

ORNITHOLIDAYS' TOUR TO INDIA - GOA
Birds, Beaches & Bhajees

06 – 21 February 2009



Leader: Roger Lawrence

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A Personal Diary

The bird names and taxonomy in this report follow those proposed by Pamela Rasmussen. (*Rasmussen, P.C. & Anderton, J.C. Birds of South Asia. The Ripley Guide. Smithsonian Institution & Lynx Edicions 2005*).

Friday 06 February

Despite the wintry weather and poor road conditions, our party assembled in good time at the South Terminal at Gatwick for our flight to Goa. Check-in was easy with no queues but we learned that because of technical problems with their Airbus A330 Monarch had substituted an A300, a smaller aircraft with no Premium class seats so some clients were disappointed. This aircraft also had a shorter range so was going to have to refuel at Bahrain in the Middle East which meant an extra 90 minutes on our journey. We took off 50 minutes behind schedule, but at least we were on our way.

Saturday 07 February

We landed in Bahrain after a six-hour flight and had an hour to wait in the terminal while refuelling took place, but at least we could stretch our legs. Eventually arriving at Dabolim Airport in Goa at 11.30 Indian Standard Time, Immigration Control dealt with us speedily. Lino, our Ground Agent awaited us and we quickly boarded our bus. Chandrakant, our driver for the tour, drove us north across two of Goa's great rivers, first the Zuari then the Mandovi and past Panaji, the state capital. By the end of the hour-long drive we had already started to amass a pleasing bird list. Many Eastern Cattle Egrets, Great Egrets, Black and Brahminy Kites and a Black-winged Kite, Brown-headed Gulls and Black Drongos had got our list off to a good start.

We arrived at our hotel in the resort of Baga and settled in to our rooms in V-Block at the back of the hotel where it is rather quieter, then met for a late lunch. The menu at the Ronil Beach Resort is huge and the food excellent, catering for every taste, even for those not wishing to sample the delicious curries. Refreshing fresh lime sodas were much appreciated, the temperature in the afternoon being somewhere in the low 30's.

After a rest we met at 4pm to begin the first birding of the holiday. A couple of minutes walk up the road brought us to another hotel, the Beira Mar, a perfect place to start to get acquainted with Indian birds. From the hotel pool terrace the profusion of species in front of us on the now almost dry rice paddies was at first rather bewildering for some. However, with Pramod, Reuben (Goan bird guides from the Backwoods Camp) and myself, we soon managed to get the birds sorted out for everyone.

Almost the first bird we saw was a Ruddy-breasted Crake, normally a difficult bird to see and it was just a few feet below us on the mud. The pool terrace is elevated so giving good views of the birds on the paddies. Two Greater Painted-snipe showed well a little further out in the rank grass and there was a much more familiar Common Snipe too. Overhead electricity wires held a flock of Rosy Starlings and there were White-rumped and Scaly-breasted Munias, a White-throated Kingfisher, a 'rufous-backed' Long-tailed Shrike, Jungle Mynas, a Pied Bushchat, a Siberian Stonechat and both Little Green and Blue-tailed Bee-eaters as well. The three of us were kept very busy. A Shikra flew over and an Asian Koel called persistently. Close to where the crake had been, an Indian Reed Warbler the size of a Song Thrush, croaked loudly, and came right out into the open so that it was easy to see really well. Indian Pond-herons, motionlessly watching the grass then stabbing for frogs, fascinated us. Brown and streaky when on the ground, they suddenly become white birds in flight. A Purple Heron flew in.

By the time we returned to our hotel to freshen up before dinner over 40 species had been seen by everyone and with the temperature in the 30's the contrast with the weather we had left behind in the UK could not have been greater.

Dinner was served around our hotel's main swimming pool. By 19.30 it was pleasantly cooler but no question of needing a jumper. Live entertainment was not too intrusive and the conversation flowed easily. However, by 21.00 we were all ready for a good night's sleep. It had been a long and tiring journey and everyone wanted to be fresh for the new species ahead of us tomorrow.

Sunday 08 February

Although breakfast at the Ronil is scheduled to start at 07.30 we always get preferential treatment and the very cooperative staff are always prepared to serve us much earlier. Everyone appeared well before 06.30 and a full buffet breakfast with plenty of fresh fruit, omelettes, toast etc. got the morning off to a good start.

