black Redstart, Brown Rock Chat, Red-breasted Flycatcher (including a stunning breeding-plumaged male), and Indian Silverbill,

The wetland areas contained numerous birds, with many herons, egrets, storks, and assorted wildfowl. Some of the highlights here included **Knob-billed Duck**, **Cotton Pygmy Goose**, **Indian Spot-billed Duck**, **White-throated** and **Pied Kingfishers**, **Sarus Crane**, **White-tailed Lapwing**, **Ruff**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Common Snipe**, **Indian Cormorant**, **Oriental Darter**, **Black-headed Ibis**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Painted Stork**, and **Woolly-necked Stork**. However, two great avian treats probably stood out more than the rest, namely the **Black-necked Stork** which, after having seen them on the marshes feeding, we had wonderful views of a male bird that randomly flew right over our head, and it was low, too! The other big standout event was a **Black Bittern**, which walked across the track in front of us in rather comedic fashion and then showed well in its more usual habitat of a tree overhanging the water.



We were treated to a spectacular, low fly-over by this male Black-necked Stork.

The open areas and tower hides also provided great vantage points to view raptors, and we had very good views of Long-legged Buzzard, Crested Honey Buzzard, Western Marsh Harrier, Egyptian Vulture, and plenty of eagles, including Indian Spotted, Greater Spotted, Booted, Tawny, and Eastern Imperial Eagles.

There was plenty of interesting wildlife to keep us busy, with common Indian monitor, rhesus macaque, sambar, chital, nilgai, golden jackal, Indian flying fox, and the ubiquitous five-striped palm squirrel all seen well. Although the clear highlight here was the jungle cat we found



sleeping and then hunting in some reedy grass, our attention was drawn to the presence of this rare cat by alarm-calling **Ashy** and **Plain Prinias** – don't ignore the common stuff! Today was also Diwali, so it was great to see the lights around the city, hear the fireworks, taste some of the traditional sweets of this important religious Hindu festival, and watch an interesting puppet show too.

Day 5, 20th October 2017. Bharatpur area to Chambal Safari Lodge via Fatehpur Sikri

We spent the morning birding in some farmland near the town of Bharatpur, where our main target, **Indian Courser**, was found with surprising ease, despite the fact that the site where we had found them last year had been totally destroyed by a new development in construction! Luckily there was a clump of scrub near to where the small flock of seven birds were present, allowing us to creep a bit closer to them, eventually giving us some very nice views, though we wondered how long this site will remain being used by the birds.



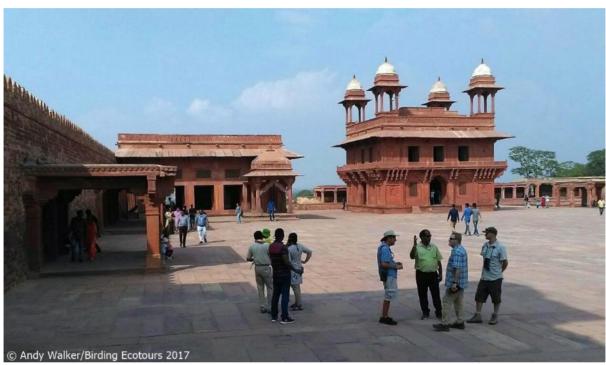
Indian Courser (phone-scoped with iPhone 7 and Swarovski ATX-95 scope)

There were a number of birds for us in the farmland here, and we spent a couple of hours enjoying an assortment of species, including Isabelline (Daurian) Shrike, Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, Crested Lark, Greater Short-toed Lark, Isabelline and Desert Wheatears, Tawny and Long-billed Pipits (the latter still in rather nice breeding plumage), Rufous Treepie, and a large flock of Blue-tailed Bee-eater. While enjoying all of these birds, our attention was drawn by a bubbling call of a single Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse flying over; it gave two passes. Small patches of water in this very dry habitat held Pied Avocet, Blackwinged Stilt, Common Greenshank, Spotted and Common Redshanks, and Green and Wood Sandpipers.



As we were driving back to our hotel a rather rank drainage ditch held our second target bird of the morning, the stunning **Greater Painted-snipe.** Here we also had great looks at a **Ruff**, a couple of **Wood Sandpipers**, and a lone **Temminck's Stint**. A very good-looking **White** (Masked) **Wagtail** also showed well.

After lunch we started our journey to the delightful Chambal Safari Lodge. En route we visited the very impressive Fatehpur Sikri World Heritage Site, one of the best-preserved collections of Mughal architecture in India. Following our exploration here we continued our journey, arriving near dusk at our accommodation. We enjoyed a very nice meal and had a walk around the grounds at night, finding **Spotted Owlet**, **Indian Scops Owl**, Indian flying fox, Indian gerbil, and common wolf snake.



Charley, Paul, and Andy taking a guided walk around Fatehpur Sikri

Day 6, 21st October 2017. Chambal River and Safari Lodge to Delhi via Taj Mahal

We took an early morning drive to the Chambal River to catch our boat. As we were driving through the farmland here we came across numerous large flocks of **Red-headed Buntings** of various ages and plumages, feeding in small areas of remaining millet, a very impressive sight indeed. Here we also found quite a few **Rosy Starlings**, including some smart males, **Baya Weaver**, **Pied Bush Chat**, **Large Grey Babbler**, **Common Kestrel**, and **Shikra**. A deceased cow on the side of the road had attracted a few **Egyptian Vultures** with at least eleven birds noted in the close vicinity.

On arrival at the boat dock we were greeted by stunning **River Lapwings**, which were numerous along the river banks here. We boarded our boat as a pair of **Knob-billed Ducks** and a **Western Osprey** (with a fish) flew upstream and a pair of **White-browed Wagtails** flew in to check us out. **White-browed Wagtails** and **White Wagtails** seemed ever-present along the river here. At least a few of the **White Wagtails** were of the *leucopsis* (Amur) subspecies, while others were of the *personata* (Masked) subspecies. Pottering along we came across a few turtles of two species,



red-crowned roofed turtle and Indian tent turtle, some baby muggers, and a couple of the Critically Endangered (IUCN) gharials, but just small ones at first. A couple of **Pied Kingfishers** were noted, along with yet more **River Lapwings** and assorted other waders such as **Common Greenshank** and **Black-winged Stilt**. A sandbar held at least 80 **Small Pratincoles** and three **Great Stone-curlews**, along with **Painted Stork**, **Asian Openbill**, and a few assorted egrets.

