



## **NORTHERN INDIA: TIGERS, BIRDS AND THE HIMALAYAS**

### **TRIP REPORT JANUARY 2016**

**By Andy Walker**



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Bengal tiger

This tour commenced on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2016 in Delhi and concluded back there on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Due to international flight arrival times, two clients (Dave and Sue) arrived a day ahead of the tour starting, and we took the opportunity for a day of birding near Delhi on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January as a 'pre-tour'. Hume and Lisl arrived late on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and early on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, respectively, ahead of the tour starting.

The tour visited world famous national parks such as Ranthambhore, Keoladeo Ghana (formerly known as Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary), and Corbett 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 called in to these very impressive places to soak up the sights and sounds. India is well known for its amazing food, and we sampled a great deal of different, interesting, and tasty local dishes throughout the tour.

The tour connected with numerous exciting birds, such as **Indian Skimmer, Indian Courser, Koklass and Cheer Pheasants, Painted Spurfowl, Bearded Vulture, Collared Falconet, Sarus Crane, Ibisbill, Painted Sandgrouse, Pallid Scops Owl, Tawny and Brown Fish Owls, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Great Hornbill, Sirkeer Malkoha, Long-billed Thrush, Spotted, Slaty-backed, and Little Forktails, Golden Bush Robin, Himalayan Bluetail, White-tailed (Himalayan) and Siberian Rubythroats, Wallcreeper, Rufous-breasted and Altai Accentors, and White-capped Bunting.**

A total of 401 bird species were recorded, along with an impressive list of other animals, including such emblematic species as Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, Asian elephant, gharial, and Indian python, and the less well-known but equally exciting Indian long-eared hedgehog, Indian crested porcupine, Himalayan agama, and a range of beautiful butterflies. Complete lists are found at the end of this report for all species identified.

## **India Pre-tour: Sultanpur National Park**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> January 2016. Full day Sultanpur National Park**

Dave and Sue arrived from Australia ahead of the tour starting, and as I was already in Delhi we decided to spend the day together, birding at nearby Sultanpur with local guide Ganesh, who would be guiding the first day of the main tour the following day. The site (a large lake with adjacent scrub and woodland) offers a great introduction to Indian birding with very good views of a number of species, without being too overwhelming for a first-time visitor to the region.

We started off on a surprisingly cold morning in a mix of mist and smog. Once the haze lifted, it was apparent that there was a lot of wildfowl present on the large lake, and we had good views of both **Bar-headed and Greylag Geese, Knob-billed Duck, Indian Spot-billed Duck, Northern Shoveler, Garganey, Northern Pintail, Eurasian Teal, Common Pochard, Tufted Duck, and Ferruginous Duck.** There was an impressive breeding colony of **Painted Storks**, and we also found a nesting pair of **Black-necked Storks** with two young.

As we progressed round the lake we found **Glossy Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill, Indian Pond Heron, Grey Heron, Purple Heron, Eastern Cattle Egret, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Little Egret, Oriental Darter, and Little and Great Cormorants.** We also saw our first waders, **Black-winged Stilt, Red-wattled Lapwing, and White-tailed Lapwing.**

As we were working our way around the lake all of the wildfowl would occasionally flush; this was a result of **Western Marsh Harrier** and **Booted, Indian Spotted**, and **Eastern Imperial Eagles**, which were all out hunting.

The day wasn't all about big showy birds, though, as we had plenty of small birds to chase through the bushes. Our main target here was the range-restricted **Brooks's Leaf Warbler**. We quickly found a couple and had very nice views of them singing, along with several other *Phylloscopus* warblers: the ubiquitous **Common (Siberian) Chiffchaff**, **Sulphur-bellied Warbler**, **Greenish Warbler**, and **Hume's Leaf Warbler**. Another of our targets was **Sind Sparrow**, which also showed well. As we progressed through the wooded area we added **Spotted Owlet**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Large Grey** and **Jungle Babblers**, **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker**, **Black-rumped Flameback**, **Rufous Treepie**, and **Red-breasted Flycatcher**. Though bird of the day, for Dave at least, was **Eurasian Wryneck** – fulfilling a lifelong dream to see this very cool-looking species!

The lakeshore and reedbeds offered up **Long-tailed Shrike**, **Indian Bush Lark**, **Moustached Warbler**, **Bluethroat**, **Pied Bush Chat**, **Western Yellow Wagtail**, and a very showy, stunning male **Citrine Wagtail** that proved quite photogenic.

It was a great day for getting our eyes and ears tuned in to some of the common birds we would come to know really well during the tour and to see a few range-restricted species we would not see again. We recorded over 100 species for the day.



Citrine Wagtail



## **India Main Tour: Tigers, Birds and the Himalayas**

### **Day 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2016. Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Delhi**

Once everyone had arrived at our hotel in Delhi we headed over to spend a relaxing day birding at Okhla Bird Sanctuary on the edge of Delhi. This site is one of the most famous birding sites in Delhi and has a huge list of species (over 300) attracted to the scrub, river, lake, and marshes. We had a couple of targets here, and as we headed out toward them we gradually started finding a steady number of common birds, such as **Oriental Magpie-Robin**, **Red-whiskered** and **Red-vented Bulbuls**, **Jungle Babbler**, **Rufous Treepie**, **Rose-ringed Parakeet**, **White-throated Kingfisher**, and **Asian Koel**. We also had our first views of the national bird of India, **Indian Peafowl**.

As we headed into the marsh area we stopped to check over a small flooded area that yielded **Temminck's Stint** as well as **Green** and **Wood Sandpipers** and **Red-naped Ibis**. Here we found a few (Sykes's) **Western Yellow Wagtails** and (Masked) **White Wagtails**. Continuing out to the marsh we were distracted by a couple of **Indian Grey Hornbills** and **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**, which led Ganesh to the discovery of a bit of a rarity in form of a **Pallid Scops Owl** – the first record of this species in the reserve, and in the Delhi area<sup>1</sup>! We spent a while photographing and documenting this exciting record in case it wasn't seen again. What a way to start the tour!

After all of the excitement of the owl we still had a number of target species to find, and it didn't take long before we were enjoying good views of the range-restricted **White-tailed Stonechat**, **Striated Grassbird**, **Yellow-bellied Prinia**, and, with a bit of effort, **Striated Babbler**. **Coppersmith Barbet** gave very nice views here too, as the sun set on a great day.



Pallid Scops Owl – the first record for the Delhi area

<sup>1</sup> This bird was subsequently successfully twitched by numerous birders and tour groups over the following weeks, and was present into March 2016 at least.

