

India (Darjeeling, Assam, West Bengal) 30/10 – 03/12/2016

Introduction

This report is based on a 5 weeks trip to North-East India on which I was joined by my girlfriend Thai Kong. Sites visited were Tiger Hill and Sandakphu (we did the trek) in Darjeeling, Kaziranga, Nameri and Manas in Assam and finally the Sunderbans. Most of the tour was organized by Help Tourism, Kolkata.

Climate

When visiting the country the weather was generally fine, warm and sunny during the day. Nights and early mornings were freezing cold in the mountains during Sandakphu trek and quite chilly in Assam. Wearing warm clothes including pullover, jacket, warm cap and gloves when driving in an open jeep at 6am is recommended.

Visa

As a German I needed to apply for a visa. It was valid for 6 months from the date of issue.

How to get there

I chose to fly with Emirates from Frankfurt to Kolkata via Dubai.

Getting around

We traveled longer distances twice by train, which is a rather comfortable and relaxed way to travel around. In Darjeeling we used buses and more often shared jeeps that can take you to lots of destinations, especially on small and winding mountain roads. We had one flight from Guwahati to Kolkata. On our Assam tour and to the Sunderbans we made use of taxis. This service was part of the pre-booked tours with Help Tourism. Generally getting around in India by public transport is easy and no problem at all. But be prepared for traffic jams and constant honking noise.

Money

During the time of our stay 1 Euro was worth about 72 Rupees. Unfortunately, the Indian government banned the use of 1000 and 500 Rupee bills overnight after we came back from our trek, so that we were struggling to get along with the cash we had. Banks and ATM's were closed for more than a week and then you could only get 2000 Rupees per transaction for another 10 days or so. If we had not paid most of our tour already to Help Tourism and were not carrying Dollars and Euros in cash, we would not have been able to see and do what we wanted to see, as it was not possible to pay by credit card in the lodges, nor the guides, jeeps, entrance fees etc. in Kaziranga, Nameri and Manas.

Safety

We always felt perfectly safe in India. But to travel to certain states or regions you do need a special permit for safety reasons.

People

During our stay we met only very friendly, honest, relaxed and helpful people and did not have any bad moment with anybody.

Food

As Indian food is my favorite anyway, I was very happy with the food we were eating wherever we went. At all the lodges where we stayed we were served a good variety of excellent local meat and vegetable dishes.

Accommodation

In India you can usually find accommodation for every price level. I think we were quite lucky with the places we stayed at. Sometimes the hotels were a bit noisy, like in Kolkata, Manebhanjan or Lava, but most of them were quiet, friendly and comfortable. My favorite ones were the ones in the Sunderbans, in Kaziranga and Nameri and in Darjeeling.

Books/Reports

I used "Birds of the Indian Subcontinent" by Grimmett and Inskipp as a Field Guide and various trip reports and information found at "Kolkata birding" to prepare for the trip.

Our Guides, Bookings

Help Tourism: our 10 days tour to Assam, the visit of the Sunderbans, Sandakphu trek, our hotels in Darjeeling and Guwahati, 2 train tickets and one flight were pre-arranged, booked and paid with Help Tourism, based in Kolkata. Everything arranged with them worked out perfectly, the lodges and hotels chosen were excellent, the bird guides were also very good and enthusiastic. It was the first time in my life to pre-book such a trip and I did not regret it!

The price for the 10 days Assam tour was more or less 2000 Euros for 2 people, covering accommodation, 3 meals a day, transfer from Guwahati to Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and back to Guwahati by taxi, jeep for safaris inside the national parks, bird guide, driver, entrance fees and permits and a boat trip in Nameri.

For the trek to Sandakphu we paid approximately 600 Euros (5 nights, all meals and accommodation, guide, porter, permit, jeep back to Manebhanjan).

3 nights in the Sunderbans incl. transfer from Kolkata and a ship for myself for 2.5 days cost me around 550 Euros - if I remember well.

Help Tourism PVT. LTD., Sadananda Kuthi, 67A Kali Temple Road, Kolkata-26. Phone: 91 (033) 2455-0917 or 2454-9719/9682 Fax: 2485-4584 Mail: kolkata@helptorism.com or info@helptourism.com

Darjeeling/Tiger Hill: Lama. Trekking and Tourist guide and bird watcher. Recommended and contacted through Little Singamari Homestay. Mail: littlesingamari@gmail.com

Sandakphu Trek: pre-booking through Help Tourism. Our guide Nagan Rumbaz as well as porter Rakesh Roy knew the birds quite well and tried hard to show us as many species as possible. They were both very friendly and nice folks and I can only recommend to do the trek with them.

Lava/Neora Valley: birded one full day with the excellent local bird guide Joseph Lepcha. He organized a jeep for the drive to Neora Valley NP. The forest department, where we had to get our entry permit contacted him for us.

Kaziranga: Pallab, our guide at Kaziranga was very knowledgeable and showed us lots of birds and found a tiger for us! Mail: pallab.kazi94@rediffmail.com and saikiapalabprakash1@gmail.com

Nameri: Rustom Basumatary guided us in Nameri and Manas. He is a great birder and showed us plenty of birds, including some very rare ones. Played the tape to attract some difficult to see species. Mail: rusommms80@gmail.com

Manas: Rustom Basumatary

Sunderbans: Avrajjal Ghosh was my nature guide in the Sunderbans. He knows the birds very well, but is mainly interested in snakes. He is a very nice person and I enjoyed wildlife watching with him a lot. Mail: pitviper18@gmail.com

Itinerary

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 29/10/2016 | Flight Frankfurt to Kolkata via Dubai with Emirates |
| 30/10 | Guest House 66/2B in South Kolkata, friendly but a bit noisy. Meeting Momot and Paul from Help Tourism. Lunch at Biryani Restaurant Arsalan. Picking up Thai from the airport at night. |
| 31/10 | Visit of Kalighat temple. Religious ceremony (end of Diwali) at Babughat at night. |
| 01/11 | Taxi to Kolkata station. Train to New Jalpaiguri, 11h. Taxi (250IR) to nearby Siliguri. Hotel Conclave (2000 IR, OK). |
| 02/11 | Jeep from the jeep stand in front of our hotel to Darjeeling (3h). Lovely Little Singamari Homestay (very relaxed and friendly, excellent food). Visit of the Himalayan Zoo. |

- 03/11 Day trip Tiger Hill with guide Lama (500 IR) and driver Sunil (1800 IR), arranged from our Homestay.
- 04/11 Shared jeep to Manebhanjan (2h, 70 IR). Homestay. First birding near the village with guide Nagan Rumbaz.
- 05/11 Start of our trek to Sandakphu with guide Nagan Rumbaz and porter Rakesh Roy. Hike up to Tumling at 2900m, where we stayed overnight.
- 06/11 Early morning birding. After breakfast hike to Kalipokari at 3200m. Night at Pandim Lodge.
- 07/11 Hike to Sandakphu. Night at Sherpa Chalet Lodge.
- 08/11 Spectacular sunrise and early birding. After breakfast jeep back to Manebhanjan. Night at the same Homestay as before.
- 09/11 Jeep to Darjeeling (70 IR, 1.5h) and then to Kalimpong (130 IR, 3h). Long-Jeep to Lava (80 IR, 1.5h). Hotel Orchid (1500 IR, friendly, bit noisy).
- 10/11 Birding on the road towards Neora Valley. Permit from the forest department for tomorrows trip (300 IR)
- 11/11 Daytrip to Neora Valley with very knowledgeable bird guide Joseph Lepcha (1500 IR) and driver (3000 IR).
- 12/11 Birding along the road to Rashet and on path behind the church.
- 13/11 Jeep (70 IR, 2.5h). Hotel Breathing Stone (1500 IR, friendly, quiet) bit outside the busy town center.
- 14/11 Half day sightseeing tour with a taxi (1500 IR). Durpin Gompa, Dr. Graham`s House, Hindu Temple etc.
- 15/11 Bus from hotel to Siliguru (100 IR, 3h) along the river Teesta. Hotel Gananayak (2400 IR) close to the bus station. Tasty dinner at the New Bombay Store in the city center.
- 16/11 Taxi to station in New Jalpaiguri and train to Guwahati (7h). Hotel Baruah Bhavan.
- 17/11 7:30 pick up from our driver. 4h drive to Kaziranga NP. Bungalow in the beautiful, quiet and friendly Jupuri Ghar Resort. Game drive with guide Pallab in the central range of the NP..
- 18/11 Morning (eastern zone) and afternoon (western zone) birding/game drive with Pallab.