We made our way further down the river and located a jungle cat that was skulking along in the riverine undergrowth; great looks were had before it vanished out of sight, a fantastic surprise! Next came a pair of **Bonelli's Eagles** flying directly over our heads and into their nest, great birds! We then enjoyed very close looks at a pair of **Great Stone-curlews**, a few **Black-bellied Terns** (our main target bird on the river), scores of **Small Pratincoles** foraging overhead (very low at times), and a very showy **River Lapwing**. Some excellent, close views of birds that won't be forgotten in a hurry! Here we also finally found some of the larger, more impressive-looking gharials and muggers. This is definitely not a river to go for a swim in! Although it was still relatively early, the sun was already scorching hot (and we had a long day ahead), so we decided to head back to the lodge. Further looks at the pair of nesting **Bonelli's Eagles** and a few **Rednaped Ibis** being about the best highlights on our way back to the dock.



Great Stone-curlew has a very impressive bill, and this bird showed very well.





Bonelli's Eagle flew right overhead as it made its way back to its nest.



It was great to find the gharial, a Critically Endangered (IUCN) crocodilian.



A brief walk before lunch gave us **Indian Grey Hornbill**, **Asian Koel**, **Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher**, and our first **Olive-backed Pipit** of the trip. Seeing the Indian flying foxes by day was a real treat too. A wonderful lunch was enjoyed at the lodge.

Then we left the peace and quiet here for the hustle and bustle of the Taj Mahal, arriving in the mid-afternoon! The Taj Mahal is one of the world's most instantly recognizable sights. It was just as impressive in real life as we had hoped it would be. We had a guided walk around the site, taking in the beautiful architecture and history of the place and noting numerous **Black Kites**, an **Egyptian Vulture**, and scores of **Little Swifts** overhead.



Paul, Andy, Charley, and Shyam enjoying the sights of the Taj Mahal

After our time at the Taj Mahal we continued our journey back to New Delhi, making full use of the new expressway from Agra and arriving in the city late but after a great and varied day.

Day 7, 22nd October 2017. Drive from New Delhi to Sattal

Today was essentially a travel day to get from the plains to the Himalayan foothills, so we took the long drive from New Delhi to Sattal. The roads were extra busy due to it being the weekend after Diwali, therefore the journey took a bit longer than usual. But it was nice to gain some



elevation and get out of the city smog and the unusually hot weather we'd been having on the plains.

We checked into our hotel, which gave us nice views across the valley, had a quick late-lunch, and headed out to make the most of the last few hours of light. Standout birds from the river valley we chose to explore included Crested Kingfisher, White-capped Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Russet Sparrow, Blue Whistling Thrush, Streaked Laughingthrush, Himalayan Bulbul, Grey Treepie, Green-backed Tit, and Black-chinned Babbler. A flock of circa 20 Black-throated Bushtits that showed very well at eye level was probably the highlight of the short walk.

Day 8, 23rd October 2017. Sattal to Pangot

We had another early breakfast and headed out into the forests on the edge of town. Here we had plenty of targets, and we wasted no time in getting them under the belt, with a **Grey-backed Shrike** being practically the first bird we saw, quickly followed by **Grey Bush Chat** and **Grey Treepie**. What the morning needed was a hit of color, and that was unexpectedly provided by a showy **Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush** that moved through some open bushes, allowing good views, and even perching in the top of a bush for detailed scope views. We've had to work really hard for that species before! Here we also found the first of several flocks of **Himalayan Black-lored Tits** that we would see during the morning, along with **Black-headed Jay**, **Grey-hooded Warbler** and **Oriental White-eye**. Our main targets of this little area were not overly forthcoming, although a first-winter **Himalayan Rubythroat** showed briefly, but eventually the male **Siberian Rubythroat** did pop up into view, always a treat.



Himalayan Black-lored Tit is a rather funky little bird!



Further color was provided by a couple of displaying male Rufous-bellied Niltavas having a face-off, a flock of Slaty-headed Parakeets, a male Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, and a male Ultramarine Flycatcher. Walking through the forest we also found multiple Brown-fronted Woodpeckers and Chestnut-bellied Nuthatches, along with a gorgeous male Scarlet Minivet, Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, several Bronzed Drongos, and another male Ultramarine Flycatcher. A stop in some forest nearby allowed us our first look at Black Bulbul, Red-billed Leiothrix, and Great Barbet (briefly!). Blue Whistling Thrush and Grey Wagtail were around a small patch of water here.

We checked out of our hotel mid-morning and made the relatively short journey to Pangot, gaining some elevation along the way and glimpsing some impressive mountain scenery too, albeit a bit hazy due to the time of the day. We checked into our new accommodation, had lunch, and enjoyed an hour or so of rest and relaxation within the hotel grounds, finding White-throated Laughingthrush, Black-headed Jay, Rufous Sibia, Fire-tailed Sunbird, Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, White-capped Bunting, and Kalij Pheasant while doing so.



Black-headed Jay showed well as it came to a pool to drink.

We took an afternoon drive and walk below our accommodation, where we found plenty to keep us interested for a couple of hours. One of the best-looking birds was probably **Striated Laughingthrush**, but we also enjoyed watching a pair of **Grey-headed** (Black-naped) **Woodpeckers**, fleeting glimpses of both **Greater** and **Lesser Yellownapes**, pairs of both **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** and **Verditer Flycatcher**, several **Red-billed Blue Magpies**,



Great Barbet (better views than during the morning), very confiding Black-throated Bushtit, Green-backed Tit, White-throated Fantail, White-throated and Streaked Laughingthrushes, Olive-backed Pipit, loads of Slaty-headed Parakeets, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, and a number of *Phylloscopus* warbler species to firmly test our ID skills! Two of the best birds we saw were probably the rare and local Grey-crowned Prinia and Striated Prinia, proving that sometimes the best birds are not always the biggest or most ludicrously-plumaged birds!

Day 9, 24th October 2017. Full day at elevation above Pangot

After the coldest night of the tour we awoke early for a warming cup of black or masala tea and hit the road just as it was getting light enough to see. It didn't take long to find some thrushes, with **Blue Whistling Thrush** being one of the earliest risers. Shortly thereafter we had **Greywinged Blackbird**, **Long-billed Thrush**, and a brief **Scaly Thrush**. Several **Oriental Turtle Doves** were also noted. We'd not gone too far before a male **Kalij Pheasant** appeared in the road; it quickly got out of the way, and then a few others moved through. We kept our eyes peeled in the areas where we usually see Koklass Pheasant, but with no joy; it was MIA...