Chandrakant and Reuben arrived at the hotel punctually and we all set off to Arpora Hill, just a few minutes drive east of the Ronil. This is a small patch of dry, deciduous monsoon forest and holds some interesting species. At first we birded from the track and as the light improved and avian activity increased new species came thick and fast. Ashy Bulbul, with its diagnostic red eye and lacking the small white spot (rectal spot) at the gape, characteristic of Black Bulbul, was eventually seen by everyone. The first Western Ghats endemic species, Nilgiri Flowerpecker, soon followed. Then a Black-rumped Flameback, one of the most common woodpeckers in India, landed in a tree close by. A White-browed Bulbul, a subcontinent endemic, popped up in front of us then a pair of Jerdon's Leafbirds shimmered bright green in the early morning sunlight. Four species of tiny sunbirds – Purple, Purple-rumped, Small and Vigors's, the last two both Western Ghats endemics, flitted about searching for pollen among the flowering trees and were all seen quite well, the subtle differences between them sorted out

The temperature when we arrived here had been quite pleasantly warm but by 08.30 it was already getting hot. Moving into the trees to get some shade, we encountered more excellent species. One of the 'must see' species that birders hope to see in Goa, a skulker and not always easy to find, is the Indian Pitta. We found one of these little gems more or less straight away and everyone saw it well, both on the ground and in flight.

The birds here are all fairly tolerant of the presence of humans, so good sightings were easy and the birds cooperative. A couple of Indian Blackbirds and an Orange-headed Thrush, almost as colourful as the pitta, turned over leaves on the ground in search of tasty morsels. Indian Black Robin, another subcontinent endemic, appeared close to us. A pair of extremely colourful Small Minivets in the trees above a small, disused quarry took our breath away. There was also a Common Iora showing well.

From beneath taller trees we watched a small clearing and this produced a Common Woodshrike and a Coppersmith Barbet, like us keeping cool in the shade so took a bit of patience to spot. A Puff-throated Babbler was more difficult as it shuffled about beneath the shrubby vegetation and we would have to wait until later in the tour for everyone to see it properly.

By 11.00 the temperature had risen to the low 30's and bird activity was minimal so we started back for some leisure time at the hotel. On the way we stopped at some flooded paddyfields hoping for some waders but the water was too deep and there were none to be seen. The swimming pools at the hotel and the prospect of cool drinks were too inviting so we ended the morning's birding before midday.

After a delicious lunch and a siesta we started again at 16.00 as it began to cool down. The afternoon session was to be on the coast at Fort Aguada, an old Portuguese defensive site on a cliff overlooking Aguada Bay where the Mandovi River empties into the Arabian Sea. This is a popular place for both tourists and locals and as it was a Sunday afternoon there were plenty of people there enjoying themselves. However, this did not mean that it was birdless. A female Blue Rock-thrush perched on the forts ramparts taking no notice of the people passing close by it. We also got good views of a Puff-throated Babbler and most people saw a female Asian Paradise Flycatcher reasonably well. A party of Grey-breasted Prinias flitted in the bushes on the cliff top above the steep drop to the sea and a White-cheeked Barbet, whose persistent '*tonk, tonk, tonk*' call had been our musical accompaniment all the while we had been here, was also eventually spotted, well camouflaged against the tree-top foliage. On a much larger scale, a huge White-bellied Sea-eagle drifted overhead but for most of us the most endearing sight was of a group of eight Little Green Bee-eaters dust bathing on the path ahead of us, one always acting as look-out while the rest got on with their ablutions.

On our drive back to Baga we stopped briefly to watch a Striated Heron fishing on a mangrove-fringed creek but there was still a treat in store. In the hotel's grounds a beautiful Vigors's Sunbird sat in full view in a coconut palm right by the small swimming pool, a lovely way to end our first full day's birding we agreed – but not quite. Later, as we returned to our rooms after another tasty meal, a Common Barn-owl was sitting on the hotel's water tower.

Monday 09 February

We caught the kitchen staff on the hop a bit this morning and breakfast was not quite ready for us at 06.15 when we assembled. However, we had eaten well in time to meet Reuben and our bus at 07.00.