- 19/11 Early morning drive to far western zone (Hoolock Gibbons). Afternoon in the central zone (Finn's Weaver and my first ever Tiger!!).
- 20/11 9:00 with driver to Nameri NP (3h). Bridge across the Brahmaputra. Lodge "Jia Bhorali Wild Resort". Afternoon lovely rafting tour 14km down the Kameng/Jia Bhorali river.
- 21/11 Boat across the river into Nameri NP with guide Rustom. Walk together with armed ranger in the NP. Crested Kingfisher. Afternoon walk through the fields to the river. Few interesting birds.
- 22/11 Again to Nameri NP. Walk through forest and swamp and along the river. Many birds.
- 23/11 With driver and Rustom to Manas NP (7h). "Florian Cottage"
- 24/11 Game drive in the central zone. Drive into the Royal Manas NP in Bhutan for 45 minutes. Wonderful place!!
- 25/11 Full day trip to the eastern part of Manas. Less woodlands, but more grasslands. Black-breasted Parrotbill. Lunchbreak in eco-lodge. Afternoon Kaklabari seed Farm, the best place to find Bengal Floricans. Finally manage to see 4 birds flying.
- 26/11 Game drive and 11:30 with driver to Guwahati Airport. Flight with Indigo (1h) to Kolkata. Guesthouse 66/2B.
- 27/11 Sightseeing Victoria Memorial. Thai returns to Siem Reap at night.
- 28/11 Kolkata
- 29/11 Avra the Naturalist from Help Tourism picks me up at my hotel. 3.5 hours drive down south to the jetty to the Sunderbans near G....1 h by boat to Bali Island. Check in at the lovely Sunderbans Jungle Camp, run by Help Tourism - best accommodation of the trip! Organizing permit at NP office.
- 30/11 All day cruising through the canals and mangroves of the Sunderbans with Avra and a ranger from the NP. Low bird density.
- 01/12 All day long on the boat. Brown-winged Kingfisher
- 02/12 Stroll through the idyllic village. Transport back to Kolkata. Avra invites me to stay with him and his family in their house close to the airport. Evening birding and looking for snakes nearby. Dinner with Avra and family.
- 03/12 Avra drives me to the airport. Pleasant flight home with Emirates.

Tiger Hill 03/11/2016 Zoo 02/11/2016

Birded full day 12km on foot on the old military road to Chattakpur in Sinchil (Senchal) Wildlife Sanctuary, a few km below the top of Tiger Hill (1). Also saw a few birds around and in Darjeeling Zoo (2). We were with the very friendly bird guide Lama, organized through our Little Singamari Homestay. A car drove us and picked us up. Permit was arranged by Lama. Got it on the way early morning. The bird activity was rather good in this open forest area. Satyr Tragopan is rarely seen here, I was very lucky to glimpse a female.

1 Satyr Tragopan 1

4 Kalij Pheasant 1

1 Crested Goshawk 1

1 Himalayan Buzzard 1

1 Speckled Wood Pigeon 2 ?? (flying over)

1 Great Barbet 1

f Blue-throated Barbet (Siliguri)

f Coppersmith Barbet (Siliguri)

3 Yellow-billed Blue Magpie 1

1 Spotted Nutcracker 1

f Green-backed Tit 1 2

c Black-throated Tit 1

1 White-throated Bulbul 1

f Yellow-browed Warbler 1 ??? not on checklist

f Hume`s Leaf Warbler 1

2 Green-crowned (Golden-spectacled) Warbler (S. burkii) 1

f Ashy-throated Warbler 1

2 Golden Babbler 1

f Laughingthrush spec. 1

2 Red-billed Leiothrix 1

1 Bar-throated Siva 1

| | | |
|----|------------------------|-----|
| c | Rufous-winged Fulvetta | 1 |
| fc | Rufous Sibia | 1 2 |
| f | Stripe-throated Yuhina | 1 |
| f | Blue Whistling Thrush | 1 2 |
| f | Green-tailed Sunbird | 1 |

Mt. Khangchendzonga (sleeping Buddha)



Sandakphu Trek 04/11 - 09/11/2016

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1: around Manebhanjan (2100m) | 2: Mane to Tumling (2900m) |
| 3: Tumling to Kalipokari (3200m) | 4: Kalipokari to Sandakphu (3636m) |

wonderful 4 days trek with guide Nagan Rumbaz and porter Rakesh Roy (both knew the birds pretty well). Organized through Help Tourism.

Oak and Rhododendron forest (Tumling to Kalipokari), Bamboo, Pine forest. Lots of birds and fantastic views on 4 of the 5 highest mountains on this planet. Especially Khangchendzonga ("sleeping Buddha") was very impressive! Nights in Manebhanjan (where the trek started), Tumling, Kalipokari and Sandakphu. Simple accommodation, but surprisingly good food. Was not as romantic as I had imagined (quite busy with tourists, half of the walking was done on the road), but still an extraordinary experience and a highlight of our trip. Always birded

before breakfast and then hiked and birded until dark. The path/road was extremely steep in parts. Some physical fitness is necessary to do this trek. Nights were cold (around zero degrees) as was the water in the bathrooms. Think twice about taking a shower! Days were sunny and warm and the sky was blue throughout. We drove back to Mane by pre-booked jeep.

| | | |
|----------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| f | Kalij Pheasant | 1 |
| | Satyr Tragopan (heard) | 3 |
| 2 | Himalayan Vulture | 2 3 |
| 3 | Himalayan Buzzard | 2 4 |
| 2 | Besra | 2 4 |
| 1 | Asian Barred Owl | 3 |
| | Great Barbet (heard) | 3 |
| 1 | Darjeeling Woodpecker | 3 |
| f | Scarlet Minivet | 2 |
| 4 | Yellow-bellied Fantail | 1 3 |
| 2 | White-throated Fantail | 3 |
| f | Yellow-billed Blue Magpie | 3 4 |
| f | Nutcracker | 3 |
| c | Rufous-vented Tit | |
| fc | Green-backed Tit | |
| f | Grey-cheeked Tit | 4 |
| 1 | Black-lored Tit | 4 |
| c | Black-throated Tit | |
| 2 | Rufous-fronted Tit | 3 |
| c | Large-billed Crow | |
| f | Yellow-browed Warbler | ??? not on ckecklist |
| f | Hume`s Leaf Warbler | 2 |
| f | Ashy-throated Warbler | |

1 Chestnut-crowned Warbler 3

f Blue Whistling Thrush 1

fc Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush 1 3

f Black-faced Laughingthrush 3

4 Spotted Laughingthrush 2 4 fantastic observation of this beautiful bird

2 Blue-winged Laughingthrush 2

1 Hoary-throated Barwing 3

1 Red-billed Leiothrix 4

fc Rufous-winged Fulvetta 2

fc White-browed Fulvetta 2 3

fc Rufous Sibia 2

c Rufous-vented Yuhina 2

c Whiskered Yuhina 2

f Brown Parrotbill 2 wonderful observation. Seen from very close!

(2 Fire-tailed Myzornis glimpsed early morning in poor light – probably this species)

2 Eurasian Wren 3

1 Rusty-flanked Treecreeper 3

2 Thrush spec. 4

1 White-capped Water Redstart 1

c Blue-fronted Redstart 2 3 4

1 Himalayan Bluetail 3

f Rufous-bellied Niltava 3 4

1 Rufous-breasted Accentor 4

fc Fire-tailed Sunbird 2 3 4

Grey Wagtail 2

Olive-backed Pipit 2

f Plain Mountain Finch 3

Northern/Indian Red Muntjac (Barking Deer) (*Muntiacus vaginalis*)

Himalayan Striped Squirrel (*Tamiops macclellandi*)

Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel (*Dremomys lokriah*)

Hoary-bellied Himalayan (Irrawaddy) Squirrel (*Calloscirus pygerthrus*)



Mt. Everest view from Sandakphu





impressions from Sandakphu trek – our porter Rakesh, Thai, our guide Nagan and myself

Lava/Neora Valley 09 – 13/11

1: Road to Neora Vally first 2km

2: 14km to Neora Valley with jeep and guide

3: walk with guide from ranger station 3km further

4: road to Rashet

5: path right hand behind church

Lava is a village that is situated at 2350m. We birded on our own around Lava, except for a full day birding with excellent guide Joseph Lepcha. We got the permit at the forest/national park department a few 100m outside of Lava. They also contacted Joseph Lepcha, who arranged a car. Had very good bird activity in the forest throughout the day. We drove 14km by jeep and made many birding stops on the way to the Chaudaferi Camp Ranger Station. After having a simple lunch there, we continued on a path on foot about 3km further. Unfortunately we did not see Ward's Trogon, which is regularly observed in this area. But had fantastic observations of Black-throated Parrotbill, Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler and Golden-breasted Fulvetta.

| | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|---------|
| 1 | Hill Partridge | 2 | (guide) |
| 1 | Mountain Hawk Eagle | 2 | |
| 1 | Eurasian Sparrowhawk | 1 | |
| 2 | Ashy Woodpigeon | 2 | |
| 4 | Ashy-headed Green Pigeon | 1 | |
| | Oriental Turtle Dove | | |
| 3 | Great Barbet | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | Short-billed Minivet | 2 | |
| f | Scarlet Minivet | 2 | |
| 1 | Grey-backed Shrike | 5 | |
| f | Yellow-billed Blue Magpie | 1 | |
| fc | Green-backed Tit | | |
| f | Yellow-cheeked Tit | 2 | |
| f | Rufous-vented Tit | | |
| fc | Yellow-browed Tit | 2 | |
| fc | Black-throated Tit | 1 | 2 |
| c | Black Bulbul | | |

3 Striated Bulbul 2

1 Chestnut-headed Tesia 2

1 Grey-bellied Tesia 2 heard

1 Brown-flanked Bush Warbler 4

2 Pale (Lemon)-rumped Warbler 2 4

2 Buff-barred Warbler 2

f Ashy-throated Warbler 1 2

2 Hume's Leaf Warbler 5

2 Chestnut-crowned Warbler 2

2 Green-crowned (Golden-spectacled) Warbler (S. burkii) 4

3 Grey-cheeked Warbler 2

f Black-faced Warbler 4

1 Rufous-throated Wren Babbler 2 fantastic looks at a singing bird!!!

1 Scaly-breasted Wren Babbler 2

1 Spotted Wren Babbler 2 heard

f Chestnut-capped Babbler 2

Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler 2 heard

1 Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler 5

Striated Laughingthrush 2 seen by guide and Thai

fc Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush 1 2 4 5

fc Bar-throated Siva 1 2

6 Red-billed Leiothrix 1 5

Red-tailed Minla 2 heard

4 Black-headed Shrike Babbler 2

f Golden-breasted Fulvetta 2 3

f White-browed Fulvetta 3

1 Nepal Fulvetta 2

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| c | Whiskered Yuhina | |
| c | Rufous-vented Yuhina | |
| f | Stripe-throated Yuhina | 2 |
| 40 | Black-throated Parrotbill | 3 |
| 1 | Eurasian (Winter) Wren | 3 |
| 3 | White-tailed Nuthatch | 1 2 |
| 4 | Black-breasted Thrush | 4 |
| f | White-browed Bush Robin | 2 |
| 1 | Golden Bush Robin | 2 seen by our guide |
| 1 | White-capped Water Redstart | |
| fc | Blue-fronted Redstart | 1 2 4 5 |
| 1 | Grey Bushchat | 1 |
| 2 | Rufous-gorgetted Flycatcher | 2 |
| 2 | Verditer Flycatcher | 1 5 |
| 2 | Rufous-bellied Niltava | 1 |
| fc | Green-tailed Sunbird | 1 2 3 |
| 1 | Streaked Spiderhunter | 1 |
| 4 | Maroon-backed Accentor | 3 |
| 4 | Yellow-breasted Greenfinch | 4 |
| | Dark-rumped Rosefinch | 2 guide |
| fc | Red Crossbill | 1 5 |
| 2 | Olive-backed Pipit | 4 |



1: central 2: eastern part 3: western 4: far western part

Our visit to Kaziranga, Nameri and Manas was pre-arranged, booked and paid through Help Tourism. We stayed 3 nights at each place in a friendly and pleasant lodge (3 meals included, packed lunch if necessary), had a bird guide and a jeep to drive us around Kaziranga and Manas. Usually an armed guard had to accompany us. The tour started and ended in Guwahati and a car/taxi drove us from place to place. Permits needed to be paid and received every morning before entering the park!!, which was quite a nuisance, esp. since in the early morning the offices were not always occupied yet and thus precious time was lost.

We stayed in the green, peaceful and friendly Jupuri Ghar. We did longer game drives in the mornings and shorter ones in the afternoon. For lunch and a little rest we always drove back to the lodge. With our excellent guide Pallab we visited different parts of the National Park. The central part was close to our lodge, while other parts were more than an hour's drive away. Be aware that it is quite cold driving in the open jeep in the mornings!

The habitat in Kaziranga consists mainly of wetlands, forests and woodlands and expansive grassy savannas. It is very rich in bird life, but is most famous for its one-horned rhinos. Nowadays about 2500 individuals inhabit the park, as well as 1200 elephants and 106 tigers. Was lucky to spot my first ever tiger in the last evening from a watch tower. Also had outstanding observations of family groups of Hoolock Gibbons and Capped Langurs. Compared with the other National Parks, Kaziranga was quite touristy. Do not expect to be there by yourself.

7 Swamp Francolin 1 3

fc Red Junglefowl 1 2 3

Lesser Whistling Duck

Greyleg Goose 2

c Bar-headed Goose

fc Ruddy Shelduck

Northern Shoveller 2

Mallard

Eurasian Wigeon 2

Gadwall 2

Tufted Duck 2

Common Pochard 2

Common Teal

Northern Pintail

Indian Spot-billed Duck

4 Black-necked Stork 1 2 3

2 Black Stork 1

c Asian Openbill

f Woolly-necked Stork

fc Lesser Adjutant Stork

f Spot-billed Pelican 2 3

f Purple Heron 2

f Striated Heron

f Darter

f Black-headed Ibis 1

Great Cormorant

Indian Cormorant

Little Cormorant

1 Osprey 2

f Grey-headed Fish Eagle

f Pallas`s Fish Eagle

1 Steppe Eagle 3

3 Crested Serpent Eagle 1

3 Greater Spotted Eagle 2 3

f Changeable Hawk Eagle

1 Jerdon`s Baza 4

1 Eurasian Sparrowhawk

2 Hen Harrier 1

1 Black-winged Kite 4

2 Eurasian Kestrel 5

| | | |
|----|----------------------------|-----|
| 2 | Peregrine Falcon | |
| 1 | Laggar Falcon | 3 |
| 1 | Black-tailed Crake | 3 |
| | Common Moorhen | |
| f | White-breasted Waterhen | |
| f | Northern Lapwing | |
| fc | Grey-headed Lapwing | |
| fc | Red-wattled Lapwing | |
| fc | River Lapwing | |
| f | Spotted Redshank | 2 5 |
| 1 | Common Redshank | 2 |
| f | Green Sandpiper | 4 5 |
| fc | Common Sandpiper | |
| f | Wood Sandpiper | |
| f | Temminck`s Stint | 1 |
| 1 | Green Imperial Pigeon | 4 |
| 1 | Yellow-footed Green Pigeon | 2 |
| f | Alexandrine Parakeet | |
| c | Rose-ringed Parakeet | |
| f | Blossom-headed Parakeet | |
| 4 | Greater Coucal | |
| 2 | Lesser Coucal | |
| 2 | Dusky Eagle Owl | 2 |
| 1 | Spotted Owlet | 2 |
| 2 | Great Hornbill | |
| 6 | Oriental Pied Hornbill | 1 2 |
| f | Blue-tailed Bee-eater | |

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----|
| 2 | Blue-bearded Bee-eater | 2 |
| fc | Indian Roller | |
| 1 | Hoopoe | 3 |
| fc | White-throated Kingfisher | |
| 1 | Stork-billed Kingfisher | 1 |
| f | Pied Kingfisher | |
| f | Common Kingfisher | |
| 3 | Lineated Barbet | 2 4 |
| 1 | Greater Flameback | 1 |
| 1 | Greater Yellownape | 4 |
| 1 | Large Woodshrike | 3 |
| 1 | Large Cuckoo-shrike | 3 |
| 1 | Common Iora | 2 |
| 3 | Black-hooded Oriole | 1 2 |
| f | Long-tailed Minivet | 2 |
| fc | Scarlet Minivet | 2 3 |
| | Black Drongo | |
| f | Spangled Drongo | |
| 2 | Greater Racket-tailed Drongo | 4 |
| fc | Rufous Treepie | |
| | Long-tailed Shrike | |
| | Grey-backed Shrike | |
| | Brown Shrike | |
| c | Red-vented Bulbul | |
| | Great Tit | |
| 4 | Striated Grassbird | 4 |
| 1 | Zitting Cisticola | 4 |

| | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|----------|---|
| f | Plain Prinia | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | Paddyfield Warbler | 1 | |
| 1 | Smoky Warbler | 1 | |
| 2 | Dusky Warbler | 1 | |
| f | Yellow-browed Warbler | 2 | |
| f | Tickell`s Leaf Warbler | | |
| f | Blyth`s Leaf Warbler | | |
| f | Yellow-vented Warbler | 2 | |
| 1 | Abbott`s Babbler | 3 | |
| f | Pin-striped Tit Babbler | | |
| fc | Chestnut-tailed Starling | | |
| | Asian Pied Starling | | |
| c | Siberian Stonechat | | |
| f | Oriental Magpie Robin | | |
| 2 | Bluethroat | 1 | |
| 1 | Himalayan Rubythroat | 4 | |
| 1 | Little Pied Flycatcher | 1 | |
| 1 | Asian Brown Flycatcher | | |
| 2 | Taiga Flycatcher | 1 | 2 |
| 1 | Golden-fronted Leafbird | 4 | |
| 1 | Ruby-cheeked Sunbird | 2 | |
| 1 | Crimson Sunbird | 4 | |
| 1 | Richard`s Pipit | 4 | |
| 2 | Paddyfield Pipit | 2 | |
| 1 | Rosy Pipit | 1 | |
| f | Citrine Wagtail | | |
| | Yellow Wagtail | | |