We continued to gain elevation and came to an opening where in January 2016 the Birding Ecotours group bumped into Arjan Dwarshuis twelve days into his quest to beat the world record for the highest number of birds seen in a year. That day Arjan and his group had already located our main target of the morning, which was great, but this time we were on our own, and the bird apparently hadn't been seen for months. We spaced out along the road, scanning the steep grassy slopes. After a short while Paul called out that he'd got something large; a short while later we were all watching a female globally threatened and rarely seen **Cheer Pheasant**.



Cheer Pheasant male (phone-scoped with iPhone 7 and Swarovski ATX-95 scope)



It was amazing to watch the **Cheer Pheasant** stealthily foraging. Shortly thereafter we located a male that had appeared a few feet away out of nowhere! Both showed well for the next half an hour or so, allowing some phone-scoped video to be made (see our YouTube page for this). Incidentally Arjan smashed the year record with 6,852 species!

We still had plenty of time left in the morning. During our picnic breakfast we heard **Rufous-bellied Woodpecker** and saw our first **Eurasian Jays** (again of a rather distinctive subspecies, bispecularis). A clearing was busy with several species of hirundines, **Nepal House Martin** being the standout. A patch of scrub held a **Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush**, which showed different body parts to each of us! Driving around we bumped into a few flocks of a similar nature to our first one, but while we'd stopped to take photos of the seriously impressive snowy peaks of the Himalayas (which were a bit smoggy this morning, presumably an effect of the recent storms blowing the smog from New Delhi our way), we heard a woodpecker drumming. A short hike up the slope saw us having some very nice views of **Himalayan Woodpecker**. As we headed back to our accommodation in the late morning, **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** and **Peregrine Falcon** were noted soaring on the thermals.

The afternoon saw us birding from the hide at the lodge, and an excellent couple of hours flew past with highlights including **Black Francolin**, **Grey-headed** (Black-naped) **Woodpecker**, **Striated**, **White-throated**, and **Streaked Laughingthrushes**, **Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler**, **Black-headed Jay**, **Yellow-breasted Greenfinch**, **Oriental White-eye**, and a rather showy **Grey-hooded Warbler**, which almost flew inside the hide. We then headed into the forest, which was quiet with very little seen, although you really can't complain when one of the very few birds we saw was a stunning **Spotted Forktail**!



Black Francolin is often very shy and secretive, so when this one briefly jumped into view at close range we were overjoyed!



Day 10, 25th October 2017. Pangot to the Corbett area

After dipping the Koklass Pheasant the previous day we really had only one thing on our mind for this morning's birding, and that was seeing one. We headed up the mountain again at first light, again having a nice look at a very good-looking adult male **Grey-winged Blackbird**. A flock of small birds flying along the narrow mountain road encouraged us to stop, and we were glad we did, as it contained **Coal Tit** of the *melanolophus* subspecies, also known as 'Spotwinged Tit'; surely this needs to be split! Other less controversial species included numerous **White-tailed Nuthatches**, **Green-backed Tit**, **Black-faced Warbler**, **Fire-tailed Sunbird**, **Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker**, and **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush**.

We kept our eyes peeled on the road, but still there was no sign of the target pheasant. As we drove past our **Cheer Pheasant** site of the previous day two birds flushed off from right next to the road. Here we also found a small group of Himalayan goral. We decided on a different approach to try and find the missing pheasant, and after walking around in a suitable-looking area we heard one call distantly and headed in the direction of the sound. After a game of catand-mouse we found a male bird briefly sitting in a low bush before it flushed, giving some brief flight views. Finally, we'd seen the **Koklass Pheasant** – it was a start at least. While chasing the pheasant through the undergrowth a huge **Bearded Vulture** (Lammergeier) flew relatively low overhead and was relocated on a thermal over the opposite ridge to ours. A magnificent bird! While all of this was going on the sound of a **Collared Owlet** rang out close to us, with a couple of **Hill Partridges** calling off in the distance down below us. After a waiting game the **Collared Owlet** finally showed to some of us....

After a very nice picnic breakfast we continued, getting very good looks at another male Koklass Pheasant; this one ran along the road for a short while before jumping down the bank below us and out of sight. Walking through some nearby forest we found Rufous-bellied Niltava, Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, Himalayan Woodpecker, White-tailed Nuthatch, Buff-barred Warbler, a close Great Barbet, and a small covey of Hill Partridges that flushed before we could get close to them. While we were watching a flock of Russet Sparrows a group of four huge Himalayan Vultures rapidly gained height over a nearby ridge before disappearing into the bright blue sky.

Back at the lodge before packing up, having lunch, and driving down to the Corbett area for the next three nights a couple of **Oriental Turtle Doves** showed well in the garden, as too did a **Striated Laughingthrush** and a pair of **Kalij Pheasants**, as well as the usual garden birds here. After another wonderful lunch we made the drive to Corbett National Park, arriving just before dusk. The only birds of real note en route were a small group of four **Himalayan Vultures** seen near Nainital, interestingly three adults and a juvenile, looking rather similar to the group we'd seen in the morning and possibly being the same birds.





Striated Laughingthrush is possibly one of the best-looking birds in northern India.

Day 11, 26th October 2017. Full day Corbett National Park

We had another early start to get to our allocated section of Corbett National Park for our morning game drive. As the sun rose the alarm sound of chital, sambar, and golden jackal rang out, indicating that there was a Bengal tiger or Indian leopard concealed in the undergrowth. Despite waiting it out for quite a while there was no sign, but there were plenty of birds present to keep us occupied while we waited, with Red-headed Vulture being the pick of the lot. Then we headed into the tall grassland and woodland, seeing our first Red-whiskered Bulbul, Bluethroat, Golden-headed Cisticola, Tricolored Munia, and Red Avadavat of the trip, along with Eurasian Hoopoe, Plum-headed Parakeet, Brahminy Starling, and Black Redstart (and lots more). A Peregrine Falcon flew overhead, mobbed by a pair of Black-winged Kites, but the star sighting of this section of the game drive was the third jungle cat of the trip. It suddenly appeared behind the vehicle and gradually walked away in the wheel lines.

After this feline excitement we again came close to another possible big cat sighting. Two chital were alarm-calling, and **Jungle Babblers** and others were going crazy, everything indicating that a cat was walking through the forest. Unfortunately, as quickly as it had started things settled down, suggesting that whatever it was had sat down somewhere and we were out of luck. We did, however, find a nice flock containing Great Hornbill, Oriental Pied Hornbill, Haircrested and Ashy Drongos, Golden-fronted Leafbird, and Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker. The sounds of White-crested Laughingthrush, Black-hooded Oriole, and Red Junglefowl rang out here too. A short while later, as we drove around a corner, we were suddenly face-toface with a female Asian elephant and her baby. We had nice looks at them before they moved off after the trumpeting call of a male sounded from the distance. Just near here we found a flock



of brightly-plumaged **Small Minivet** and **Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker**, finally ending our game drive with **Crested Bunting** and **Tree Pipit**.