Saligao Zor (spring) was our destination this morning. It was barely a 20 minute drive so we arrived in the little village at the perfect time with the birds just starting to become active. A Loten's Sunbird with an extremely long, curved bill was our first new species of the day, even before we had walked to the spring where we were to wait and watch. At the spring, women were doing their washing and others were collecting water, carrying it away in pots on their heads. The spring is at the head of a small, narrow valley and as the sun rose and the bushes on the valley side were bathed in warm sunlight, birds soon began to appear. Brown-cheeked Fulvetta called, both Indian Golden and Black-hooded Orioles flew into the trees above us, a Pale-billed Flowerpecker darted about overhead and an Asian Paradise Flycatcher gave everybody a much better view than yesterday's bird. Both Asian Brown and Tickell's Blue Flycatchers came and went.

While we enjoyed the new species as the sun rose and with it the temperature, Reuben disappeared, returning to say that he had located the bird we had really come to Saligao to see. Following him into the forest a short distance we were soon looking at our second owl of the tour. It was difficult to see at first, but with a telescope set up everyone had superb views of this Brown Wood-owl, a big bird, considerably larger than our Tawny Owl.

Well-pleased with our successes, we returned to the hotel, stopping at another spring on the way but added nothing new. However, we did get better views of a Rufous Treepie, a White-bellied Drongo and a White-spotted Fantail than was possible at Saligao and by 11.30 the 'leisure' part of the morning kicked in. Some of our group, but only the ladies I have to say, had a swim.

After a leisurely and convivial lunch and a rest we met again at 15.30 for the rather longer drive to Dona Paula a few kilometres south south-west of the state capital Panaji, known by the locals as Panjim. This is a desiccated low laterite plateau threatened by building development. Here we hoped to see larks and pipits and Yellow-wattled Lapwings, rather scarcer than their Red-wattled cousins seen almost anywhere that there is water. At first this plateau seemed birdless, but we soon found some of our target species. The first were Ashy-crowned Finch-larks. Robert spotted two nice males sitting on top of stones quite close to us, then a small flock of females was put to flight by a dog. A beautiful adult male Montagu's Harrier flew low above us affording superb views of this lovely raptor.

Sue spotted a group of four Yellow-wattled Lapwings and there were Red-wattled Lapwings close to them for comparison. Indian Black Robins seemed to be everywhere and Pied Bushchats perched on twigs for easy viewing. However, we could not find any larks for quite some time, but, as the sun began to sink in the sky and the temperature ameliorated, suddenly two Oriental Skylarks flew in and landed right in front of us and began to feed on weed seeds. They could not have been more cooperative. Sue had gone back to the bus, but I was able to fetch her to see them quite easily. While we had searched for the larks, four Common Hoopoes flew about close by.

It was 19.00 and getting dark when we arrived back at the Ronil. As usual, we assembled for dinner around the pool at 19.30, and the complimentary white wine, (although not the best I have had), went down well. It was Brenda and Sue's declared intention not to eat the same dish twice but, with so much to choose from it would take more than our 14 night's stay to work ones way through the entire menu.

Tuesday 10 February

The kitchen staff and a waiter were really on the ball this morning and breakfast was ready well before 06.30.

By 06.50 we were on our way to Carambolim Lake more or less due east of Panjim. From the bus as we drove along the southern shore of the Mandovi River towards Old Goa, the old Portuguese capital, we saw several Common Kingfishers and a Western Reef Egret together with many Great and Intermediate Egrets perching precariously on the tops of poles supporting fishing nets in the river. Gull-billed Terns flew over the water and there were many Black and Brahminy Kites in the sky.

We crossed the Konkan Railway that connects Mumbai (Bombay) over 500 kilometres to the north with Trivandrum in Kerala to the south. The crossing is at Old Goa (Karmali) railway station and the road runs along a causeway damming the lake that is used to irrigate the bright green, young rice crop in adjacent fields. This vantage point gives sufficient elevation to see across this huge, lily-filled expanse of water. Countless Purple Swampheens walked on the rafts of floating vegetation. In the water separating the lily pads there were hundreds of Lesser Whistling-ducks, lovely delicate Cotton Teal and hoards of Bronze-winged Jacanas and a few Pheasant-tailed Jacanas showing huge amounts of white in their wings as they flew about. The lake was teeming with life. A Common Sandpiper and a Common Kingfisher perching on the causeway wall were much more familiar birds to European eyes and a Wood Sandpiper flew in and stood on the floating vegetation right in front of us. It was birding at its best. A Western Marsh Harrier flew over putting up great flocks of Whistling-ducks but an Oriental Darter flying over was missed by most of our party. A train pulled in to the station on its way north, all 17 coaches of it, and certainly not the longest I have seen.