**Day 2, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Delhi to Ranthambhore, afternoon birding in National Park**

Most of the day was spent traveling down to Ranthambhore National Park on the train. An interesting experience, and front-seat views of real Indian life! Once we arrived at Ranthambhore we met up with our expert local guide, Shyam, who would be with us for the whole of the tour from this point onward. We checked into our very nice hotel, had a brilliant lunch, and then headed into the National Park to see what we could find in the remaining couple of hours of light.

We didn't have long in the National Park, but we still managed to find one of the area's specialties, **Painted Spurfowl**, which showed nicely in the road. A mad rush of vehicles indicated that a tiger had been discovered, so we followed the buzz down to the lake, where we saw a very distant Bengal tiger lying out on the far bank. I never expected to be underwhelmed by a tiger sighting, but we probably all were – it was great to see, but we didn't really want scope views of a tiger looking a bit like a carpet rug! We'd just have to come back tomorrow to try for better views. While we waited for the big cat to move, we had a small flock of **River Terns** flying around, and a couple of **Cotton Pygmy Geese** on the lake too. In the area around our vehicle we found **Indian Stone-curlew**, **White-bellied Drongo**, **Cinereous Tit**, **White-browed Fantail**, **Yellow-throated Sparrow**, very tame **Rufous Treepie**, and numerous **Citrine Wagtails**. There were also numerous rhesus macaques, southern plains gray langurs, sambar, chital (spotted deer), and wild boar present as we drove around, and a tiny mugger crocodile was hiding in a cliff face. But by this time nature was calling, so we headed back to the hotel.



Painted Spurfowl



**Day 3, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Ranthambhore NP and Soorwal Lake**

Today was the big day, and we were all full of anticipation for what might happen. We visited three distinct areas through the course of the day and finished up recording over 120 species. First up was an early morning drive into Ranthambhore NP. We picked up where we had left off the previous day with great views of a pair of **Painted Spurfowl**. We then carried on to our allotted sector of the park and stopped at a lake to admire a few **Asian Openbills** and **Woolly-necked Stork**, **Lesser Whistling Duck**, and **Eurasian Teal**.

As we drove round a bend in the road we noticed some vehicles racing along a different track. We presumed they must have heard about something good, so we headed in that direction too. Once we turned the corner it was clear that there was a tiger about, as well as a lot of vehicles. As is the way in this park we hustled into a position where we were able to obtain a view of this highly-prized apex predator. A frustrating couple of glimpses ensued as it moved through the tall grass, but we had enough of a view to really appreciate this huge cat, a large tigress. After a while she decided to walk out of the tall grass right out into the open. Unfortunately, some rather idiotic people blocked her route, so she turned round and walked back into cover. It was a shame for us, but you have to feel more for the animal that was essentially trapped where it didn't want to be. After a while, though, she reappeared on the other side of the tall grass. She walked right out into the open, pausing briefly a couple of times to look back at us, and scent mark. We were all pretty overcome with excitement at this view, a proper view of a Bengal tiger!

The vehicles all dispersed to chase the tigress, but we sat and soaked up what we'd just seen, and in the process admired a non-breeding **Black-tailed Godwit** and a couple of **Black-headed Ibis** that were walking around on the lakeshore nearby.



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Bengal tiger

We decided to drive on, and in doing so happened to bump into the same tigress again; this time she was resting under a small tree. After a while she again got up and walked away from us, giving us more fantastic views, with Sue getting an incredible photo of her scent marking! Needless to say, we were very happy.

The birds seen during the rest of the morning struggled to register, but we had **Ruddy Shelduck**, a nice, close, perched **Crested Serpent Eagle**, **Western Osprey**, **Black-crowned Night Heron**, **River Tern**, **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**, **Plum-headed**, **Alexandrine**, and **Rose-ringed Parakeets**, **Bluethroat**, **Tree Pipit**, and **White-browed Wagtail**. Soon it was time for breakfast, so we headed back to the hotel.



Bengal tiger spraying (© Sue Harper 2016) – spot the peacock pretending to be a rock!

Our second calling point of the day was actually the scrub around our hotel, which offered a new set of birds. We quickly found **Painted Sandgrouse** that sat and allowed a close view. We picked up new birds left and right, **Indian Vulture**, **Yellow-legged Buttonquail** (thanks to Sue chasing a butterfly!), **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker**, **Small Minivet**, **Bay-backed**, **Long-tailed**, and **Southern Grey Shrikes**, **Indian Bush Lark**, **Dusky Crag Martin**, **Rufous-fronted Prinia**, **Large Grey Babbler**, **Black Redstart**, **Brown Rock Chat**, *opistholeuca* **Variable Wheatear**, and **Brahminy Starling**.

Our third stop of the day was Soorwal Lake. After a bumpy and dusty drive (including a brief stop at a small field containing 20+ **Indian Stone-curlews**) we arrived at the site and spent some time scoping out the birds on and around the lake. There were numerous highlight birds here, such as **Bar-headed Goose**, **Knob-billed Duck**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, **Greater Flamingo**, **Great White Pelican** (thanks Hume!), **Pied Avocet**, a whole host of small waders, **Small Pratincole**, **Pallas's** and **Brown-headed Gulls**, and some very distant **Indian Skimmers**. We unfortunately couldn't get closer views of the skimmers or pratincoles, which was frustrating. But as we were trying to do so we did find a couple of **Brown Crakes**. A



quick drive back toward our accommodation and a strategic stop produced our only **White-naped Woodpecker** of the trip just as the sun went down. All in all a pretty fantastic day!

#### **Day 4, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Soorwal Lake and travel to Bharatpur**

Due to our excellent views of tiger the previous day we decided not to go back into Ranthambhore NP but to head back to Soorwal Lake to try for better views of **Indian Skimmer**, which we were successful in doing, with a flock of 20 birds present at a much closer range. We also had good views of jungle cat and golden jackal here, as well as a few different birds to the previous evening, such as **Great Stone-curlew**, **Black-bellied Tern**, **Ruff**, **Barred Buttonquail**, and **Siberian Stonechat**. As we traveled across to Bharatpur a couple of roadside stops failed to produce the hoped-for Indian Courser, but did result in us seeing our first **Yellow-wattled Lapwing**, **Isabelline Wheatear**, and **Greater Painted-snipe** of the tour.

#### **Day 5, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Keoladeo Ghana NP**

We spent the full day birding within Keoladeo Ghana NP, 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 again we recorded 120 species for the day.