It's always a special moment when you see a wild feline, this jungle cat being no exception.

A brief stop at a river near our hotel gave us fantastic views of Crested Kingfisher, Blue Rock Thrush, White-capped Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, and Verditer Flycatcher. Then it was back to our hotel for a brief rest and lunch before we headed out on another game drive, this time in a different zone. There were many highlights from our drive through some beautiful scenery, such as Collared Falconet, Great Slaty and Rufous Woodpeckers, Greycapped Pygmy Woodpecker, Lesser Yellownape, Black-rumped and Himalayan Flamebacks, Stork-billed, Common, and White-throated Kingfishers, Lineated Barbet, Oriental Turtle Dove, and Changeable Hawk-Eagle, along with the usual 'game' animals.

Day 12, 27th October 2017. Full Day Corbett National Park

Another early start saw us back in the same section of Corbett National Park as the previous evening, where we found several different species from our last game drive. Woodpeckers were again evident, both **Streak-throated Woodpecker** and **Greater Flameback** were new for the trip, and it was nice to see most of what we had seen yesterday again. A rapidly moving mixed flock gave us **Common Iora**, **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch**, and **Cinereous Tit**. A small area of scrub contained a couple of very secretive and elusive **Himalayan Rubythroats**, one of which briefly sat in the top of the bushes, allowing a good view and a record shot.



Any view of the secretive Himalayan Rubythroat is not to be sniffed at!

Continuing on our game drive we came across plenty of chitals and a few sambars, and best of all a large bull Asian elephant. A flock of nearly one hundred Crested Treeswifts showed nicely both in flight and perched in a tree – such a large bird with huge wings and a long tail. A pair of rapidly moving Green-billed Malkohas worked their way through the forest canopy, and several Black-hooded Orioles were seen and heard, giving their beautiful song and glowing in the morning mist. We also had the impressive sight of some close-up Coppersmith and Lineated Barbets, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Dark-sided Flycatcher, and Black Redstart, along with many birds seen the previous day. As we headed back to our hotel for a late breakfast we saw a small group of River Lapwings, Common Greenshank, and Lesser Fish Eagle. After some time relaxing across the middle of the day we headed out for our final game drive of the trip, this time to a new area of Corbett National Park for us. Literally the first thing we saw on entering the park was a five-feet-long Indian rock python lying across the road – always great to see a huge snake!





This Indian rock python was a fantastic start to our final game drive.

A short while later we were watching Pallas's Fish Eagle, Red-headed Vulture, and Peregrine Falcon on a thermal over the river. We spent quite a lot of time checking out two widely-spaced areas in our zone of the national park for tigers, but without any joy, unfortunately. We did, however, get a few new birds such as Red Junglefowl (actually seen this time), Blue-bearded Bee-eater, and an unseasonable Indian Pitta that was calling from the undergrowth. One of the most interesting encounters involved us coming across a male Eurasian Sparrowhawk sitting on a very fresh kill. As we drove around the corner the raptor flew off, leaving its dinner behind. We stopped to look at the kill, and very surprisingly found that the bird had been dining on an Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, a species we were not even expecting to be in the area! As we passed the site later in the afternoon the accipiter was still eating the pigeon. Driving out of the park at dusk we had a hunting male Besra make a dash through an open area and followed that up with a Jungle Owlet and several Large-tailed Nightjars, ending the drive with a family group of six Asian elephants foraging next to the road.

Day 13, 28th October 2017. Morning birding Kosi River, transfer to New Delhi

This was essentially another travel day to drive from the Corbett area to New Delhi, but before that we had a couple of hours of riparian forest birding. One of the highlights along the Kosi River was watching a pair of Brown Dippers nest-building and foraging underwater. We also saw Crested, Pied, White-throated, and Common Kingfishers, White-capped Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, River Lapwing, and several species of wagtails. A relatively stationary flock of Scarlet Minivets also contained a couple of Long-tailed Minivets, Blackhooded Oriole, Ashy and Hair-crested Drongos, and Brown-fronted Woodpecker, while a pair of Slaty-blue Flycatchers were in the undergrowth. A few stops gave us brief views of Rufous-bellied and Small Niltavas, some confiding Oriental White-eyes, Grey-hooded, Yellow-browed, and Greenish Warblers, White-throated Fantail, and Blue Whistling Thrush, but the best bird species from this habitat was a pair of Blue-breasted Bee-eaters that eventually showed very well as they caught insects, far better than the brief views we had had the previous day. We also came across numerous beautiful butterflies here, along with northern red muntjac, Rhesus macaque, southern plains gray langur, and golden jackal. We noted a set of fresh Indian leopard footprints in one of the trails, and while we were in a dry riverbed we heard the alarm call of a sambar, indicating a possible Bengal tiger up ahead. So we called it a day and got out of there!



After checking out of our hotel late in the morning we completed our circuit of northern India, arriving in New Delhi in the early evening.



River Lapwing is common in northern India and always a popular sight.

Day 14, 29th October 2017. Sultanpur National Park and Basai Wetlands

We spent the final day of the tour birding at Sultanpur National Park and nearby Basai Wetlands near New Delhi, and it was an excellent way to end the tour with lots of new trip birds. Our first stop was at a roadside wetland, where we found a nesting pair of the local **Sind Sparrow**, a family group of **Striated Babblers**, **Graceful Prinia**, **Moustached Warbler**, **Zitting Cisticola**, several **Bluethroats**, **Pied Bush Chat**, and a stunning male **Red Avadavat** in some reeds, all of which showed very well. A nice surprise was a juvenile **Jacobin Cuckoo**, our second of the tour, expertly found by Charley, hiding in the reedbeds. A flock of at least one hundred and fifty **Citrine Wagtails**, **Singing Bush Lark**, and an assortment of pipits, along with **Wood Sandpiper**, **Temminck's Stint**, and **Common Snipe** was feeding in a field before being flushed first by a **Shikra** and afterwards by the constant presence of a pair of **Western Marsh Harriers** and a rapid male **Peregrine Falcon**, which nearly caught a **Common Greenshank** right in front of us.





Striated Babbler is found in reedbeds and tall grass, so it can be difficult to see at times.