We drove to the far side of the lake and watched a Lesser Pied Kingfisher hovering over the water on the way. From the other shore we saw more new species. A female Garganey dabbled in the shallows, several Glossy Ibis prodded the wet turf and a couple of Western Yellow Wagtails of the race *Motacilla flava thunbergi* known as Grey-headed Wagtail strutted about with several Paddyfield Pipits. Robert found a Spot-billed Duck, an unusual species in Goa. There were many egrets and a Purple Heron, a Little Stint, several Little Ringed Plovers and a Common Greenshank to keep everyone busy while Reuben went off in search of an owl. Although not the species he sought, he did find a couple of delightful Spotted Owlets for everybody to admire. As we drove off Pauline drew our attention to a Stork-billed Kingfisher sitting in a tree, a really spectacular sight.

Moving on towards Carambolim village we stopped along another causeway and left the bus to continue to the tiny settlement. Two Tawny Eagles drifted over, a juvenile followed by an adult and both Plain and Ashy Prinias were seen at close range. More waders included a Temminck's Stint, Common Redshank, Spotted Redshank, a Marsh Sandpiper and a few Ruff. An Indian Roller surveyed the surrounding disused paddies from its perch on wires above.

Reuben had walked ahead to the tiny hamlet set among trees on a low knoll above the marshy ground. When we reached him he had succeeded in finding his second owl of the day, this one a Brown Hawk-owl half hidden in a tall tree in the middle of the hamlet.

We walked on, across the knoll and out to tidal mudflats beyond. A far from pretty Lesser Adjutant and an Osprey flew over. The tide was still too high for the flats to be of interest for waders and as it was 11.30 and hot, we headed back to base to cool down before lunch.

Baga Hill, a wooded ridge just north of our hotel was the afternoon's birding location. Sadly the hill is being developed for holiday accommodation and not the place it used to be. However, it is still good for birds. The session was more of a revision course but we did add an Alexandrine Parakeet to our ever-growing tally. Two preening Vigors's Sunbirds obliged for long enough for everyone to observe them closely through telescopes.

After a quick stop at the river below Baga Hill we returned to the resort and ended the day back at the Beira Mar Hotel. Once again it produced the goods, this time a Chestnut Bittern. This is a crepuscular species that does not usually emerge from marsh-side vegetation until it is almost dark. However, this time we watched it right below us in good light and, like the crane on Saturday evening, it was only feet away. We also saw our first Common Mynas, Greater Painted Snipe again and, as we left to return to our hotel as the light finally went, there were two Spotted Owlets on overhead wires out on the paddies.

Wednesday 11 February

After our usual 06.30 breakfast we headed north, picking Reuben up at Siolim close to his home on the way. Gulls were our focus for the morning's session and the destination was the turtle-breeding beach at Morjim on the estuary of the Chapora River. A variety of interesting gulls regularly roost here at high tide on this quiet beach, a far cry from Baga's beach full of sun beds, beach shacks and bustle.

When we arrived it was still some time to high water but we were well occupied sorting through the large flocks of waders on the sandy beach. Fiddler crabs scurried away as we approached the aptly-named sand plovers, merging amazingly well into the sparsely vegetated sand. Most were Lesser Sand Plovers but careful scrutiny produced several of the larger, heavier-bill and longer, paler-legged Greater Sand Plovers. There were also a few Kentish Plovers keeping separate. They are remarkably similar but distinguishable by a complete white collar below their napes. They generally scurry about more busily. A single Ruddy Turnstone seemed a bit out of place here. A pair of magnificent White-bellied Sea-eagles flew close to us displaying and calling and Sheila saw one of them grab a gull.

Apart from us the only other people were a couple of sunbathers and two other birdwatching couples with Indian bird guides on this vast sandy beach. One of the latter reported that he had found a Broad-billed Sandpiper but when we joined them we found that it had been misidentified and it was just a humble Dunlin!