Birding in the scrub and woodland produced **Grey Francolin**, **Indian Peafowl**, **Barred Buttonquail**, **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**, **Indian Scops Owl**, **Dusky Eagle-Owl**, **Spotted Owlet**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Eurasian Wryneck**, **Bay-backed** and **Long-tailed Shrikes**, **Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher**, **White-eared Bulbul**, **Eastern Orphean Warbler**, **Pied Myna**, **Brahminy** and **Rosy Starlings**, **Tickell's Thrush**, **Bluethroat**, **Indian Robin**, **Red-breasted Flycatcher**, **Black Redstart**, **Red Avadavat**, and **Indian Silverbill**, but bird of our time in this habitat was probably the stunning male **Siberian Rubythroat** at close range.



Siberian Rubythroat (© David Harper 2016)



The wetland areas were full of birds, with many herons, egrets, storks, and assorted wildfowl. Highlights here included **Bar-headed Goose**, **Knob-billed Duck**, **Ruddy Shelduck**, **Red-crested Pochard**, **Ferruginous Duck**, nesting **Black-necked Stork**, **Black Bittern**, **Oriental Darter**, **Sarus Crane**, **White-tailed Lapwing**, **Pheasant-tailed Jacana**, **White-throated** and **Pied Kingfishers**, and **Citrine Wagtail**. The open areas and tower hides also provided great vantage points to view raptors, and we saw **Western Marsh Harrier**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Egyptian Vulture**, and **Crested Serpent**, **Indian Spotted**, **Greater Spotted**, and **Eastern Imperial Eagles**.

There was also plenty of interesting wildlife to keep us busy, with a huge Indian python resting in the heat of the day, common Indian monitor, rhesus macaque, sambar, chital, nilgai, wild boar, golden jackal, and the ubiquitous five-striped palm squirrel.

**Day 6, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Bharatpur area to Chambal Safari Lodge via Fatehpur Sikri**

We made an early departure from our hotel to get into some farmland near Bharatpur, where our main target was found with surprising ease, unlike two days prior when we were looking for it! Our target was **Indian Courser**, and we had at least four birds that gave good scope views. Trying to get very close to them was not possible due to the lack of anything for us to hide behind in our approach. Nevertheless, it was great to find this highly sought-after species that does have a habit of going missing!



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Indian Courser (iPhone-scoped from the area the week before the tour started)

There was a number of new birds for us out in the farmland, and we spent a couple of hours enjoying an assortment of species, including calling **Black Francolin**, **Egyptian Vulture**, **Sarus Crane**, **Indian Roller**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Common Kestrel**, **Isabelline (Daurian) Shrike**, **Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark**, **Indian Bush Lark**, **Oriental Skylark**, **Crested Lark**, **Greater Short-toed Lark**, **Isabelline** and **Desert Wheatears**, **Richard's** and **Tawny**

**Pipits**, and a number of wagtails – (Sykes’s) **Western Yellow**, **Citrine**, (Masked) **White**, and **White-browed Wagtails**.

After this birding session we started our journey to the delightful Chambal Safari Lodge, calling in to visit the very impressive Fatehpur Sikri World Heritage Site, one of the best preserved collections of Mughal architecture in India. After our time 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 **Brown Hawk-Owl**, **Indian Scops Owl**, common palm civet, Indian flying fox, and Indian long-eared hedgehog.

#### **Day 7, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Chambal River and Safari Lodge to Delhi via Taj Mahal**

We took an early morning drive to the Chambal River. A brief stop in some scrub near the river produced the secretive **Sirkeer Malkoha**, **Crested Honey Buzzard**, **Plum-headed Parakeet**, **Grey-breasted Prinia**, **Common** and **Yellow-eyed Babblers**, **Baya Weaver**, and **White-capped Bunting**. Once on the water we had great looks at the stunning **River Lapwing**, which was numerous along the river banks, and we found a small group of **Great Stone-curlews**. Both **River** and **Black-bellied Terns** were present in small numbers, and a **Pallas’s Gull** put in an appearance. A large flock of **Bar-headed Geese** was a spectacular sight as they flew in. While on the river we also saw three turtle species and two species of crocodile: mugger and the critically endangered gharial.



Gharial

After our trip out to the river a spot of birding in the lodge grounds produced day-roosting **Brown Hawk-Owl** and **Spotted Owlet**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Indian Grey Hornbill**, and **Brown-headed Barbet**, among a number of common birds. We had a long drive and a stop at the Taj Mahal World Heritage Site ahead of us, so after a wonderful lunch we pressed on, arriving at the Taj Mahal in the early 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 area, taking in the beautiful architecture and history of the place. But being birders we couldn’t help but scan the area for birds during the tour, and we picked up a nice **Black-eared Kite** among **Black Kites**, a **Red-rumped Swallow** in with some **Barn Swallows**, and a host of waders on the river.

After our time here we continued our journey on to Delhi, where we had a rendezvous with an overnight train. Our train left Delhi almost on time, and we all went to sleep with great excitement at what birds and wildlife the Himalayan foothills were going to give us.



The group in front of the Taj Mahal

#### Day 8, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016. All day birding the Sattal Area

This was one of the group's (and my) favorite days of birding during the tour. After a smooth, uneventful overnight train journey we arrived at Sattal just before first light and checked into our hotel. After a bite to eat we headed out for a most enjoyable day's birding, finding some very high-quality birds, including a spectacular male **White-tailed (Himalayan) Rubythroat** that stole the show for most and was my personal bird of the trip!

Being in a totally new environment, new birds came thick and fast, and we had a great morning. Further highlights during the morning included **Jungle Owlet**, **Great Barbet**, **Blue-throated Barbet**, **Speckled Piculet**, **Greater and Lesser Yellownapes**, **Grey-headed Woodpecker**, **Slaty-headed Parakeet**, **Black-headed Jay**, **Red-billed Blue Magpie**, **Grey Treepie**, **Yellow-bellied Fantail**, **Chestnut-headed Tesia**, **Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler**, **Red-billed Leiothrix**, **Siberian Rubythroat**, **Golden Bush Robin**, **Himalayan Bluetail**, **Spotted Forktail**, **Rufous-bellied Niltava**, **Blue Whistling Thrush**, **Slaty-blue Flycatcher**, **Crimson Sunbird**, **Russet Sparrow**, **Rufous-breasted Accentor**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Common and Pink-browed Rosefinches**, **Yellow-breasted Greenfinch**, and **White-capped Bunting**. There was also a number of laughingthrushes to keep us



entertained: **Rufous-chinned, White-throated, Streaked**, and the most popular (and serious contender for Bird of the Trip) **Striated Laughingthrush**.