At Sultanpur ducks had finally started to arrive in the area, and we saw many species: Lesser Whistling Duck, Knob-billed Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Mallard, Indian Spotbilled Duck, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Garganey, Eurasian Teal, Common Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, and Tufted Duck. Numerous herons and egrets were present, but storks probably stole the show with a huge colony of Painted Stork (complete with many babies), Asian Openbill, Woolly-necked Stork, and a nesting pair of the giant Black-necked Stork with at least three rather 'cute', very young nestlings. A pair of elegant Sarus Cranes was also present, gracefully walking through the marsh.

The waterfowl were often flushed by Western Marsh Harriers and both Greater Spotted Eagle and a dark-phased Booted Eagle. Several waders were present, with White-tailed Lapwings giving the best views of the tour and our first Pheasant-tailed Jacana too. It was also great to see so many Grey-headed Swamphens, Common Moorhens, Eurasian Coots, and Little Grebes. Reedy vegetation around the edge of the lake also held a pair of Yellow-bellied **Prinias** and several more **Bluethroats**.

It wasn't all about the waterfowl, though, and we found plenty of interesting birds in the scrub and woodland around the lake. A pair of Spotted Owlets was garnering a lot of attention from Common (Siberian) Chiffchaff, Lesser Whitethroat, Brooks's Leaf Warbler, Yellowbrowed Warbler, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Oriental Magpie-Robin, and Jungle Babbler. Also present in this habitat were Black Redstart, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Oriental White-eye,



Large Grey Babbler, Eurasian Hoopoe, Long-tailed Shrike, Common Woodshrike, Redbreasted Flycatcher, and Purple Sunbird. One of the biggest highlights of our time here was a juvenile Common Hawk-Cuckoo, which obviously wasn't very familiar with people and showed ridiculously well at close-range.



This Common Hawk-Cuckoo was totally oblivious to our presence, dropping down at our feet to catch this worm and then sitting there for five minutes while eating it!

After a spicy lunch we headed to a couple of other flooded fields. Unfortunately, these fields are rapidly being developed, so it's not clear how long they will continue to support birds. We saw many of the species already mentioned above but also found Red-naped, Black-headed, and Glossy Ibis, Black-tailed Godwit, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Spotted and Common Redshanks, and numerous other waders. A patch of reeds held several Clamorous and Paddyfield Warblers, Bluethroat, Zitting Cisticola, and another surprise, a juvenile Brown Shrike. The air was full of Barn Swallows (as well as an awful stink from hundreds of discarded eggs being enjoyed by the Bank, Common, and Pied Mynas!), and the marsh was full of Grey-headed Swamphen and nearly twenty Pheasant-tailed Jacanas. A Eurasian Sparrowhawk flew overhead and flushed plenty of Western Yellow (Sykes's), White (Masked), Citrine, and White-browed Wagtails. We also had nice views of Tree Pipit, Bluethroat, and a very confiding male Red Avadavat. A long daily account, but we recorded 140 species, our highest daily tally for the tour!

It was a great way to end our really enjoyable tour together. A huge thank you to Shyam for his excellent local knowledge and guiding once again, to Pawan for safely driving us all around northern India on its 'famous' roads and for spotting some great birds too, and to Charley and



Paul for being such fun travel companions. It was a pleasure birding with you all and I look forward to the next time!



Making the most of the final days birding together at the wonderful Sultanpur National Park.

It was difficult to pick a favorite 'Bird of the Tour', but Charley chose a 'Top 5' of 1: Indian Courser, 2: Cheer Pheasant, 3: Painted Stork, 4: Red-headed Vulture, and 5: Black-bellied Tern, and Paul chose a 'Top 5' of 1: Oriental Scops Owl, 2: Cheer Pheasant, 3: Indian Skimmer, 4: Spotted Forktail, and 5: Painted Sandgrouse. Unsurprisingly, Bengal tiger was voted mammal of the trip!

India Extension: Birding near New Delhi

Day 1, 30th October 2017. Surajpur Bird Park

Paul and Charley had an extra morning birding around New Delhi with Shyam, while Andy flew on to Java ahead of his West Papua tour starting. They headed to Surajpur Bird Park, seeing several good species, such as another nesting pair of **Black-necked Storks**, **Alexandrine Parakeet**, **Red Avadavat**, and several species of warbler, including **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Paddyfield Warbler**, and **Booted Warbler**, the latter being the final new bird of the tour.

Day 2, 31st October 2017. Departure from New Delhi

Paul and Charley departed from New Delhi in the midmorning, and their tour concluded.





Asian elephant at Corbett National Park.



Chital (spotted deer) and sambar at Ranthambhore National Park.



Bird List^{1,2} **Following IOC 7.03**

English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
	ANSERIFORMES	
Ducks, Geese and Swans	<u>Anatidae</u>	
Lesser Whistling Duck	Dendrocygna javanica	1
Knob-billed Duck	Sarkidiornis melanotos	1
Cotton Pygmy Goose	Nettapus coromandelianus	1
Garganey	Spatula querquedula	1
Northern Shoveler	Spatula clypeata	1
Gadwall	Mareca strepera	1
Eurasian Wigeon	Mareca penelope	1
Indian Spot-billed Duck	Anas poecilorhyncha	1
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	1
Northern Pintail	Anas acuta	1
Eurasian Teal	Anas crecca	1
Common Pochard (VU)	Aythya ferina	1
Ferruginous Duck (NT)	Aythya nyroca	1
Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula	1
	GALLIFORMES	
Pheasants and allies	Phasianidae	
Black Francolin	Francolinus francolinus	1
Grey Francolin	Francolinus pondicerianus	1
Hill Partridge	Arborophila torqueola	1
Painted Spurfowl	Galloperdix lunulata	1
Koklass Pheasant	Pucrasia macrolopha	1
Red Junglefowl	Gallus gallus	1
Kalij Pheasant	Lophura leucomelanos	1
Cheer Pheasant (VU)	Catreus wallichii	1
Indian Peafowl	Pavo cristatus	1
	PODICIPEDIFORMES	
<u>Grebes</u>	Podicipedidae Podicipedidae	
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	1
	PHOENICOPTERIFORMES	

¹ Species in **bold** text are Indian endemics. The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following BirdLife International: CR = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near-threatened, and I = Introduced. **Booted Warbler** was recorded on the post-tour extension only. Birds 'heard only' are marked with 'H' in the Trip List column, all other species were seen.

² Interestingly we found a **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** sat on a fresh (headless, but still warm) kill which turned out to be a slightly out of range Orange-breasted Green Pigeon. We were not expecting to see this species on the tour, and indeed we didn't see one alive so this species, although we technically saw it, is not counted on the list.