Gulls and Gull-billed Terns were flying about as the tide came in but we decided to look in the area on the inland side of the narrow coast road to allow time for it to rise higher. This proved to be a good decision as I quickly spotted a fairly rare Grey-bellied Cuckoo catching caterpillars and carrying them back to its low perch close to the ground and beating them soundly on a twig before swallowing them. There was also a flock of 60 or so Baya Weavers, remarkably House Sparrow-like in their drab non-breeding plumage, a pair of lovely Plum-headed Parakeets and several Little Green Bee-eaters, Jungle Mynas and Rosy Starlings to keep us busy.

When we returned to the shore again the gulls were beginning to assemble on the sandspit at the end of the beach and were fairly approachable. Through the telescopes we slowly sorted through them. They were of various sizes. Most of the smaller gulls were Brown-headed Gulls with one or two Black-headed among them. With patience and care Slender-billed Gulls were also found. The larger gulls were trickier. The very largest were easy, money already coming into breeding plumage – Great Black-headed Gulls. The rest were all part of the difficult 'Herring Gull Complex', described by Pamela Rasmussen in her recent book as '...a taxonomic nightmare'. With care however they were not as difficult as at first they seemed. Most were 'Steppe' Gulls with round-shaped pure white heads and rather small, beady eyes. There were also just a few Heuglin's Gulls with more angular heads and various amounts of brownish-grey streaking on their napes, but the whole issue was complicated because there were also lots of immature gulls among the mass. However, after some time here most of the group agreed that they had sorted out at least one of each. There were also terns among the gulls, both orange-billed Lesser Crested Terns and the slightly larger, greenish-billed Great Crested Terns.

As we left John picked up on a raptor flying above us. The tell-tale 'headlights' as it turned to circle meant it was a Booted Eagle. Well done, John!

We stopped briefly at Barshim Marsh on the way back to Baga. Here a bund separated salt tidal water on one side from freshwater marsh and rice paddies on the other. The tide was still too high and little mud had, as yet, been exposed. We did have very good views of Wire-tailed Swallows, an Indian Shag, much more scarce in Goa than Little Cormorant and a pair of Ruddy Shelducks. We did not linger and drove back to Baga dropping Reuben in Siolim again, arriving at the hotel in time for some of us to have a pre-lunch dip.

At 16.00 we drove back to Barshim Marsh, collecting Reuben on the way. However, when we arrived there were many locals and someone from the media standing around in anguish. The sluice in the bund had just collapsed and salt water was pouring into the paddies as the tide rose. This meant that the crop would almost certainly be ruined and the soil's salinity would certainly prevent further cultivation until after the next monsoon later in the year.

This time we drove on towards the head of the marsh but there was little new to be seen. On wires at some distance a large perched pipit showed exceptionally long hind claws, one of the diagnostic features of Richard's Pipit. We stopped at the bund again where two White-browed Wagtails were on overhead wires. By now the tide had dropped sufficiently to expose mudbanks on the seaward side of the bund. An old woman, knee-deep in mud, was chipping oysters off the rocks with a hammer and was completely surrounded by opportunistic House Crows looking for an easy meal. There were also a couple of Striated Herons disputing territory so giving us excellent views as they threat-postured.

Waders had appeared. Most were Common Redshanks but, on the far side close to the mangroves there were six Terek Sandpipers, always nice waders to encounter on these tours.

Thursday 12 February

The extremely efficient and obliging hotel staff had breakfast ready for us at 06.00 this morning as we had a longer drive ahead of us before birding would begin. We had to drive along the south shore of the Mandovi River to Ribander to catch the 07.00 ferry. Chandrakant wasted no time and drove us swiftly, the light traffic meaning that we arrived in good time.

The vehicle ferry was tiny; just space for our bus, a couple of cars several motor cycles and a few foot passengers. The ferry took us across the river to Charao Island, the shortest route to Maem (Mayem) Lake, our destination for this morning's activity. On the 15-minute crossing we added several Eurasian Curlews and Whimbrel to our list and at least 200 Glossy Ibis flew over in two large flocks. Brown-headed Gulls and Gull-billed Terns flew over huge barges plying downstream towards the Arabian Sea, filled with iron ore one of Goa's main exports and empty barges retuning for their next load. The ocean-going ore ships cannot get into the estuary so the barges offload into them out at sea.