- Grey Wagtail
- f Baya Weaver
- 1 **Finn`s Weaver** 1 not easy to see good enough and to identify!
- c Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*)
- 7 **Capped Langur** (*Trachypithecus pileatus*) 4
- 6 **Western Hoolock Gibbon** (*Hoolock hoolock*) 4
- 1 **Tiger** (*Panthera tigris*) 1
- c Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)
- c One-horned (Indian) Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)
- c Water Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalus*)
- c Hog Deer (*Axis porcinus*)
- c **Swamp Deer/Barasingha** (*Rucervus duvaucelii*)
- f Sambar Deer (*Cervus/Rusa unicolor*)
- f Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*)
- 3 **Smooth-coated Otter** (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)
- 3 Hoary-bellied Squirrel (*Callosciurus pygerythus*)
- Black Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa bicolor*)
- 2 **Red-necked Keelback** (*Rhabdophis subminiatus*)
- Blue Tiger (*Tirumala limniace*)
- Striped/Common Tiger (*Danaus genutia*)
- Common Crow (*Euploea core*)
- Blue-striped Crow (*Euploea mulciber*)
- Great Orange Tip (*Hebomoia glaucippe*)

enjoying excellent food at Jupuri Ghar



crossing over to Nameri NP

Nameri NP 20 – 23/11

1: boat trip 2: walk inside NP, also along the river 3: walk to the river + fields

In Nameri we spent two mornings birding inside the NP, where we walked on various trails and along the river, together with our excellent guide Rustom. To get to the NP we had to cross a river with a small rowing boat. Here, in contrast to Kaziranga and Manas, walking around was allowed in company of an armed ranger. The afternoons were spent walking around the village, fields and along the river. We also did a very pleasant rafting trip, 14 km down the Kameng/Jia Bhorali river. Unfortunately White-winged Duck was not around, due to high water levels. We were told that January/February would have been better months to see this sought after species.

Lodging was at the very friendly and nice Jia Bhorali Wild Resort. Tasty local food was served there, too.

Asian Openbill Stork

1 Black Stork 2

c Great Cormorant

Little Cormorant

1 Peregrine 1

1 Collared Falconet 2

2 Pallas's Fish Eagle 1 2

1 Changeable Hawk Eagle 2

3 Jerdon's Baza 2

3 Great Thick-knee 1

2 Indian Thick-knee 2

Common Sandpiper

Green Sandpiper

f River Lapwing

fc Red-wattled Lapwing

2 Little Ringed Plover

f Green Imperial Pigeon

| | | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|----------|--|
| fc | Pin-tailed Green Pigeon | 2 | |
| f | Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon | 2 | |
| f | Yellow-footed Green Pigeon | 2 | |
| 1 | Emerald Dove | 2 | |
| 3 | Vernal Hanging Parrot | 2 | |
| 1 | Asian Barred Owl | 2 | |
| f | White-throated Kingfisher | 1 2 | |
| f | Common Kingfisher | | |
| f | Pied Kingfisher | 1 2 | |
| 3 | Crested Kingfisher | 2 | |
| 1 | Blue-bearded Bee-eater | 2 | nice observation of a bird sitting quietly on a branch |
| f | Green Bee-eater | 2 | |
| 2 | Hoopoe | 2 3 | |
| 2 | Great Hornbill | 3 | |
| 6 | Wreathed Hornbill | 1 | |
| f | Lineated Barbet | 2 | |
| 2 | Blue-throated Barbet | 2 | |
| 4 | Greater Goldenback | 2 | |
| 2 | Lesser Goldenback | 2 | |
| 2 | Greater Yellownap | 2 | |
| 3 | Rufous Woodpecker | 2 | |
| 1 | Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker | 2 | |
| 2 | Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker | 2 | |
| 2 | Common Iora | 2 | |
| c | Long-tailed Minivet | 2 | |
| | Brown Shrike | | |
| 4 | Large Cuckooshrike | 1 2 | |

| | | |
|----------|------------------------------|----------|
| 3 | Black-winged Cuckooshrike | 2 |
| 3 | Greater Racket-tailed Drongo | 2 |
| 1 | Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo | 2 |
| | Spangled Drongo | |
| | Black Drongo | |
| fc | Black-hooded Oriole | |
| 1 | Maroon Oriole | 2 |
| 1 | Yellow-bellied Fantail | 2 |
| 1 | White-throated Fantail | 2 |
| c | Eastern Jungle Crow | |
| fc | Plain Martin | |
| 4 | Bengal Bushlark | 3 |
| 2 | Sand Lark | 2 |
| f | Black-crested Bulbul | 2 |
| 2 | Clamorous Reed Warbler | 3 |
| f | Tickell`s Leaf Warbler | 2 |
| f | Yellow-browed Warbler | 2 |
| 2 | Yellow-vented Warbler | 2 |
| 1 | Dusky Warbler | 2 |
| 1 | Smoky Warbler | 2 |
| fc | Pin-striped Tit Babbler | |
| 1 | Abbott`s Babbler | 2 |
| 2 | Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch | 2 |
| f | Velvet-fronted Nuthatch | 2 |
| f | Chestnut-tailed Starling | 3 |
| f | Spot-winged Starling | 3 |
| 2 | Blue Whistling Thrush | 1 2 |

- f Oriental Magpie Robin
- Common Stonechat
- 3 Plumbeous Water Redstart 1 2
- 1 White-capped Water Redstart 2
- f Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher 2
- 1 Pale Blue Flycatcher 2
- 1 Little Pied Flycatcher 2
- 1 Snowy-browed Flycatcher 2
- 1 Pale-chinned Flycatcher 2**
- 3 Small Niltava 2**
- 2 Golden-fronted Leafbird 2
- 2 Oriental White-eye 2
- 1 Crimson Sunbird 2
- c Baya Weaver 3
- f Scaly-throated Munia 3
- f White Wagtail

- f Rhesus Macaque (Macaca mulatta)
- 1 Capped Langur (Trachypithecus pileatus) 2
- 3 Water Buffalo (Bubalus bubalus) 2
- 1 Northern Red (Indian) Muntjac (Barking Deer) (Muntiacus vaginalis) 1
- 2 Assam Roofed Turtle (Pangshura sylhetensis) 2**
- 2 Hoary-bellied Squirrel (Callosciurus pygerythus) 2
- 1 Black Giant Squirrel (Ratufa bicolor) 2
- Garden Lizard (Calotes versicolor)
- Great Orange Tip (Hebomoia glaucippe)
- Grass Yellow (Eurema hecabe)

Common Yeoman (*Cirrochroa tyche*)

impressions of Manas NP: Manas river bordering Bhutan, lunchbreak, game drive





Manas NP 23/11– 26/11/2016

1: Manas NP 2: Kaklabari Seed-Farm

We stayed 3 nights at the nice and friendly Florian Cottage and birded sometimes all day long with our guide Rustom. Drove by jeep to different areas of the park and in contrast to Kaziranga here it was possible to drive around on many small, partly overgrown jeep tracks, which was much more interesting and more fun, too. Also entered the Bhutanese part of Manas, called Royal Manas NP, for an hour. Found Manas to be the most beautiful NP out of the 3 parks visited in those 10 days. Wonderful forests, mountains, grasslands, woodlands and crystal clear streams together with fantastic birding.