Turnicidae

Burhinidae

Turnix suscitator

Burhinus indicus

Barred Buttonquail

Indian Stone-curlew

Stone-curlews, Thick-knees

Buttonguail

1

1

English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Great Stone-curlew (NT)	Esacus recurvirostris	1
Stilts, Avocets	Recurvirostridae	
Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	1
Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta	1
Plovers	<u>Charadriidae</u>	
River Lapwing (NT)	Vanellus duvaucelii	1
Yellow-wattled Lapwing	Vanellus malabaricus	1
Red-wattled Lapwing	Vanellus indicus	1
White-tailed Lapwing	Vanellus leucurus	1
Little Ringed Plover	Charadrius dubius	1
Kentish Plover	Charadrius alexandrinus	1
Painted-snipes	Rostratulidae	
Greater Painted-snipe	Rostratula benghalensis	1
<u>Jacanas</u>	<u>Jacanidae</u>	
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	Hydrophasianus chirurgus	1
Bronze-winged Jacana	Metopidius indicus	1
Sandpipers, Snipes	Scolopacidae	
Eurasian Curlew (NT)	Numenius arquata	1
Black-tailed Godwit (NT)	Limosa limosa	1
Ruff	Calidris pugnax	1
Temminck's Stint	Calidris temminckii	1
Little Stint	Calidris minuta	1
Common Snipe	Gallinago gallinago	1
Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos	1
Green Sandpiper	Tringa ochropus	1
Common Redshank	Tringa totanus	1
Marsh Sandpiper	Tringa stagnatilis	1
Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola	1
Spotted Redshank	Tringa erythropus	1
Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia	1
Coursers, Pratincoles	<u>Glareolidae</u>	
Indian Courser	Cursorius coromandelicus	1
Small Pratincole	Glareola lactea	1
Coursers, Pratincoles	<u>Laridae</u>	
Indian Skimmer (VU)	Rynchops albicollis	1
Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	1
Gull-billed Tern	Gelochelidon nilotica	1
River Tern (NT)	Sterna aurantia	1



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Black-bellied Tern (EN)	Sterna acuticauda	1
	PTEROCLIFORMES	
Sandgrouse	<u>Pteroclidae</u>	
Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	Pterocles exustus	1
Painted Sandgrouse	Pterocles indicus	1
	COLUMBIFORMES	
Pigeons, Doves	<u>Columbidae</u>	
Rock Dove	Columba livia	1
Speckled Wood Pigeon	Columba hodgsonii	1
Oriental Turtle Dove	Streptopelia orientalis	1
Eurasian Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto	1
Red Turtle Dove	Streptopelia tranquebarica	1
Spotted Dove	Spilopelia chinensis	1
Laughing Dove	Spilopelia senegalensis	1
Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	Treron phoenicopterus	1
	CUCULIFORMES	
Cuckoos	<u>Cuculidae</u>	
Greater Coucal	Centropus sinensis	1
Green-billed Malkoha	Phaenicophaeus tristis	1
Jacobin Cuckoo	Clamator jacobinus	1
Asian Koel	Eudynamys scolopaceus	1
Common Hawk-Cuckoo	Hierococcyx varius	1
	STRIGIFORMES	
Owls	Strigidae	
Indian Scops Owl	Otus bakkamoena	1
Oriental Scops Owl	Otus sunia	1
Brown Fish Owl	Ketupa zeylonensis	1
Collared Owlet	Glaucidium brodiei	1
Jungle Owlet	Glaucidium radiatum	1
Spotted Owlet	Athene brama	1
	CAPRIMULGIFORMES	
<u>Nightjars</u>	<u>Caprimulgidae</u>	
Large-tailed Nightjar	Caprimulgus macrurus	1
	APODIFORMES	
<u>Treeswifts</u>	Hemiprocnidae	
Crested Treeswift	Hemiprocne coronata	1
<u>Swifts</u>	<u>Apodidae</u>	
Himalayan Swiftlet	Aerodramus brevirostris	1



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Little Swift	Apus affinis	1
	CORACIIFORMES	
Rollers	Coraciidae	
Indian Roller	Coracias benghalensis	1
Kingfishers	Alcedinidae	
Stork-billed Kingfisher	Pelargopsis capensis	1
White-throated Kingfisher	Halcyon smyrnensis	1
Common Kingfisher	Alcedo atthis	1
Crested Kingfisher	Megaceryle lugubris	1
Pied Kingfisher	Ceryle rudis	1
Bee-eaters	Meropidae	
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	Nyctyornis athertoni	1
Green Bee-eater	Merops orientalis	1
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	Merops philippinus	1
	BUCEROTIFORMES	
Hoopoes	<u>Upupidae</u>	
Eurasian Hoopoe	Upupa epops	1
Hornbills	Bucerotidae	
Great Hornbill (NT)	Buceros bicornis	1
Oriental Pied Hornbill	Anthracoceros albirostris	1
Indian Grey Hornbill	Ocyceros birostris	1
	PICIFORMES	
Asian Barbets	Megalaimidae	
Great Barbet	Psilopogon virens	1
Brown-headed Barbet	Psilopogon zeylanicus	1
Lineated Barbet	Psilopogon lineatus	1
Blue-throated Barbet	Psilopogon asiaticus	1
Coppersmith Barbet	Psilopogon haemacephalus	1
Woodpeckers	<u>Picidae</u>	
Eurasian Wryneck	Jynx torquilla	1
Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	Yungipicus nanus	1
Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	Yungipicus canicapillus	1
Brown-fronted Woodpecker	Dendrocoptes auriceps	1
Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	Leiopicus mahrattensis	1
Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	Dendrocopos hyperythrus	1
Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker	Dendrocopos macei	1
Himalayan Woodpecker	Dendrocopos himalayensis	1
Greater Yellownape	Chrysophlegma flavinucha	1