Once off the ferry, we crossed Choroa Island, separated from the Mandovi's north shore by little more than a stream, and headed straight for the lake, wishing to arrive in time for the early morning avian activity and we arrived at 07.40.

The lake is surrounded by forested hills. At the end nearest the road it is dominated by the trappings of tourism, with small boats for hire, but there was no sign of a single tourist. This end is roped off so that most of the lake is natural and free from disturbance. As we walked along the narrow path around the shore, mist rose from the water and, apart from an aggravating dog that adopted us and followed us everywhere, the setting was wonderful. The only sounds breaking the silence were birdcalls. Apart from the ubiquitous Red-whiskered Bulbuls there were many Asian Koels, Coppersmith and White-cheeked Barbets, three species of orioles, Indian Golden, Black-hooded and Black-naped, an unusual bird in this part of India, Indian Blackbirds, at least four wonderful Malabar Pied Hornbills, an Asian Brown Flycatcher and Bronzed Drongos.

A little further round the lakeshore we encountered two Little Spidehunters in a tree above us. Closely related to sunbirds, these tiny birds have enormously long curved bills and are usually difficult to see well. Four Green Sandpipers chased about and John spotted a Rufous Treepie down by the water with a couple of Spotted Doves and a Little Cormorant. An Osprey flew in twice low over the water and was very close to us.

Reuben had disappeared but returned to say that we should follow him. He had located a roosting Indian Jungle Nightjar, characteristically perched along a horizontal branch fifteen feet or so above the ground, its beautiful cryptic colouring making it quite difficult to see at first.

Rather reluctantly, we decided that we had seen much of what was on offer here so we strolled back to the rather shabby little café for a cool drink and comfort stop. We interrupted our refreshment to rush outside and watch a Crested Serpent-eagle circling right above us and calling continuously. It was John who noticed a nice male Asian Paradise Flycatcher just outside the café.

Somewhat refreshed, we started back towards the ferry taking another route and making a couple of stops, the first when a Black Eagle circled overhead. At the Pomburpa grasslands four Woolly-necked Storks were

feeding in the wet vegetation. I saw a group of waders flying towards us. They were Small Pratincoles, about a dozen of them, a species that I had expected to see at Barshim Marsh. Our arrival at the ferry was perfectly timed and we drove straight on but it was a bit of a squeeze to get the bus on. We were back to the Ronil at exactly 13.00 and so went straight to lunch, the swimming having to wait until after we had eaten.

The evening session started half an hour later than usual as we were only going out onto the Baga paddies in search of pipits and larks. Unfortunately, we only found Paddyfield Pipits, plenty of them but nothing more unusual but we did get very close views of the endemic Malabar Larks in the ploughed plots. There were several Siberian Stonechats and a close encounter with a lovely Indian Roller. This was the ideal place to have a really close look at the Black Kites. Careful scrutiny enabled us to find a couple of 'Black-eared' Kites with broader wings with more white at the base of the primary feathers and a very short, hardly perceptible forked tail and the whole plumage has a more rufous tone. Whether this is a full species (Sibley and Monroe, 1990, think so) is equivocal, but one that appeared in East Anglia a couple of winters ago caused a huge 'twitch'. Pamela Rasmussen is more cautious stating that "...the *Milvus migrans* complex probably consists of several species."

Friday 13 February

We had a considerably longer drive of over 60 kilometres this morning and Chandrakant appeared before 07.00 with a slightly bigger bus. We were going south again, this time to a wetland at Curtorim south of the large town of Margao. No journey is fast by British standards and it took us an hour and a half to get there. Our journey coincided with children going to school which begins at 08.00 and the road was crowded and often clogged by parents' cars, scooters and motor cycles – the same the world over!