White-tailed Rubythroat (© Sue Harper 2016)



© Andy Walker/Birding Ecotours 2016

Striated Laughingthrush



The afternoon didn't let up either, with more new birds coming thick and fast in another, more forested area. We enjoyed **Kalij Pheasant**, **Ashy Drongo**, **White-throated Fantail**, **Green-backed Tit**, **Himalayan Black-lored Tit**, **Himalayan Bulbul**, **Black Bulbul**, **Black-throated Bushtit**, **Rufous Sibia**, **Bar-tailed Treecreeper**, **Small Niltava**, **Slaty-backed Forktail**, **Blue-capped Redstart**, **Plumbeous Water Redstart**, **White-capped Redstart**, **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush**, and **Grey Wagtail**. One of the more unexpected species of the day was a **Eurasian Woodcock** found at the bottom of a river valley.

**Day 9, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Morning birding the Sattal area, travel to Pangot**

We spent the early morning back at our final stop of the previous day, seeing more of the same quality birds, getting better views of some of them, and finding a few new species. Highlights included **Common** and **Crested Kingfishers**, **Chestnut-headed Tesia**, **Rufous Sibia**, **Grey-hooded**, **Lemon-rumped**, and **Buff-barred Warblers**, **Long-billed Thrush**, **Spotted Forktail**, **Little Pied Flycatcher**, **Slaty-blue Flycatcher**, **Siberian Stonechat**, **Grey Bush Chat**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker**, and **Green-tailed Sunbird**.



Long-billed Thrush

As we left Sattal we picked up a flock of **Griffon Vultures**, **Steppe Eagle**, **Black Kite**, and **Black-eared Kite**, as well as a small party of **Eurasian Crag Martins**. A brief roadside stop produced very good views of both **Kalij Pheasant** and **Hill Partridge**, as well as **Red-billed Blue Magpie** and **Chestnut-crowned** and **Streaked Laughingthrushes** hopping around our feet, with a brief appearance of a stunning male **Vinaceous Rosefinch**.

We arrived at Pangot for a late lunch, which was fantastic. We took a rest, watching **Black-headed Jay** in the garden of the lodge, and then headed out for a late-afternoon walk through some woodland and woodland edge habitat, finding several good birds: **Kalij Pheasant**, **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**, **Great Barbet**, **Grey-headed** and **Brown-fronted Woodpeckers**,

**Bronzed Drongo, Himalayan Black-lored Tit, Striated Prinia, Rufous-bellied Niltava, Blue-capped Redstart, Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush, Altai Accentor, and Common Rosefinch.**

As if the birds were not enough, while we were up in this area we hit an elevation of approximately 2,200 meters; this allowed us some seriously spectacular views of the Himalayas. I don't think you can ever prepare yourself for this view, it really is breathtaking. Every time we glimpsed it a collective WOW, OHHH and AHHHH went through the vehicle!



The Himalayas from near Pangot, looking at several 7,000-meter peaks

#### **Day 10, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Full day at elevation above Pangot**

It was a cold night at elevation, with temperatures dropping to freezing point. We had an early start with several high-elevation key target species in mind. As we drove along a mountain road a male **Hill Partridge** showed well, feeding with a couple of **Kalij Pheasants**. Continuing onward and upward a mixed-species flock caught our attention as we were searching for our first target, and we enjoyed good, close-up views of several species: (**Spot-winged**) **Coal Tit**, **Green-backed Tit**, **Yellow-browed**, **Grey-hooded**, and **Black-faced Warblers**, **Black-throated Bushtit**, **Bar-tailed Treecreeper**, and **White-tailed Nuthatch**. A hundred yards down the road our first target finally gave itself up, and it was a beautiful male **Koklass Pheasant**, a very nice-looking, but rather shy bird!

We continued higher up the mountains for our second main target – **Cheer Pheasant**, where we bumped into Arjan Dwarshuis twelve days into his quest to see the most species in the world in a year. With a stroke of luck the elusive pheasant had just been in view for him and his group, so we waited for five minutes, and then it appeared again for us, giving good scope views. It was interesting to watch how this large, cryptically-plumaged bird slowly walked through open habitat to avoid detection. We wished Arjan good luck on his quest and headed further up the mountain road – we had a few more birds to find.





Cheer Pheasant (iPhone-scoped)

After soaking up the views of the impressive mountains and some breakfast (and another flock of **Altai Accentors**), we found the beautiful **Rufous-bellied Woodpecker**, along with **Brown-fronted** and **Himalayan Woodpeckers**, several **Eurasian Jays**, **Mistle Thrush**, and **Himalayan Bluetail**.

It was soon time to head back down the mountain for lunch, but as we got to a ridge it was apparent that there was some vulture activity going on. A strategic stop produced good views of our third main target of the morning: **Bearded Vulture** – what a bird! We then had both (**Eurasian**) **Griffon Vulture** and **Himalayan (Griffon) Vulture** cruising a mere few meters above our heads as they passed over the ridge, coming up from below us! Some incredible views!

Over lunch we enjoyed a range of birds coming in to feed on seeds and drink water in the lodge grounds, such as a couple of **Striated Laughingthrushes**, **Eurasian** and **Black-headed Jays**, and **Grey-headed Woodpecker**, but the star of the show for sheer number and noise generated was the flock of 80+ **White-throated Laughingthrushes** that came into the garden and covered the small lawn area!

We spent the afternoon birding forest and farmland habitats near Pangot, adding further new birds to our trip list and other good birds, such as **Black Eagle**, a very showy **Scaly-bellied Woodpecker**, **Spotted Forktail**, **Blue Whistling Thrush**, **Blue-capped Redstart**, **Blue-fronted Redstart**, **Rock Bunting**, and **Little Bunting**.



Scaly-bellied Woodpecker

**Day 11, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Pangot to Kosi River**

We left Pangot after another delicious breakfast to head down to the Kosi River, but not before we'd all had looks at a pair of **Black Francolin**. We had a couple of really important birds to find, so we wanted to maximize our time along the river. Driving down from the mountain we stopped to enjoy the Himalayan views for the final time, still the gasps went through the vehicle, you just don't get used to seeing this stunning vista!

As we were driving Dave spotted one of his trip target species from the vehicle, so we quickly got onto it – a beautiful **Blue-bearded Bee-eater** catching bees from a water tower perch! Continuing we headed straight down to a river viewpoint, where in no time at all we picked out the big target of the day – a flock of five **Ibisbill**. This stunning wader was just as spectacular as we expected, and we spent an hour or so watching them feed along the fast-flowing boulder-strewn river. As we made our way down to the river to get a better angle/view of the birds we picked up another one of our targets – **Wallcreeper**. Again another bird that was high on our target list and was just as good as we had hoped! We watched it feeding along the boulders in the river for a good while, but it was difficult to know what to look at!

Other birds noted here included **Besra**, **Himalayan Swiftlet**, **Nepal House Martin**, **White-capped Redstart**, **Plumbeous Water Redstart**, and **Blue Rock Thrush**.