- 3 Kalij Pheasant
- fc Indian Peafowl
- Ruddy Shelduck
- f Black Stork
- f Lesser Adjutant Stork
- Openbill
- 2 Peregrine

| | | | |
|----------|----------------------------|----------|---------------|
| 1 | Common Kestrel | 2 | |
| 1 | Collared Falconet | | good looks! |
| 1 | Osprey | 2 | |
| 1 | Himalayan Griffon | | |
| f | Hen Harrier | 2 | |
| | Black Kite | | |
| 2 | Black-winged Kite | | |
| 1 | Pallas`s Fish Eagle | | |
| 1 | Steppe Eagle | | |
| 1 | Rufous-bellied Eagle | | |
| 3 | Black Eagle | | |
| f | Changeable Hawk Eagle | | |
| f | Crested Serpent Eagle | | |
| 1 | Himalayan Buzzard | | |
| 2 | Jerdon`s Baza | | |
| 1 | Crested Goshawk | | |
| 1 | Besra | | |
| 4 | Bengal Florican | 2 | flying |
| | River Lapwing | | |
| | Red-wattled Lapwing | | |
| f | Common Redshank | | |
| 1 | Spotted Redshank | | |
| f | Imperial Green Pigeon | | |
| c | Yellow-footed Green Pigeon | | |
| f | Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon | | |
| c | Pin-tailed Green Pigeon | | |
| f | Ashy-headed Green Pigeon | | |

| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| c | Red-breasted Parakeet |
| 1 | Green-billed Malkoha |
| 1 | Asian Barred Owlet |
| 1 | Collared Owlet |
| fc | Indian Roller |
| | Green Bee-eater |
| | White-throated Kingfisher |
| | Common Kingfisher |
| 1 | Great Hornbill |
| fc | Lineated Barbet |
| f | Blue-throated Barbet |
| 1 | Eurasian Wryneck |
| | Greater Yellownap |
| | Lesser Yellownap |
| f | Grey-headed Woodpecker |
| 1 | Common Woodshrike |
| f | Ashy Woodswallow |
| 2 | Black-winged Cuckooshrike |
| f | Common Iora |
| fc | Long-tailed Minivet |
| fc | Long-tailed Shrike |
| fc | Grey-backed Shrike |
| | Ashy Drongo |
| | Bronzed Drongo |
| | Greater Racket-tailed Drongo |
| | Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo |
| c | Black-hooded Oriole |

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| f | Fairy Bluebird | | |
| f | Yellow-bellied Fantail | | |
| f | Rufous Treepie | | |
| f | Bengal Bushlark | | |
| 1 | Zitting Cisticola | | |
| 1 | Golden-headed Cisticola | | |
| f | Ashy Prinia | | |
| f | Plain Prinia | | |
| fc | Striated Grassbird | | |
| 1 | Greenish Warbler | | |
| f | Jungle Babbler | | |
| fc | Striated Babbler | | |
| f | Yellow-eyed Babbler | | |
| 2 | Jerdon`s Babbler | | |
| fc | Rufous-vented Laughingthrush | | |
| f | Lesser Neclaced Laughingthrush | | |
| 2 | Black-breasted Parrotbill | E | fantastic observation! |
| 1 | Blue Rock Thrush | | |
| f | Blue Whistling Thrush | | |
| 1 | Bluethroat | | |
| 1 | Siberian Rubythroat | | |
| | Oriental Magpie Robin | | |
| 1 | White-rumped Shama | | |
| 2 | White-capped Water Redstart | | |
| c | Siberian/Common Stonechat | | |
| 3 | Hodgson`s Bushchat | | |
| 2 | Black-backed Forktail | | |

- 1 Taiga Flycatcher
- f Small Niltava very good looks!
- f Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher
- f Golden-fronted Leafbird
- f Plain Flowerpecker
- 2 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker
- 2 Streaked Spiderhunter
- 2 Rosy Pipit
- Paddyfield Pipit
- f Crested Bunting

Rhesus Macaque (Macaca mulatta)

Capped Langur (Trachypithecus pileatus)

Asian Elephant (Elephas maximus)

One-horned (Indian) Rhinoceros (Rhinoceros unicornis)

Asian Water Buffalo (Bubalus bubalus)

Hog Deer (Axis porcinus)

Swamp Deer/Barasingha (Rucervus duvaucelii)

Northern Red (Indian) Muntjac(Barking Deer) (Muntiacus vaginalis)

Wild Boar (Sus scrofa)

cruising the Sunderbans, Red-tailed Bamboo Pit-Viper, huge Saltwater Crocodile, Blue Tiger





Sunderbans Tiger Reserve 29/11 – 02/12/2016

The visit of the Sunderbans was organized through Help Tourism and I stayed at their eco lodge, the Sunderbans Jungle Camp on Bali Island. The visit included pick up from my hotel in Kolkata and transfer with taxi and vessel to Bali Island. The camp is situated in a lovely

garden setting. The bungalow was very huge and comfortable, the staff friendly and the local food excellent. Some of the meals were freshly prepared on the boat.

All bird watching was done from a ship. Walking in the Sunderbans was strictly prohibited due to the danger of meeting one of the man-eating tigers. When we visited the NP office or a watch tower, all walkways or houses were fenced off like at a high security prison. I spent 2 full days cruising the canals of the Sunderbans together with naturalist Avra from Help Tourism, a ranger from the National Park, a skipper and his helper and a cook.

Birding was slow and difficult from the ship. As the habitat was not very diverse, the number of bird species seen could not match with the other places visited. But was still interesting to bird and see the biggest mangrove forest of the world. Avra and the staff of the ship and the camp had a big share of the fun of this experience as well.

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| fc | Lesser Adjutant Stork |
| 60 | Lesser Whistling Duck |
| 2 | Peregrine |
| 2 | Short-toed Snake Eagle |
| 2 | Oriental Honey Buzzard |
| 3 | Shikra |
| 2 | White-breasted Waterhen |
| f | Redshank |
| 1 | Greenshank |
| c | Common Sandpiper |
| 1 | Little Ringed Plover |
| 3 | Sand Plover |
| f | Eurasian Curlew |
| f | Whimbrel |
| c | Rose-ringed Parakeet |
| f | Asian Koel |
| f | Asian Palm Swift |
| 2 | Brown-winged Kingfisher |
| c | Black-capped Kingfisher |

| | |
|----------|---|
| f | White-throated Kingfisher |
| 5 | Collared Kingfisher |
| f | Common Kingfisher |
| 2 | Pied Kingfisher |
| fc | Green Bee-eater |
| 1 | Lesser Goldenback |
| f | Common Iora |
| fc | Small Minivet |
| c | Bronzed Drongo |
| f | Black-hooded Oriole |
| 1 | Great Tit |
| 2 | Dusky Warbler |
| f | Greenish Warbler |
| | Oriental Magpie Robin |
| 2 | Oriental White-eye |
| 1 | Pale-billed Flowerpecker |
| f | Purple Sunbird |
| f | Purple-rumped Sunbird |
| f | White Wagtail |
| 5 | Estuarine (Saltwater) Crocodile |
| f | Asian Water Monitor Lizard (<i>Varanus salvator</i>) |
| | Rhesus Macaque (<i>Macaca mulatta</i>) |
| f | Spotted Deer/Chital (<i>Axis axis</i>) |
| f | Wild Boar (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) |
| | Indian (Common) Grey Mongoose (<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>) |
| 2 | Red-tailed Bamboo Pit Viper (<i>Trimeresurus erythrurus</i>) |

1 Checkered Keelback (*Xenochrophis pisator*)

Red Fiddler Crab

Mudcrabs

Hermit Crabs

Butterflies:

Blue Tiger (*Tirumala limniace*)

Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*)

Common/Striped Tiger (*Danaus genutia*)

White Tiger (*Danaus melanippus*)

Common Crow (*Euploea core*)

Common Mormon (*Papilio polytes*)

Common Palmfly (*Elymnias hypermnestra*)

Peacock Pansey/Tagpfauenauge (*Aglais io*)

Common/Indian Jezebel (*Delias eucharis*)

Kolkata (New Town) 02/12/2016

Avra, who invited me to stay with him and his family, spent an evening birding in some of New Town wetlands with me. Avra is particularly interested in snakes and managed to show me some species.

1 Greater Coucal

Long-tailed Shrike

Plain Prinia

3 Clamorous Reed Warbler

1 Blyth`s Reed Warbler

1 Sulphur-bellied Warbler (probably, bad light conditions)

Red Avadavat

- f Northern (Five-striped) Palm Squirrel *Funambulus pennantii*) at Victoria Mem. garden
- 1 **Smooth-scaled Water Snake (*Enhydris enhydris*)**
- 1 **Olive Keelback (*Atretium schistosum*)**
- 1 **Painted Keelback (*Xenochrophis cerasogaster*)**
- 1 **Checkered Keelback (*Xenochrophis pisator*)**

Birdlist:

Swamp Francolin

7 were seen from a watchtower just before dark in Kaziranga

Hill Partridge

glimpsed by our guide at Tiger Hill and Neora Valley. Missed it two times!