Almost our first bird when we arrived at this artificial lake or 'tank', providing water for irrigation, was a River Tern. This large tern is far from common in Goa and I was pleased to add it to our list. The tank was full of waterfowl, mainly Lesser Whistling Ducks and Garganey, but there were several Comb Ducks a species that we had failed to see at Carambolim Lake, and there was a single Spot-billed Duck too. A nice variety of kingfishers were easy to see here. As well as the ubiquitous White-throated Kingfishers there were no fewer than eight Stork-billed Kingfishers, six together at one point on the same section of overhead electricity wires. There were several Common Kingfishers but the star was, without question a fine Black-capped Kingfisher. Bronze-winged and Pheasant-tailed Jacanas trod the lily pads and swallows dipped into the water to take insects from the surface. In the trees behind us there were two species of orioles, Coppersmith Barbets and Robert spotted a superb Gold-fronted Leafbird above us in the canopy. It was he who, a little later when we crossed the road to scan the rice paddies, drew our attention to a large raptor sitting in the shade in a coconut palm's crown. Through the telescopes it was quickly identified as a Greater Spotted Eagle. The identification of the two similar *Aquila* eagles in this part of India need some care. The endemic Indian Spotted, although slightly smaller, has a less shaggy nape and its gape reaches the back of its eye. The gape on Greater Spotted comes only to the middle of the bird's eye, not possible to see unless, as was the case here, one gets a really good look through a telescope.

In a roadside ditch we saw our first Grey Wagtail, a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher and had good views of a Puff-throated Babbler. Then Pauline found us two distant Lesser Adjutants and a couple of Woolly-necked Storks far across the paddy fields, bright green with young rice plants.

We departed at 10.30 and started back for lunch but made a diversion just before we reached Panjim to Batim Marsh. A couple of new but familiar ducks were added to our list – Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler and Common Teal. Barbara thought that she had found us a new heron, but it was an Indian Pond Heron coming into breeding plumage, a much brighter and more attractive bird in this attire than the rather drab, brown streaky jobs that we were now used to.

At our usual afternoon starting time of 16.00 we left the hotel again and headed back towards Panjim. A small lake at Pilerne was our first stop. I was surprised to see eight Yellow-wattled Lapwings here close to the water. I am more used to seeing them on dry stony ground. There were no duck here, just a few egrets yet another Stork-billed Kingfisher and Green and Wood Sandpipers.

We ended the day at Saligao Zor, much less human activity taking place here at this time of the early evening

than we had seen on our first visit. Gradually birds began to appear. First White-rumped Munias, then several Brown-cheeked Fulvettas, much easier to see than on our morning visit, Indian Yellow Tits, a wonderfully colourful Coppersmith Barbet in perfect light but the best was to come. Reuben found a Malabar Whistling-thrush that most of us saw quite well and this was followed by two male Asian Paradise Flycatchers, one the rufous morph the other the spectacular white morph. It has been suggested that this difference is age-related, the older birds acquiring white plumage, but this is far from proven. This late highlight was a fitting way to round off Friday the 13th!

Saturday 14 February

I was amazed to see six Indians sitting at our table when I came to the restaurant at 05.45. These were the first guests I had seen in the restaurant at our breakfast time. We intended to get an early start as our intention was to go to the smallest of Goa's true forest reserves at Bondla this morning. We had all eaten by 06.30 but we had to change our plans as Reuben had over-slept and it was important to get away early since Bondla is a long drive. Instead I decided that a return to Morjim Beach, which I had intended to visit again tomorrow, was our best option. We met Reuben at Siolim.

Just over the Chapora River bridge we started our day's birding. On the mud beneath the mangroves Des spotted the species I had hoped to see here, three Pacific Golden Plovers just standing quietly very close to us. The second addition to our tally was Indian Swiftlets overhead. We had nice views of two Black-rumped Flamebacks, several other waders, a pair of Plum-headed Parakeets displaying and eventually mating (most appropriate on Valentine's Day) and Common Mynas going into their nest hole in a palm stump. A Greenish Warbler preened in a low bush in the morning sunshine, a change from the usual view of this small *Phylloscopus* flitting about in the canopy.

Next we drove to Barshim Marsh again where the breach in the sluice had now been repaired. Apart from several Common Kingfishers, a couple of Lesser Pied Kingfishers, White-throated Kingfisher and common waders, we found nothing much to delay our visit to the beach, and as the glare of the morning sun on the water made 'scoping difficult, we drove on to Morjim.

Low tide meant that the gulls were on two long sand bars out in the estuary but we got near enough to be sure there were no species that we had not seen on our first visit. The scrubby area on the other side of the road had nothing new to offer either so we walked to a beach shack for a cool drink and a sit down.