Ibisbill

After enjoying some great birds we headed over to our lodge for some more great Indian cuisine and enjoyed views of a stunning male **Crimson Sunbird** and a pair of roosting **Collared Scops Owls**.

After lunch we headed back to the Kosi River, where a small patch of woodland was very active, giving us good views of **Red Junglefowl**, **Mountain Hawk-Eagle** (hunting a yellow-throated marten!), **Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker**, **Scarlet Minivet**, **White-crested Laughingthrush**, **Chestnut-bellied**, **White-tailed**, and **Velvet-fronted Nuthatches**, **Bar-tailed Treecreeper**, **Rufous-bellied** and **Small Niltavas**, **Verditer Flycatcher**, and **Olive-backed Pipit**, although a roosting **Brown Fish Owl** was hard to beat. While we were walking along the river a huge **Pallas's Fish Eagle** flew right overhead, and on the other end of the size-scale a diminutive **Little Forktail** gave great scope views as it fed and bathed on the opposite side of the water from us.

#### **Day 12, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Kosi River to Dikhala Camp (Corbett National Park)**

We made a quick stop along the Kosi River early in the morning, where we saw many of the birds seen the previous day, with the addition of **Asian Barred Owlet**, **Lineated Barbet**, **Brown Dipper**, **Puff-throated Babbler**, and **Little Pied Flycatcher**. We then headed into the world-famous Corbett National Park, where we would spend the next two nights looking for the area's birds. It wasn't long after passing through the gate that we came across our first Asian elephant of the trip. We spent some time watching it feed before it turned and vanished



into the undergrowth. Continuing on towards Dikhala we found many new birds and had several very exciting encounters...

It was a slow drive into Dikhala, mainly because there were numerous distractions, including several large birds such as **Black Stork**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagle**, **Tawny Fish Owl**, **Great Hornbill**, and **Peregrine Falcon**, and several mixed-species bird-waves, including **Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Yellow-bellied Fantail**, **Cinereous Tit**, **Himalayan Black-lored Tit**, **Oriental White-eye**, **Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch**, and **Rufous-gorgeted** and **Red-breasted Flycatchers**. One piece of drama unfolded as we were watching one of these bird-waves. Alarm calls suddenly rang out, and birds dashed off quickly, all except one, a **Cinereous Tit** that was firmly gripped in the claws of a tiny **Collared Falconet**! We sat in shock watching the falconet dispatch the tit before disappearing as quickly as it had appeared out of nowhere.

The next excitement came a little further along the track, when we pulled into a river viewpoint and one of our local driver-guides picked out a beautiful Indian leopard sitting on the opposite bank. We enjoyed prolonged scope views of this graceful cat as it lazed about on the rock, making the occasional walk-around to check out what was going on around it.



Indian leopard (iPhone-scoped)

Whilst watching the leopard we were aware of a number of Hirundines and swifts low in front of us, including a small group of **White-rumped Spinetail**. As we were observing these birds, out of nowhere came a **Besra** on a mission, and with incredible speed and skill it rolled

over and plucked one of these small swifts out of the air right in front of us! This was one special day!

A late lunch was the order of the day, and after checking into our accommodation we headed out for a short late-afternoon drive to see what we could find. After having had such great views of Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, and Asian elephant already during the tour, the pressure for finding these species was off, so we could concentrate our efforts on the area's birds over the next couple of days. We focused on a flock of pipits that contained numerous **Rosy**, **Tawny**, and **Paddyfield Pipits**, with a lone **Oriental Skylark** also present. A flock of four **Eurasian Hoopoes** provided some color. We also found a herd of hog deer, another new mammal for the trip, and some dueling chital.



Sunset approaching in Corbett National Park

### Day 13, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Full Day Corbett National Park

We had a morning and afternoon drive into the National Park, with the middle of the day spent within the Dikhala compound, and, surprisingly, we recorded the most daily species of the whole trip on this day – 126 species.

The morning drive hit some nice bird waves, and we picked up quite a few new species for our trip as well as further looks at some other special birds, including **Western Osprey**, **Pallas's**, **Lesser**, and **Grey-headed Fish Eagles**, **River Lapwing**, **Common Emerald Dove**, **Pin-tailed Green Pigeon**, **Brown Fish Owl**, **Jungle Owlet**, **Crested Treeswift**, **Stork-billed**, **White-throated**, **Common**, **Crested**, and **Pied Kingfishers**, **Streak-throated Woodpecker**, **Collared Falconet**, **Plum-headed** and **Alexandrine Parakeets**, **Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike**, **Common Iora**, **Long-tailed Minivet**, **Black-hooded** and **Maroon Orioles**, **White-bellied**, **Bronzed**, and **Lesser Racket-tailed Drongos**, **Common Green Magpie**, **Grey-bellied Tesia**, **White-rumped Shama**, **White-tailed (Himalayan) Rubythroat**, and **Crested Bunting**.



Streak-throated Woodpecker

When we got back to Dikhala and started scanning the river below us, we found some wild boars eating something (an indiscernible corpse) in the river, and after a short while a few huge vultures appeared and stole the corpse from the boars, dragging it onto the dry river bed. In no time at all there were three species, **Red-headed, (Eurasian) Griffon**, and **Cinereous (Eurasian Black) Vultures**, all fighting over the food. Given the decline in vulture numbers in Asia over recent times, it was nice to see a few here. Other birds noted around the grounds included **Collared Falconet**, **Red-whiskered Bulbul**, **Siberian Rubythroat**, **Little** and **Alpine Swifts**, and **Asian House Martin**.

Our afternoon drive took us through an area of woodland out onto the open flood plains and produced yet more interesting species; some highlights included **Black-winged Kite**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagle**, **Hen Harrier**, **Himalayan Flameback**, **Long-tailed Shrike**, **Rufous Treepie**, **Oriental Skylark**, **Golden-headed Cisticola**, **White-crested Laughingthrush**, **Siberian Stonechat**, **Red Avadavat**, **Citrine**, **Grey**, **White**, and **White-browed Wagtails**, and **Tawny**, **Long-billed**, **Rosy**, and **Water Pipits**.

An evening walk within the Dikhala compound gave nice views of **Brown Hawk-Owl**, Indian porcupine, and another Indian leopard... to end another exciting day.



**Day 14, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Morning drive out of Corbett NP, travel back to Delhi**

We spent the morning driving out of Corbett NP, birding along the way. We had further looks at a large number of species recorded the previous day, and, although the majority of the day was spent traveling, we still recorded over 110 species, including a couple not seen before in the form of **Banded Bay Cuckoo**, **Dusky Warbler**, and **Blyth's Leaf Warbler**. We made a brief stop along the Kosi River, where we enjoyed good views of **Indian Cormorant** and another **Wallcreeper** (thanks Sue!). After a long day we arrived back in Delhi mid-evening. Due to other onward travel and flight times we had to say goodbye to Hume and Lisl, who both departed.