Satyr Tragopan

a female seen for a short moment at Tiger Hill. Heard Sandakphu Trek between Tumling and Kalipokari

Kalij Pheasant

4 were seen at Tiger Hill, 2 near Manebanjiang, 3 in Manas

Red Junglefowl

Fairly common in Kaziranga

Indian Peafowl

Fairly common in Kaziranga and Manas

Lesser Whistling-Duck

commonly found in Kaziranga. A flock of about 60 birds were seen in the Sunderbans

Greylag Goose

seen in Kaziranga

Bar-headed Goose

these birds were quite common in Kaziranga

Ruddy Shelduck

not uncommon in Kaziranga. Few in Manas

Gadwall

found at Kaziranga

Eurasian Wigeon

found in the eastern part of Kaziranga NP

Mallard

seen in Kaziranga

Indian Spot-billed Duck

few birds were found in Kaziranga

Northern Pintail

observed in Kaziranga

Northern Shoveller

seen in Kaziranga

Common Teal

seen in Kaziranga

Common Pochard

seen in Kaziranga

Tufted Duck

seen in Kaziranga

Asian Openbill

common

Black Stork

2 birds were seen flying in Kaziranga, 1 in Nameri, some in Manas

Woolly-necked Stork

few in Kaziranga

Black-necked Stork

4 beautiful observations of this impressive stork in Kaziranga

Lesser Adjutant

fairly common in Kaziranga, in Manas and in the Sunderbans

Black-headed Ibis

only seen in Kaziranga

Striated Heron

Indian Pond Heron

Grey Heron

Purple Heron

2 birds in Kaziranga

Cattle Egret

Great Egret

Intermediate Egret

Little Egret

Spot-billed Pelican

not uncommon in Kaziranga

Darter

seen in Kaziranga

Little Cormorant

Indian Cormorant

Great Cormorant

Collared Falconet

one bird was seen flying (chased by Drongos) at the White-winged Duck site in Nameri. One was found in Manas NP. Had excellent looks at it!

Common Kestrel

one was observed at the Florican site in Manas NP

Laggar Falcon

this bird was a surprise sighting in Kaziranga just before dusk. Flew fast and low in front of our car

Peregrine Falcon

single birds in Kaziranga, 1 in Nameri, 2 in Manas, 2 in the Sunderbans

Osprey

one was seen at Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Jerdon`s Baza

1 in Kaziranga, 3 in Nameri, 2 in Manas

Black-winged Kite

1 in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Black Kite

Brahminy Kite

Pallas`s Fish Eagle

few of those beautiful raptors were seen in Kaziranga, 2 in Nameri and 1 in Manas NP

Grey-headed Fish Eagle

few were spotted in Kaziranga

Black Eagle

3 sightings in Manas

Oriental Honey-Buzzard

2 were seen in the Sunderbans

Himalayan Vulture (Griffon)

Only two birds were seen during Sandakphu Trek, 1 in Manas

Short-toed Snake Eagle

2 individuals were spotted in the Sunderbans

Crested Serpent Eagle

few in Kaziranga and in Manas

Hen Harrier

2 in Kaziranga, 3 in Manas (Kaklabari Seed Farm)

Crested Goshawk

A single bird was seen at Tiger Hill. Another observation in Manas

Shikra

3 seen in the Sunderbans

Besra

2 were seen during Sandakphu trek, 1 in Manas

Eurasian Sparrowhawk

A single bird seen in Lava, another one in Kaziranga

Himalayan Buzzard

A single bird at Tiger Hill, 3 Sandakphu trek, 1 in Manas

Greater Spotted Eagle

3 individuals were observed in Kaziranga

Steppe Eagle

one bird was found in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Rufous-bellied Eagle

one was seen in Manas

Changeable Hawk Eagle

seen in Kaziranga, Nameri and Manas

Mountain Hawk Eagle

One observation in Neora Valley

Bengal Florican

difficult to see this time of year. Finally saw 4 birds flying (about every 2 minutes an individual flew to another field) at Kaklabari Seed Farm, in Manas NP, at dusk! Had to see this species!!

Black-tailed Crake

one observation in Kaziranga

White-breasted Waterhen

seen in Kaziranga and in the Sunderbans

Eurasian Coot

Common Moorhen

seen in Kaziranga NP

Indian Thick-knee

2 were found in Nameri

Great Thick-knee

3 seen in Nameri

Bronze-winged Jacana

Northern Lapwing

few in Kaziranga

River Lapwing

fairly common in Kaziranga, few in Nameri and Manas

Grey-headed Lapwing

fairly common in Kaziranga, few seen in the Sunderbans

Red-wattled Lapwing

fairly common in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas

Little Ringed Plover

2 were observed in Nameri, 1 in the Sunderbans

Greater Sand Plover

3 in the Sunderbans

Whimbrel

seen at few occasions in the Sunderbans

Eurasian Curlew

few were observed in the Sunderbans

Spotted Redshank

few in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Common Redshank

one was found in Kaziranga, few in Manas and in the Sunderbans

Common Greenshank

1 in the Sunderbans

Green Sandpiper

few were spotted in Kaziranga and Nameri

Wood Sandpiper

few in Kaziranga

Common Sandpiper

fairly common in suitable habitat

Temminck`s Stint

few were seen in Kaziranga

Ashy Wood Pigeon

Good looks at 2 birds in Neora Valley

Green Imperial Pigeon

small numbers seen in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas

Barred Cuckoo Dove ????

few in Nameri

Oriental Turtle Dove

Eurasian Collared Dove

Red-collared Dove

Spotted Dove

Ashy-headed Green Pigeon

first 4 individuals in Lava, then some in Manas NP

Yellow-footed Green Pigeon

one observation in Kaziranga, few in Nameri, common in Manas

Pin-tailed Green Pigeon

this species was quite common in Nameri and common in Manas

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon

few were seen in Nameri and Manas

Emerald Dove

only one individual in Nameri

Vernal Hanging Parrot

3 were seen eating fruits in Nameri

Alexandrine Parakeet

few seen in Kaziranga

Rose-ringed Parakeet

this species was common in Kaziranga and in the Sunderbans

Blossom-headed Parakeet

a flock of those fast flying Parakeets was observed in central Kaziranga NP

Red-breasted Parakeet

this pretty Parakeet was common in Manas

Asian Koel

few in the Sunderbans

Green-billed Malkoha

one sighting in Manas NP

Greater Coucal

few birds spotted in Kaziranga

Lesser Coucal

2 seen in Kaziranga

Collared Owlet

nice looks at a bird at its daytime roost in Manas

Spotted Owlet

a single bird was seen in Kaziranga

Asian Barred Owlet

Had very good looks at a bird just behind Tumling. Other one`s were found in Nameri and in Manas

Dusky Eagle Owl

2 birds were found during day time at their roost in Kaziranga NP

Asian Palm Swift

seen in the Sunderbans

Stork-billed Kingfisher

a single bird in Kaziranga

Brown-winged Kingfisher

2 birds were found early morning on our third day in the Sunderbans. They were rather shy.

White-throated Kingfisher

fairly common in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and the Sunderbans

Black-capped Kingfisher

a common sight in the Sunderbans

Collared Kingfisher

5 observations in the Sunderbans

Common Kingfisher

found in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and the Sunderbans

Crested Kingfisher

3 of those giant Kingfishers were finally observed early morning on our second day along the river in Nameri

Pied Kingfisher

few in Kaziranga, Nameri. 2 in the Sunderbans.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater

2 birds were seen flying in Kaziranga. One good observation in Nameri

Blue-tailed Bee-eater

few birds in Kaziranga

Green Bee-eater

seen in Nameri, Manas and the Sunderbans

Indian Roller

regularly found in Kaziranga and in Manas

Hoopoe

seen in Kaziranga, Nameri and in Kolkata

Oriental Pied Hornbill

6 were spotted in Kaziranga

Great Hornbill

2 were observed in Kaziranga, another 2 in Nameri, 1 in Manas

Wreathed Hornbill

6 were seen in Nameri

Great Barbet

First an individual at Tiger Hill. Heard Sandakphu trek. 3 seen in Lava and Neora Valley

Lineated Barbet

few in Kaziranga and Nameri. Fairly common in Manas

Blue-throated Barbet

Few were seen in Siliguri, 2 in Nameri, some in Manas

Coppersmith Barbet

Few birds in Siliguri while waiting for our shared Jeep to leave

Eurasian Wryneck

a single observation in Manas

Rufous Woodpecker

3 in Nameri

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker

2 in Nameri

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker

one observation in Nameri NP

Darjeeling Woodpecker

A singleton was found between Tumling and Kalipokari.