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Lesser Yellownape	Picus chlorolophus	1
Streak-throated Woodpecker	Picus xanthopygaeus	1
Grey-headed Woodpecker	Picus canus	1
Himalayan Flameback	Dinopium shorii	1
Black-rumped Flameback	Dinopium benghalense	1
Greater Flameback	Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus	1
White-naped Woodpecker	Chrysocolaptes festivus	1
Rufous Woodpecker	Micropternus brachyurus	1
Great Slaty Woodpecker (VU)	Mulleripicus pulverulentus	1
•	FALCONIFORMES	
Caracaras, Falcons	<u>Falconidae</u>	
Collared Falconet	Microhierax caerulescens	1
Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	1
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	1
	PSITTACIFORMES	
Old World Parrots	Psittaculidae	
Slaty-headed Parakeet	Psittacula himalayana	1
Plum-headed Parakeet	Psittacula cyanocephala	1
Alexandrine Parakeet (NT)	Psittacula eupatria	1
Rose-ringed Parakeet	Psittacula krameri	1
	PASSERIFORMES	
<u>Pittas</u>	<u>Pittidae</u>	
Indian Pitta	Pitta brachyura	Н
Woodshrikes and allies	Tephrodornithidae	
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	Hemipus picatus	1
Common Woodshrike	Tephrodornis pondicerianus	1
Woodswallows, Butcherbirds	<u>Artamidae</u>	
Ashy Woodswallow	Artamus fuscus	1
<u>Ioras</u>	<u>Aegithinidae</u>	
Common Iora	Aegithina tiphia	1
<u>Cuckooshrikes</u>	<u>Campephagidae</u>	
Large Cuckooshrike	Coracina macei	1
Small Minivet	Pericrocotus cinnamomeus	1
Long-tailed Minivet	Pericrocotus ethologus	1
Scarlet Minivet	Pericrocotus speciosus	1
<u>Shrikes</u>	<u>Laniidae</u>	
Brown Shrike	Lanius cristatus	1
Isabelline Shrike	Lanius isabellinus	1



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Bay-backed Shrike	Lanius vittatus	1
Long-tailed Shrike	Lanius schach	1
Grey-backed Shrike	Lanius tephronotus	1
Southern Grey Shrike	Lanius meridionalis	1
Vireos, Greenlets	<u>Vireonidae</u>	
Himalayan Shrike-babbler	Pteruthius ripleyi	Н
Figbirds, Orioles	<u>Oriolidae</u>	
Black-hooded Oriole	Oriolus xanthornus	1
<u>Drongos</u>	<u>Dicruridae</u>	
Black Drongo	Dicrurus macrocercus	1
Ashy Drongo	Dicrurus leucophaeus	1
White-bellied Drongo	Dicrurus caerulescens	1
Bronzed Drongo	Dicrurus aeneus	1
Hair-crested Drongo	Dicrurus hottentottus	1
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus paradiseus	1
<u>Fantails</u>	Rhipiduridae	
White-throated Fantail	Rhipidura albicollis	1
White-browed Fantail	Rhipidura aureola	1
Monarchs	Monarchidae	
Indian Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone paradisi	1
Crows, Jays	Corvidae	
Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius	1
Black-headed Jay	Garrulus lanceolatus	1
Red-billed Blue Magpie	Urocissa erythroryncha	1
Rufous Treepie	Dendrocitta vagabunda	1
Grey Treepie	Dendrocitta formosae	1
House Crow	Corvus splendens	1
Large-billed Crow	Corvus macrorhynchos	1
Indian Jungle Crow	Corvus culminatus	1
Fairy Flycatchers	Stenostiridae	
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	Culicicapa ceylonensis	1
Tits, Chickadees	<u>Paridae</u>	
Yellow-browed Tit	Sylviparus modestus	1
Coal Tit	Periparus ater	1
Cinereous Tit	Parus cinereus	1
Green-backed Tit	Parus monticolus	1
Himalayan Black-lored Tit	Machlolophus xanthogenys	1
<u>Larks</u>	<u>Alaudidae</u>	



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	Eremopterix griseus	1
Singing Bush Lark	Mirafra cantillans	1
Indian Bush Lark	Mirafra erythroptera	1
Crested Lark	Galerida cristata	1
Greater Short-toed Lark	Calandrella brachydactyla	1
Bulbuls	Pycnonotidae	
Red-whiskered Bulbul	Pycnonotus jocosus	1
Himalayan Bulbul	Pycnonotus leucogenys	1
White-eared Bulbul	Pycnonotus leucotis	1
Red-vented Bulbul	Pycnonotus cafer	1
Mountain Bulbul	Ixos mcclellandii	Н
Black Bulbul	Hypsipetes leucocephalus	1
Swallows, Martins	<u>Hirundinidae</u>	
Brown-throated Martin	Riparia paludicola	1
Sand Martin	Riparia riparia	1
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	1
Wire-tailed Swallow	Hirundo smithii	1
Eurasian Crag Martin	Ptyonoprogne rupestris	1
Dusky Crag Martin	Ptyonoprogne concolor	1
Nepal House Martin	Delichon nipalense	1
Red-rumped Swallow	Cecropis daurica	1
Streak-throated Swallow	Petrochelidon fluvicola	1
Cettia Bush Warblers and allies	<u>Cettiidae</u>	
Black-faced Warbler	Abroscopus schisticeps	1
Aberrant Bush Warbler	Horornis flavolivaceus	1
Grey-sided Bush Warbler	Cettia brunnifrons	1
Bushtits	<u>Aegithalidae</u>	
Black-throated Bushtit	Aegithalos concinnus	1
Leaf Warblers and allies	Phylloscopidae	
Common Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita	1
Tickell's Leaf Warbler	Phylloscopus affinis	1
Sulphur-bellied Warbler	Phylloscopus griseolus	1
Buff-barred Warbler	Phylloscopus pulcher	1
Lemon-rumped Warbler	Phylloscopus chloronotus	1
Brooks's Leaf Warbler	Phylloscopus subviridis	1
Yellow-browed Warbler	Phylloscopus inornatus	1
Hume's Leaf Warbler	Phylloscopus humei	1
Greenish Warbler	Phylloscopus trochiloides	1