**Day 15, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Full Day Birding at Basai Wetlands, Delhi**

We spent the full day birding the Basai Wetlands area near Sultanpur, and despite already having spent time in similar habitat managed to find several great new birds, with the highlights being **Mallard**, **Yellow Bittern**, **Baillon's Crake**, **Black-headed Gull**, **Merlin**, **Clamorous (Indian) Reed** and **Paddyfield Warblers**, **Zitting Cisticola**, and **Graceful Prinia** – however, the bird that took the most effort, but gave the most reward, was a bit of a local rarity in **Spotted Crake** – a lifer for Dave, Sue, and most importantly our local guide Shyam. It was nice to see him get a lifer after the immense efforts he'd put in over the previous two weeks as we searched for all of our targets, and it seemed a fitting end to a great tour.

As we were waiting for the **Spotted Crake** to show, we were constantly distracted by **Bluethroats** and **Citrine Wagtails** in the reedbeds and marshes. To top off our interesting predation sightings, at about 4:00 p.m. (in daylight) we noticed a small bat flying overhead. No sooner had I called it out, an **Isabelline (Daurian) Shrike** had flown out of the reedbed, caught it, dragged it down into the reedbed, and pierced it onto a reed stem, where it proceeded to dispatch it! It felt like a fitting end to a great tour, given also all the other interesting sightings we'd had over the fortnight.



Bluethroat (© David Harper 2016)

A huge thank you to everyone who made this tour so enjoyable, especially to Ganesh and Shyam for their expert guidance and to everyone who safely got us around, whether it be by vehicle, train, rickshaw, or boat! We saw some great birds and fantastic wildlife, sampled some incredible Indian food, and took in very special natural and man-made sights from the Taj Mahal to the stunning Himalayas.

It is difficult to pick a top bird for the tour, or even a top five, because everyone had such differing choices, so here are everyone's favorite birds: Lisl – **Himalayan (Griffon) Vulture**, Hume – **Siberian Rubythroat**, Sue – **Spotted Owlet**, and Dave – **Eurasian Wryneck**.

Other species making personal top five lists included: **Pallid Scops Owl**, **Cheer Pheasant**, **Striated Laughingthrush**, **Collared Falconet**, **Greater Painted-snipe**, **Ibisbill**, **Wallcreeper**, **White-tailed (Himalayan) Rubythroat**, **Tawny Fish Owl**, **Brown Fish Owl**, **White-crested Laughingthrush**, **Bearded Vulture**, and **Indian Skimmer**.



The group soaking up the incredible Himalayan view for one last time

### Bird List<sup>2</sup>

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
1	Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	1
2	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	1
3	Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>	1

<sup>2</sup> Species in bold text are Red List or endemic species. Species recorded only on the pre-tour are shown in italics in the Trip column.



Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
4	Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>	1
5	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	1
6	Cotton Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	1
7	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	1
8	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	1
9	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	1
10	Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>	1
11	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	1
12	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	1
13	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	1
14	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	1
15	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	1
16	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	1
17	<b>Ferruginous Duck</b>	<b><i>Aythya nyroca</i></b>	1
18	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	1
19	Black Francolin	<i>Francolinus francolinus</i>	1
20	Grey Francolin	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i>	1
21	Hill Partridge	<i>Arborophila torqueola</i>	1
22	<b>Painted Spurfowl</b>	<b><i>Galloperdix lunulata</i></b>	1
23	Koklass Pheasant	<i>Pucrasia macrolopha</i>	1
24	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	1
25	Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>	1
26	<b>Cheer Pheasant</b>	<b><i>Catreus wallichii</i></b>	1
27	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	1
28	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	1
29	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	1
30	<b>Painted Stork</b>	<b><i>Mycteria leucocephala</i></b>	1
31	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	1
32	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	1
33	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	1
34	<b>Black-necked Stork</b>	<b><i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i></b>	1
35	<b>Black-headed Ibis</b>	<b><i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i></b>	1
36	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	1
37	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	1
38	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	1
39	Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	1
40	Black Bittern	<i>Dupetor flavicollis</i>	1
41	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	1
42	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	1
43	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	1
44	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	1
45	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1
46	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	1
47	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	1
48	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	1
49	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1
50	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	1

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
51	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	1
52	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>	1
53	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	1
54	<b>Oriental Darter</b>	<b><i>Anhinga melanogaster</i></b>	1
55	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1
56	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	1
57	<b>Bearded Vulture</b>	<b><i>Gypaetus barbatus</i></b>	1
58	<b>Egyptian Vulture</b>	<b><i>Neophron percnopterus</i></b>	1
59	Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	1
60	<b>Indian Vulture</b>	<b><i>Gyps indicus</i></b>	1
61	<b>Himalayan Vulture</b>	<b><i>Gyps himalayensis</i></b>	1
62	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	1
63	<b>Red-headed Vulture</b>	<b><i>Sarcogyps calvus</i></b>	1
64	<b>Cinereous Vulture</b>	<b><i>Aegypius monachus</i></b>	1
65	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	1
66	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>	1
67	Mountain Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus nipalensis</i>	1
68	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>	1
69	<b>Indian Spotted Eagle</b>	<b><i>Clanga hastata</i></b>	1
70	<b>Greater Spotted Eagle</b>	<b><i>Clanga clanga</i></b>	1
71	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	1
72	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>	1
73	<b>Eastern Imperial Eagle</b>	<b><i>Aquila heliaca</i></b>	1
74	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	1
75	Besra	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>	1
76	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1
77	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1
78	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	1
79	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	1
80	Black-eared Kite	<i>Milvus lineatus</i>	1
81	<b>Pallas's Fish Eagle</b>	<b><i>Haliaeetus leucoryphus</i></b>	1
82	<b>Lesser Fish Eagle</b>	<b><i>Haliaeetus humilis</i></b>	1
83	<b>Grey-headed Fish Eagle</b>	<b><i>Haliaeetus ichthyaetus</i></b>	1
84	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	1
85	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1
86	Brown Crake	<i>Amaurornis akool</i>	1
87	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	1
88	Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	1
89	Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	1
90	Grey-headed Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>	1
91	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	1
92	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	1
93	<b>Sarus Crane</b>	<b><i>Grus antigone</i></b>	1
94	Yellow-legged Buttonquail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>	1
95	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	1
96	Indian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>	1
97	<b>Great Stone-curlew</b>	<b><i>Esacus recurvirostris</i></b>	1



Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
98	Ibisbill	<i>Ibidorhyncha struthersii</i>	1
99	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	1
100	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	1
101	<b>River Lapwing</b>	<b><i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i></b>	1
102	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>	1
103	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	1
104	White-tailed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>	1
105	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	1
106	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	1
107	Greater Painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	1
108	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	1
109	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>	1
110	Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	1
111	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1
112	<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	<b><i>Limosa limosa</i></b>	1
113	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	1
114	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	1
115	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	1
116	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	1
117	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1
118	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	1
119	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	1
120	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	1
121	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	1
122	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	1
123	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	1
124	Indian Courser	<i>Cursorius coromandelicus</i>	1
125	Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>	1
126	<b>Indian Skimmer</b>	<b><i>Rynchops albicollis</i></b>	1
127	Brown-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus</i>	1
128	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	1
129	Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaelus ichthyaelus</i>	1
130	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	1
131	<b>River Tern</b>	<b><i>Sterna aurantia</i></b>	1
132	<b>Black-bellied Tern</b>	<b><i>Sterna acuticauda</i></b>	1
133	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	1
134	Painted Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles indicus</i>	1
135	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	1
136	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	1
137	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	1
138	Red Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>	1
139	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	1
140	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	1
141	Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	1
142	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i>	1
143	Pin-tailed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron apicauda</i>	1
144	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	1

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
145	Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>	1
146	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>	1
147	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>	1
148	Banded Bay Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sonneratii</i>	1
149	Pallid Scops Owl	<i>Otus brucei</i>	1
150	Indian Scops Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	1
151	Collared Scops Owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>	1
152	Dusky Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo coromandus</i>	1
153	Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>	1
154	Tawny Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa flavipes</i>	1
155	Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>	1
156	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>	1
157	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>	1
158	Brown Hawk-Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>	1
159	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>	1
160	Himalayan Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus brevirostris</i>	1
161	White-rumped Spinetail	<i>Zoonavena sylvatica</i>	1
162	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	1
163	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	1
164	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	1
165	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	1
166	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	1
167	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1
168	Crested Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle lugubris</i>	1
169	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	1
170	Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>	1
171	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	1
172	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	1
173	<b>Great Hornbill</b>	<b><i>Buceros bicornis</i></b>	1
174	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>	1
175	Great Barbet	<i>Psilopogon virens</i>	1
176	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>	1
177	Lineated Barbet	<i>Psilopogon lineatus</i>	1
178	Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Psilopogon asiaticus</i>	1
179	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>	1
180	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	1
181	Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>	1
182	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos hyperythrus</i>	1
183	Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos canicapillus</i>	1
184	Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>	1
185	Brown-fronted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos auriceps</i>	1
186	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>	1
187	Himalayan Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos himalayensis</i>	1
188	Greater Yellownape	<i>Chrysophlegma flavinucha</i>	1
189	Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>	1
190	Streak-throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>	1
191	Scaly-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Picus squamatus</i>	1



Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
192	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	1
193	Himalayan Flameback	<i>Dinopium shorii</i>	1
194	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	1
195	Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus</i>	1
196	White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>	1
197	Collared Falconet	<i>Microhierax caerulescens</i>	1
198	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1
199	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	1
200	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1
201	Slaty-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula himalayana</i>	1
202	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	1
203	<b>Alexandrine Parakeet</b>	<b><i>Psittacula eupatria</i></b>	1
204	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	1
205	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>	1
206	Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>	1
207	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	1
208	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>	1
209	Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>	1
210	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus</i>	1
211	Isabelline Shrike <sup>3</sup>	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>	1
212	Bay-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius vittatus</i>	1
213	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	1
214	Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	1
215	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	1
216	Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>	1
217	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	1
218	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>	1
219	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	1
220	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	1
221	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>	1
222	Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	1
223	White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>	1
224	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	1
225	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	1
226	Black-headed Jay	<i>Garrulus lanceolatus</i>	1
227	Red-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythroryncha</i>	1
228	Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>	1
229	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	1
230	Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	1
231	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	1
232	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	1
233	Indian Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus culminatus</i>	1
234	Yellow-bellied Fantail	<i>Chelidorhynch hypoxanthus</i>	1
235	Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	1
236	Yellow-browed Tit	<i>Sylviparus modestus</i>	1

<sup>3</sup> Nominate race *Lanius isabellinus isabellinus* also known as Daurian Shrike

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
237	Coal Tit <sup>4</sup>	<i>Periparus ater</i>	1
238	Cinereous Tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>	1
239	Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>	1
240	Himalayan Black-lored Tit	<i>Machlolophus xanthogenys</i>	1
241	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>	1
242	Indian Bush Lark	<i>Mirafra erythroptera</i>	1
243	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>	1
244	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	1
245	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	1
246	Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i>	1
247	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	1
248	Himalayan Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys</i>	1
249	White-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	1
250	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	1
251	Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>	1
252	Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>	1
253	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1
254	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	1
255	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	1
256	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	1
257	Dusky Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>	1
258	Asian House Martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>	1
258	Nepal House Martin	<i>Delichon nipalense</i>	1
260	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	1
261	Pygmy Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>	1
262	Black-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>	1
263	Aberrant Bush Warbler	<i>Horornis flavolivaceus</i>	1
264	Grey-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>	1
265	Grey-sided Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia brunnifrons</i>	1
266	Chestnut-headed Tesia	<i>Cettia castaneocoronata</i>	1
267	Black-throated Bushtit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	1
268	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	1
269	Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	1
270	Sulphur-bellied Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus griseolus</i>	1
271	Buff-barred Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>	1
272	Lemon-rumped Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>	1
273	Brooks's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus subviridis</i>	1
274	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	1
275	Hume's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>	1
276	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	1
277	Western Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus occipitalis</i>	1
278	Blyth's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>	1
279	Grey-hooded Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus xanthoschistos</i>	1
280	Green-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>	1
281	Whistler's Warbler	<i>Seicercus whistleri</i>	1

<sup>4</sup> Split by some authorities as Spot-winged Tit, *Periparus melanolophus*



Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
282	Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>	1
283	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>	1
284	Moustached Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>	1
285	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	1
286	Striated Grassbird	<i>Megalurus palustris</i>	1
287	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	1
288	Golden-headed Cisticola	<i>Cisticola exilis</i>	1
289	Striated Prinia	<i>Prinia crinigera</i>	1
290	Rufous-fronted Prinia	<i>Prinia buchanani</i>	1
291	Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>	1
292	Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>	1
293	Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	1
294	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>	1
295	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	1
296	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	1
297	Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus erythrogenys</i>	1
298	Black-chinned Babbler	<i>Stachyridopsis pyrrhops</i>	1
299	Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>	1
300	Common Babbler	<i>Turdoides caudata</i>	1
301	Striated Babbler	<i>Turdoides earlei</i>	1
302	Large Grey Babbler	<i>Turdoides malcolmi</i>	1
303	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i>	1
304	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>	1
305	Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax rufogularis</i>	1
306	White-throated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax albogularis</i>	1
307	Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax striatus</i>	1
308	Streaked Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron lineatum</i>	1
309	Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron erythrocephalum</i>	1
310	Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>	1
311	Red-billed Leiothrix	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	1
312	Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>	1
313	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	1
314	Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>	1
315	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>	1
316	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	1
317	Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta cinnamoventris</i>	1
318	White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>	1
319	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>	1
320	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>	1
321	Bar-tailed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia himalayana</i>	1
322	Bank Myna	<i>Acridotheres ginginianus</i>	1
323	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	1
324	Pied Myna	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	1
325	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>	1
326	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>	1
327	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1
328	Long-billed Thrush	<i>Zoothera monticola</i>	1

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
329	Tickell's Thrush	<i>Turdus unicolor</i>	1
330	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	1
331	Indian Robin	<i>Copsychus fulicatus</i>	1
332	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	1
333	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	1
334	Rufous-bellied Niltava	<i>Niltava sundara</i>	1
335	Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>	1
336	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>	1
337	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	1
338	White-tailed Rubythroat	<i>Calliope pectoralis</i>	1
339	Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Calliope calliope</i>	1
340	Himalayan Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger rufilatus</i>	1
341	Golden Bush Robin	<i>Tarsiger chrysaeus</i>	1
342	Little Forktail	<i>Enicurus scouleri</i>	1
343	Slaty-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>	1
344	Spotted Forktail	<i>Enicurus maculatus</i>	1
345	Blue Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>	1
346	Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophciata</i>	1
347	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	1
348	Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	1
349	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>	1
350	Slaty-blue Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula tricolor</i>	1
351	Blue-capped Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus coeruleocephala</i>	1
352	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	1
353	Blue-fronted Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>	1
354	Plumbeous Water Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus fuliginosus</i>	1
355	White-capped Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus leucocephalus</i>	1
356	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	1
357	Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>	1
358	Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>	1
359	White-tailed Stonechat	<i>Saxicola leucurus</i>	1
360	Pied Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>	1
361	Grey Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola ferreus</i>	1
362	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	1
363	Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	1
364	Brown Rock Chat	<i>Oenanthe fusca</i>	1
365	Variable Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe picata opistholeuca</i>	1
366	Brown Dipper	<i>Cinclus pallasii</i>	1
367	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>	1
368	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>	1
369	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	1
370	Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>	1
371	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>	1
372	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	1
373	Sind Sparrow	<i>Passer pyrrhonotus</i>	1
374	Russet Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>	1
375	Yellow-throated Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris xanthocollis</i>	1

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	Trip
376	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>	1
377	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	1
378	Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>	1
379	Altai Accentor	<i>Prunella himalayana</i>	1
380	Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophciata</i>	1
381	Western Yellow Wagtail <sup>5</sup>	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	1
382	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	1
383	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1
384	White Wagtail <sup>6</sup>	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	1
385	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>	1
386	Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>	1
387	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	1
388	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	1
389	Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similis</i>	1
390	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	1
391	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	1
392	Rosy Pipit	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>	1
393	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	1
394	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	1
395	Pink-browed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus rodochroa</i>	1
396	Vinaceous Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus vinaceus</i>	1
397	Yellow-breasted Greenfinch	<i>Chloris spinoides</i>	1
398	Crested Bunting	<i>Emberiza lathami</i>	1
399	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	1
400	White-capped Bunting	<i>Emberiza stewarti</i>	1
401	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	1

### Mammal, Reptile, Amphibian and Butterfly<sup>7</sup> List

Count	English Name	Scientific Name	No.
1	Rhesus macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>	1
2	Southern plains gray langur	<i>Semnopithecus dussumieri</i>	1
3	Sambar	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>	1
4	Northern red muntjac	<i>Muntiacus vaginalis</i>	1
5	Hog deer	<i>Axis porcinus</i>	1
6	Chital (spotted deer)	<i>Axis axis</i>	1
7	Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>	1
8	Wild boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	1
9	Asian elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	1
10	Golden jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>	1
11	Red fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	1
12	Bengal tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>	1
13	Indian leopard	<i>Panthera pardus fusca</i>	1

<sup>5</sup> Sykes's Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava beema*

<sup>6</sup> Several races seen, including: Amur (*Motacilla alba leucopsis*), Masked (*M.a. personata*), Swinhoe's (*M.a. baicalensis*) and Indian (*M.a. dukhunensis*)

<sup>7</sup> Thank you to Sue for researching all of the butterflies we managed to photograph (34-46 in list below).



Count	English Name	Scientific Name	No.
14	Jungle cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>	1
15	Yellow-throated marten	<i>Martes flavigula</i>	1
16	Common palm civet	<i>Paradoxurus hermaphroditus</i>	1
17	Indian hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>	1
18	Indian crested porcupine	<i>Hystrix indica</i>	1
19	Five-striped palm squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennantii</i>	1
20	Brown rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	1
21	Indian bush-rat	<i>Golunda ellioti</i>	1
22	House mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>	1
23	Indian flying fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>	1
24	Indian long-eared hedgehog	<i>Hemiechinus collaris</i>	1
25	Mugger	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	1
26	Gharial	<i>Gavialis gangeticus</i>	1
27	Common house gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>	1
28	Himalayan agama	<i>Paralaudakia himalayana</i>	1
29	Common Indian monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	1
30	Indian python	<i>Python molurus</i>	1
31	Indian flap-shelled turtle	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>	1
32	Red-crowned roofed turtle	<i>Batagur kachuga</i>	1
33	Black-spectacled toad	<i>Duttaphrynus melanostictus</i>	1
34	Plain tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	1
35	White orange tip	<i>Ixias marianne</i>	1
36	Yellow orange tip	<i>Ixias pyrene</i>	1
37	Peacock pansy	<i>Junonia almana</i>	1
38	Lemon pansy	<i>Junonia lemonias</i>	1
39	Blue pansy	<i>Junonia orithya</i>	1
40	Painted lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	1
41	Pioneer white	<i>Belenois aurota</i>	1
42	Purple sapphire	<i>Heliophorus epicles</i>	1
43	Himalayan pale grass blue	<i>Pseudozizeeria maha maha</i>	1
44	Indian common rose	<i>Pachliopta a. aristolochiae</i>	1
45	Desert small salmon Arab	<i>Colotis amata amata</i>	1
46	Oriental common evening brown	<i>Melanitis leda leda</i>	1