Lesser Yellownape

some were seen in Manas

Greater Yellownape

a single one was seen in Kaziranga, 2 in Nameri, few in Manas

Gray-headed Woodpecker

few in Manas

Greater Goldenback (Flameback)

one was found in Kaziranga, 4 in Nameri

Lesser Goldenback (Flameback)

2 in Nameri, 1 in the Sunderbans

Common Woodshrike

seen in Manas

Large Woodshrike

1 in Kaziranga

Ashy Woodswallow

found in Manas

Large (Indian) Cuckooshrike

1 was seen in Kaziranga, 4 in Nameri

Black-winged Cuckooshrike

3 were found in Nameri, few in Manas

Common Iora

small numbers seen in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and in the Sunderbans

Small Minivet

those beauties were quite common in the Sunderbans

Long-tailed Minivet

Fairly common in Neora Valley, Nameri, Manas and Kaziranga

Scarlet Minivet

Few Sandakphu trek and Neora Valley. Fairly common Kaziranga

Short-billed Minivet

2 birds seen in Neora Valley

Brown Shrike

seen in several places

Long-tailed Shrike

found in several sites

Grey-backed Shrike

1 in Lava, few in Kaziranga and Manas

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo

1 was observed in Nameri. Also in Manas

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

2 were seen in Kaziranga, 3 in Nameri, some in Manas

Spangled Drongo

seen in Nameri and other places

Black Drongo

seen in several sites

Ashy Drongo

seen in Manas and other sites

Bronzed Drongo

seen in Manas and other sites. Common in the Sunderbans

Black-hooded Oriole

few in Kaziranga, Nameri and the Sunderbans. Common in Manas

Maroon Oriole

only one observation in Nameri

Yellow-bellied Fantail

4 in Sandakphu trek, 1 in Nameri, few in Manas

White-throated Fantail

2 were found on Sandakphu trek, 1 in Nameri

Yellow-billed Blue Magpie

First 3 individuals at Tiger Hill, then few on Sandakphu trek and in Lava

Rufous Treepie

fairly common in Kaziranga and Manas

Large-billed Crow

Common on Sandakphu trek

Eastern Jungle Crow

seen in Nameri and other sites

House Crow

Spotted Nutcracker

1 was seen in Darjeeling Zoo, few on Sandakphu trek

Great Tit

seen at various sites

Green-backed Tit

Fairly common at Tiger Hill, during Sandakphu Trek, in Lava and Neora Valley

Black-lored Tit

One bird was observed near Sandakphu

Yellow-cheeked Tit

Few of these Tits were found in Neora Valley

Rufous-vented Tit

This species was common during Sandakphu trek. Few more seen in Lava and Neora Valley

Grey-crested Tit

Few were found around Sandakphu

Yellow-browed Tit

Quite common in Neora Valley

Black-throated Tit

This bird was fairly common at Tiger Hill, on Sandakphu Trek, in Lava and Neora Valley. Common, but pretty!

Rufous-fronted Tit (*Aegithalos iouschistos*)

2 of those pretty birds were found between Tumling and Kalipokari

Plain Martin

fairly common in Nameri

Sand Martin

Barn Swallow

seen in Nameri among other sites

Bengal Bushlark

first seen in Nameri, then in Manas

Sand Lark

2 on sandbanks in Nameri

Striated Bulbul

3 were found in Neora Valley

Black Bulbul

This species was very common in Lava and Neora Valley

Black-crested Bulbul

some were found in Nameri

Red-whiskered Bulbul

a regular sight

Red-vented Bulbul

a regular sight

White-throated Bulbul

1 was observed at Tiger Hill, another one in Manas NP

Plain Prinia

not uncommon in Kaziranga and Manas

Ashy Prinia

few sightings in Manas

Zitting Cisticola

1 in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Golden-headed Cisticola

a single observation in Manas

Common Tailorbird

Striated Grassbird

few in Kaziranga, fairly common in Manas

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler

Seen in Lava

Clamorous Reed Warbler

seen in Nameri and in New Town, Kolkata

Paddyfield Warbler

one was observed in Kaziranga

Blyth's Reed Warbler

seen in New Town, Kolkata

Grey-bellied Tesia **heard**

heard in Neora Valley

Chestnut-headed Tesia

Only one individual was seen in Neora Valley

Dusky Warbler

2 birds were found in Kaziranga, 1 in Nameri, 2 in the Sunderbans

Smoky Warbler

one bird was seen in Kaziranga and in Nameri

Tickell`s Leaf Warbler

few in Kaziranga, Nameri

Buff-barred Warbler

Two birds were found in Neora Valley

Ashy-throated Warbler

We found a few at Tiger Hill, on Sandakphu trek, in Lava and Neora Valley

Pale (Lemon)-rumped Warbler

One individual in Lava, one in Neora Valley

Yellow-browed Warbler

Some birds of this species were seen at Tiger Hill, during Sandakphu trek, in Kaziranga and Nameri

Hume`s Leaf Warbler

Observed at Tiger Hill and on Sandakphu trek and in Lava

Greenish Warbler

1 was identified in Manas NP, few were seen in the Sunderbans

Blyth`s Leaf Warbler

few in Kaziranga

Black-faced Warbler

Only found in Lava

Yellow-vented Warbler

some birds observed in Kaziranga, 2 in Nameri

White-spectacled Warbler

A singleton at Tiger Hill

Green-crowned (Golden-spectacled) Warbler (S. burkii)

A singleton at Tiger Hill plus 2 birds in Lava were most probably this species

Grey-cheeked Warbler

3 birds seen in Neora Valley

Chestnut-crowned Warbler

Seen on Sandakphu trek and Neora Valley

Abbott`s Babbler

one observation in Kaziranga, one in Nameri

Scaly-breasted Wren Babbler

Good looks at a bird in Neora Valley

Spotted Wren Babbler

Heard in Neora Valley. Did not come out and show.

Rufous-throated Wren Babbler

An outstanding observation of a singing individual

Pygmy Wren Babbler

heard in Neora Valley

Pin-striped Tit Babbler

few spotted in Kaziranga, fairly common in Nameri

Chestnut-capped Babbler

Few in Neora Valley

Golden Babbler

Only seen at Tiger Hill

Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler

Heard in Neora Valley

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler

A good observation in Lava. More birds heard.

Striated Babbler

this species was rather common in Manas NP

Jungle Babbler

few were seen in Kalimpong and in Manas NP

Yellow-eyed Babbler

few of those Babblers were spotted in Manas

Jerdon`s Babbler

2 of those globally threatened birds were observed in grassland in Manas NP

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush

only seen once in Manas

Spotted Laughingthrush

4 birds were seen during Sandakphu trek. Had a fantastic observation near Sandakphu. A real beautiful bird if seen well!

Rufous-necked Laughingthrush

quite common and easy to see in Manas

Blue-winged Laughingthrush

Few seen during Sandakphu trek

Striated Laughingthrush

Seen by Thai and our guide in Neora Valley

Black-faced Laughingthrush

Few of this species was found on Sandakphu trek

Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush

Few birds were seen around Mane and during Sandakphu trek. Fairly common in Lava and Neora Valley (the commonest LT)

Hoary-throated Barwing

A single bird was seen between Tumling and Kalipokari

Red-billed Leiothrix

First seen at Tiger Hill. Another observation on Sandakphu trek. 6 birds seen in Lava

Bar-throated Siva

A single individual was found at Tiger Hill. Commonly observed in Lava and Neora Valley

Red-tailed Minla

Heard in Neora Valley

Black-headed Shrike Babbler

4 were found in Neora Valley

Golden-breasted Fulvetta

This very pretty bird was seen in Neora Valley

Rufous-winged Fulvetta

This bird was common at Tiger Hill and on Sandakphu trek

White-browed Fulvetta

Quite common on Sandakphu trek, few were seen in Neora Valley

Nepal Fulvetta

A single bird was seen in Neora Valley

Rufous Sibia

This bird was fairly common at Tiger Hill, in Darjeeling Zoo, on Sandakphu trek and in Lava

Striated Yuhina ??????????

Whiskered Yuhina

Common on Sandakphu trek, in Lava and Neora Valley

Stripe-throated Yuhina

Few birds seen at Tiger Hill and in Neora Valley

Rufous-vented Yuhina

This bird was commonly seen during Sandakphu trek, in Lava and at Neora Valley

Black-breasted Parrotbill E

fantastic observation of two individuals in Manas NP. We saw them singing!!

Black-throated Parrotbill

A flock of at least 40 individuals was seen in Neora Valley. Beautiful observation!!!!