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Scientific Name

Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus

Phylloscopus xanthoschistos

Phylloscopus reguloides

Acrocephalus stentoreus

Acrocephalus agricola

Acrocephalus dumetorum

Acrocephalus melanopogon

Seicercus whistleri

Acrocephalidae

Iduna caligata

Cisticola juncidis

Cisticola exilis

Prinia crinigera

Cisticolidae

English Name

Two-barred Warbler

Blyth's Leaf Warbler

Grev-hooded Warbler

Reed Warblers and allies

Clamorous Reed Warbler

Moustached Warbler

Blyth's Reed Warbler

Cisticolas and allies

Golden-headed Cisticola

Paddyfield Warbler

Booted Warbler

Zitting Cisticola

Striated Prinia

Whistler's Warbler



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Red-billed Leiothrix	Leiothrix lutea	1
Rufous Sibia	Heterophasia capistrata	1
Sylviid Babblers	Sylviidae	
Lesser Whitethroat	Sylvia curruca	1
Eastern Orphean Warbler	Sylvia crassirostris	1
Yellow-eyed Babbler	Chrysomma sinense	1
White-eyes	Zosteropidae	
Oriental White-eye	Zosterops palpebrosus	1
Nuthatches	Sittidae	
Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	Sitta cinnamoventris	1
White-tailed Nuthatch	Sitta himalayensis	1
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	Sitta frontalis	1
Treecreepers	<u>Certhiidae</u>	
Bar-tailed Treecreeper	Certhia himalayana	1
Starlings, Rhabdornis	Sturnidae	
Bank Myna	Acridotheres ginginianus	1
Common Myna	Acridotheres tristis	1
Pied Myna	Gracupica contra	1
Brahminy Starling	Sturnia pagodarum	1
Rosy Starling	Pastor roseus	1
Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	1
<u>Thrushes</u>	<u>Turdidae</u>	
Scaly Thrush	Zoothera dauma	1
Long-billed Thrush	Zoothera monticola	1
Tickell's Thrush	Turdus unicolor	1
Grey-winged Blackbird	Turdus boulboul	1
Chats, Old World Flycatchers	Muscicapidae	
Indian Robin	Copsychus fulicatus	1
Oriental Magpie-Robin	Copsychus saularis	1
White-rumped Shama	Copsychus malabaricus	1
Dark-sided Flycatcher	Muscicapa sibirica	1
Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	Cyornis tickelliae	1
Rufous-bellied Niltava	Niltava sundara	1
Small Niltava	Niltava macgrigoriae	Н
Verditer Flycatcher	Eumyias thalassinus	1
Bluethroat	Luscinia svecica	1
Himalayan Rubythroat	Calliope pectoralis	1
Siberian Rubythroat	Calliope calliope	1



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Spotted Forktail	Enicurus maculatus	1
Blue Whistling Thrush	Myophonus caeruleus	1
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Ficedula parva	1
Ultramarine Flycatcher	Ficedula superciliaris	1
Slaty-blue Flycatcher	Ficedula tricolor	1
Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros	1
Plumbeous Water Redstart	Phoenicurus fuliginosus	1
White-capped Redstart	Phoenicurus leucocephalus	1
Blue Rock Thrush	Monticola solitarius	1
Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	Monticola rufiventris	1
White-browed Bush Chat (VU)	Saxicola macrorhynchus	1
Siberian Stonechat	Saxicola maurus	1
Pied Bush Chat	Saxicola caprata	1
Grey Bush Chat	Saxicola ferreus	1
Isabelline Wheatear	Oenanthe isabellina	1
Desert Wheatear	Oenanthe deserti	1
Brown Rock Chat	Oenanthe fusca	1
<u>Dippers</u>	<u>Cinclidae</u>	
Brown Dipper	Cinclus pallasii	1
Leafbirds	<u>Chloropseidae</u>	
Golden-fronted Leafbird	Chloropsis aurifrons	1
<u>Flowerpeckers</u>	<u>Dicaeidae</u>	
Thick-billed Flowerpecker	Dicaeum agile	1
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	Dicaeum erythrorhynchos	1
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	Dicaeum ignipectus	1
Sunbirds	<u>Nectariniidae</u>	
Purple Sunbird	Cinnyris asiaticus	1
Green-tailed Sunbird	Aethopyga nipalensis	1
Crimson Sunbird	Aethopyga siparaja	1
Fire-tailed Sunbird	Aethopyga ignicauda	1
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches	<u>Passeridae</u>	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	1
Sind Sparrow	Passer pyrrhonotus	1
Russet Sparrow	Passer rutilans	1
Yellow-throated Sparrow	Gymnoris xanthocollis	1
Weavers, Widowbirds	<u>Ploceidae</u>	
Baya Weaver	Ploceus philippinus	1
Waxbills, Munias and allies	Estrildidae	



English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
Red Avadavat	Amandava amandava	1
Indian Silverbill	Euodice malabarica	1
Scaly-breasted Munia	Lonchura punctulata	1
Tricolored Munia	Lonchura malacca	1
Wagtails, Pipits	Motacillidae	
Western Yellow Wagtail	Motacilla flava	1
Citrine Wagtail	Motacilla citreola	1
Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea	1
White Wagtail	Motacilla alba	1
White-browed Wagtail	Motacilla maderaspatensis	1
Paddyfield Pipit	Anthus rufulus	1
Tawny Pipit	Anthus campestris	1
Long-billed Pipit	Anthus similis	1
Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis	1
Olive-backed Pipit	Anthus hodgsoni	1
<u>Finches</u>	Fringillidae	
Yellow-breasted Greenfinch	Chloris spinoides	1
Buntings, New World Sparrows	Emberizidae	
Crested Bunting	Emberiza lathami	1
White-capped Bunting	Emberiza stewarti	1
Grey-necked Bunting	Emberiza buchanani	1
Red-headed Bunting	Emberiza bruniceps	1
TOTAL		362

Mammal³, Reptile, and Amphibian List

English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
<u>MAMMALS</u>		
	PRIMATES	
	Cercopithecidae	
Rhesus macaque	Macaca mulatta	1
Southern plains gray langur	Semnopithecus dussumieri	1
Central Himalayan langur	Semnopithecus schistaceus	1
	CETARTIODACTYLA	
	Cervidae	
Sambar	Rusa unicolor	1
Northern red muntjac	Muntiacus vaginalis	1

³ We also saw signs (pug marks/footprints) of Indian leopard, sloth bear and at least four species unidentified bats of various sizes at dusk where specific identification could not be ascertained.





English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
	Gavialidae	
Gharial	Gavialis gangeticus	1
	SQUAMATA	
	Gekkonidae	
Common house gecko	Hemidactylus frenatus	1
Yellow-bellied house gecko	Hemidactylus flaviviridis	1
	Agamidae	
Himalayan agama	Paralaudakia himalayana	1
Kashmir rock agama	Laudakia tuberculata	1
Common garden lizard	Calotes versicolor	1
	Varanidae	
Common Indian monitor	Varanus bengalensis	1
	Pythonidae	
Indian rock python	Python molurus	1
	Boidae	
Red sand boa	Eryx johnii	1
	Colubridae	
Common wolf snake	Lycodon aulicus	1
	TESTUDINES	
	Trionychidae	
Indian flap-shelled turtle	Lissemys punctata	1
	Geoemydidae	
Red-crowned roofed turtle	Batagur kachuga	1
Indian tent turtle	Pangshura tentoria	1
TOTAL		14
	<u>AMPHIBIANS</u>	
	ANURA	
	Bufonidae	
Black-spectacled toad	Duttaphrynus melanostictus	1
TOTAL		1