Brown Parrotbill

Had a wonderful observation of a group in a bamboo thicket on the way to Tumling

Fire-tailed Myzornis

2 birds glimpsed around Kalipokari early morning in bad light conditions were most probably this species

Oriental White-eye

seen in Nameri and the Sunderbans in small numbers

Eurasian Wren

Seen on Sandakphu trek and in Neora Valley

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch

2 bird of this species were observed in Nameri

White-tailed Nuthatch

3 birds seen in Lava and Neora Valley

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

several were found in Nameri

Rusty-flanked Treecreeper

A single observation between Tumling and Kalipokari

Spot-winged Starling

few were observed in Nameri

Jungle Myna

Common Myna

Asian Pied Starling

seen at Kaziranga and other sites

Chestnut-tailed Starling

seen in Kaziranga and Nameri

Blue Whistling Thrush

Found at Tiger Hill, in Darjeeling Zoo, on Sandakphu trek, in Nameri and Manas

Black-throated Thrush

4 birds observed in Lava were most probably of this species

Bluethroat

2 found in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Siberian Rubythroat

one was seen in Manas NP

Himalayan (White-tailed) Rubythroat

one bird was glimpsed in Kaziranga

Golden Bush Robin

Seen by our guide in Neora Valley NP

White-browed Bush Robin

Few birds found in Neora Valley

Himalayan Bluetail

A female was observed between Tumling and Kalipokari on Sandakphu trek

Oriental Magpie Robin

found in Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and the Sunderbans

White-rumped Shama

one was spotted in Manas NP

Plumbeous Water Redstart

3 were found in Nameri

White-capped Water Redstart

few sightings of this bird. Near Manebanjiang, in Lava, Nameri and Manas NP

Blue-fronted Redstart

This bird was common on Sandakohu trek. Also found in Lava and Neora Valley

Black-backed Forktail

2 sightings in Manas. One was actually seen on the Bhutanese side.

Hodgson`s Bushchat

3 individuals were identified in Manas NP

Common Stonechat

very common in Kaziranga and Manas. Also seen in Nameri NP

Grey Bushchat

Seen around Lava

Blue Rock Thrush

only a single individual was seen in Manas NP

Asian Brown Flycatcher

a single one was seen in Kaziranga NP

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher

2 birds found at the road to Neora Valley NP

Taiga Flycatcher

2 in Kaziranga, 1 in Manas

Snowy-browed Flycatcher

a singleton in Nameri

Little Pied Flycatcher

spotted in Kaziranga and Nameri

Verditer Flycatcher

2 were found around Lava

Pale Blue Flycatcher

1 in Nameri

Pale-chinned Flycatcher

a female was spotted in Nameri

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher

few in Nameri and Manas

Rufous-bellied Niltava

Few individuals observed during Sandakphu trek, 2 in Lava

Small Niltava

3 seen very clear in Nameri, few good looks in Manas NP

Asian Fairy Bluebird

few of those beauties were observed in Manas

Golden-fronted Leafbird

1 in Kaziranga, 2 in Nameri, few in Manas NP

Pale-billed Flowerpecker

one observation was made around the main entrance in the Sunderbans

Plain Flowerpecker

few were seen in Manas NP

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker

2 birds were found in Manas NP

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird

a single observation in Kaziranga

Purple Sunbird

few in the Sunderbans

Purple-rumped Sunbird

few were observed in the Sunderbans

Green-tailed Sunbird

This beautiful bird was observed at Tiger Hill, in Lava and Neora Valley

Fire-tailed Sunbird

this bird was fairly common during Sandakphu trek

Crimson Sunbird

a singleton was found in Kaziranga, another one in Nameri NP

Streaked Spiderhunter

Seen in Lava and Manas

House Sparrow

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Baya Weaver

few in Kaziranga NP, common in Nameri NP

Finn`s Weaver

a single bird was finally identified in Kaziranga NP. It was not easy to find this endangered species and not easy to identify.

Red Avadavat

seen around New Town, Kolkata

Scaly-breasted Munia

few were seen feeding in the fields around Nameri NP

Rufous-breasted Accentor

A single observation on the way up to Sandakphu

Maroon-backed Accentor

4 birds seen on the track behind the Ranger Station in Neora Valley NP

Yellow Wagtail

seen for example in Kaziranga NP

Citrine Wagtail

few in Kaziranga

Grey Wagtail

White Wagtail

small numbers at several sites

Richard`s Pipit

one was found in Kaziranga NP

Paddyfield Pipit

seen in Kaziranga and Manas

Olive-backed Pipit

Seen on Sandakphu trek and in Lava

Rosy Pipit

a single bird was found in Kaziranga, 2 in Manas

Yellow-breasted Greenfinch

4 birds were found in Lava

Plain Mountain Finch

3 small flocks seen during Sandakphu trek

Dark-rumped Rosefinch

Seen by our guide in Neora Valley

Rosefinch spec.

seen in Lava and on Sandakphu trek. Flying too far to identify them clearly

Red Crossbill

This bird was fairly common around Lava.

Crested Bunting

few were spotted in Manas NP

Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*)

very common in Kaziranga. Also seen in Nameri and in the Sunderbans

Capped Langur (*Trachypithecus pileatus*)

those very beautiful primates were observed in Kaziranga, Nameri and Manas

Western Hoolock Gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*)

had a wonderful observation of a family in Kaziranga

Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)

I spotted my first and much desired tiger from a watchtower in Kaziranga. As it sat down after having crossed a track, I had it 30 minutes in my bins!

Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

fairly common in Kaziranga and Manas. Had wonderful observations from close range, like mothers with their babies.

One-horned (Indian) Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)

nowadays the population of those unique giants in Kaziranga NP is 3500 individuals. So they were a common sight. Also seen in Manas.

Water Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalus*)

fairly common in Kaziranga and Manas. Few in Nameri NP.

Hog Deer (*Axis porcinus*)

common in Kaziranga. Also seen in Manas NP

Northern Red (Indian) Barking Deer/Muntjac (*Muntiacus vaginalis*)

observed at Sandakphu trek, in Nameri NP and in Manas

Swamp Deer/Barasingha (*Rucervus duvaucelii*)

common in Kaziranga, also seen in Manas

Sambar Deer (*Cervus/Rusa unicolor*)

seen in Kaziranga

Spotted Deer/Chital (*Axis axis*)

observed in the Sunderbans

Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*)

several found in Kaziranga, Manas and the Sunderbans

Indian (Common) Grey Mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsii*)

seen in the Sunderbans

Smooth-coated Otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)

3 were found in Kaziranga

Hoary-bellied Squirrel (*Callosciurus pygerythus*)

few on Sandakphu trek and in Kaziranga, 2 in Nameri

Himalayan Striped Squirrel (*Tamias maccllellandii*)

several observations on Sandakphu trek

Northern (Five-striped) Palm Squirrel (*Funambulus pennantii*)

2 observed in the garden of Victoria Memorial in Kolkata

Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel (*Dremomys lokriah*)

seen on Sandakphu trek

Black Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa bicolor*)

one observation was made in Kaziranga, another one in Nameri NP

Estuarine (Saltwater) Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*)

several of those up to 5m large crocs were spotted in the Sunderbans

Water Monitor Lizard (*Varanus salvator*)

not uncommon in the Sunderbans

Assam Roofed Turtle (*Pangshura sylhetensis*)

2 of those very rare, and range restricted turtles were seen sunbathing in Nameri.
Classified as endangered by IUCN.

Red-tailed Bamboo Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus erythrurus*)

2 males (much smaller than females) found in the Sunderbans. One in a shrine at the main entrance (S...)

Red-necked Keelback (*Rhabdophis subminiatus*)

twice such snakes were crossing the road in a village close to Kaziranga NP at dusk

Checkered Keelback (*Xenochrophis pisator*)

found in the Sunderbans, one in New Town, Kolkata

Painted Keelback (*Xenochrophis cerasogaster*)

one observation at New Town

Olive Keelback (*Atretium schistosum*)

one spotted with our torch at after dusk in New Town, Kolkata on my last night

Smooth-scaled Water Snake (*Enhydris enhydris*)

1 at New Town

Butterflies:

Blue Tiger (*Tirumala limniace*)

seen in Kaziranga and in the Sunderbans

Common/Striped Tiger (*Danaus genutia*)

seen in Kaziranga and in the Sunderbans

Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*)

found in the Sunderbans

White Tiger (*Danaus melanippus*)

seen in the Sunderbans

Common Crow (Euploea core)

seen in Kaziranga and in the Sunderbans

Blue-striped Crow (Euploea mulciber)

found in Kaziranga

Common Mormon (Papilio polytes)

seen in the Sunderbans

Common Palmfly (Elymnias hypermnestra)

seen in the Sunderbans

Peacock Pansel/Tagpfauenaugen (Aglais io)

found in the Sunderbans

Common/Indian Jezebel (Delias eucharis)

seen in the Sunderbans

Great Orange Tip (Hebomoia glaucippe)

found in Kaziranga and Nameri

Grass Yellow (Eurema hecabe)

seen in Nameri

Common Yeoman (Cirrochroa tyche)

this yellow butterfly was seen in Nameri

c: common fc: fairly common f: few bold: **lifer**

ralf.jahraus@gmx.de