We were back in good time for the bathers among us to have their swim before lunch. Preparations for the Valentine Night's festivities at the Ronil this evening were in full swing. Although the morning had not gone quite to plan most of the group enjoyed returning to the quiet beach and the opportunity to sort through the gulls again.

At 16.00 we returned to Arpora Hill where our first full day's birding had started. Continuing to consolidate our ID skills we had a calmer look at species that only warranted a quick glance in the frantic rush of new species on Sunday morning. Common Iora, Black-headed Cuckoo-shrike, Orange-headed Thrush and our second chance to see India Pitta. In perfect light we watched Purple and Purple-rumped Sunbirds, marvelling at the iridescent shimmer of their plumage.

The Valentine's Night celebrations were not to everyone's taste. There were certainly many more people than we had seen at dinner before. The extended entertainment meant that the buffet meal, excellent as it was, started later than we usually ate. It ended with a firework display for those prepared to wait up for it.

Sunday 15 February

Almost all signs of last night's activities had been cleared away and our table set ready for our early breakfast when I came into the restaurant at 05.45. Reuben, eager to make amends for yesterday's tardiness, was waiting at 06.15 so we set off promptly for our drive to Bondla.

The almost empty roads and Chandrakant's concern to get us birding as early as possible meant that we arrived at the bottom of the forested ridge at Goa's smallest forest reserve by 07.40. Bondla is pristine deciduous monsoon forest and its small size concentrates the birds so they are relatively easy to find. Two

Brown-headed Barbets in the top of huge bamboos, were our first new species, followed by Grey-fronted Green-pigeons. Two Rufous Woodpeckers were also perched in bamboo and although only seen in silhouette in still quite poor light, they have a very distinctive head shape so were positively identified. A Red Spurfowl, often a difficult bird to see, ran across a dry streambed below us. Our first Racket-tailed Drongos, spectacular birds, called and flew about and maniacal laughter heralded the arrival of Malabar Grey Hornbills. It was all very exciting. Beautiful Flame-throated Bulbuls were a pleasant change from the Red-whiskered and Red-vented Bulbuls that we were now used to down on the coast.

Sometimes walking and then driving on for a short distance, or walking off the road and a little way into the forest where there was a clearing, we slowly made our way up the hill. We saw Western-crowned Warblers, the endemic Malabar White-headed Starlings and, at a large pond surrounded by magnificent trees and giant bamboo clumps, we watched Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters dipping down to the water's surface to capture insects. An unusual find was a Black Redstart, but a different subspecies to the bird we are used to seeing in Europe. This was *Phoenicurus ochuros phoenicuroides* with brick-red lower breast, belly, vent and tail.

At the top of the hill on the ridge there was a restaurant and the gate leading into the reserve proper and down to a zoo. Reuben excelled himself here by locating a pair of Oriental Scops-owls roosting in a bamboo clump and almost at eye-level – luck, skill or prior knowledge? We all had wonderful scoped views of these small owls. As we walked to the restaurant there were Dark-fronted Babblers moving through the bamboo and Black-naped Blue Monarch showed well.

The restaurant is two storeys up and, although hardly 'five star', we did manage to get cold drinks and the opportunity to look down on unsuspecting birds below us drinking and bathing in a trickle of water from a leaking tap. Only those at the windows first saw a White-rumped Shama but everyone had superb views of an Orange-headed Thrush.

We paid at the gate then walked slowly down the road on the other side of the ridge. This time everyone had a long look at a White-rumped Shama and we all saw a pair of Orange Minivets and a lovely Velvet-fronted Nuthatch.

There was some non-avian interest too - a couple of mammals - Bonnet Macaques and an Indian Giant Squirrel and a Draco or Gliding Lizard that landed on a tree trunk close to us. We did not go all the way to the zoo as it was lunchtime and it had been a long time since breakfast. We made a couple of stops on the way back down to the main road, once at the pool where I had hoped to see Forest Wagtail, but we were out of luck today. However, further down we did see a White-bellied Blue Flycatcher, a nice male and another species not seen on every tour.

It was too far back to have late lunch in Baga. Instead we stopped at the Sahakari Spice Garden on the outskirts of the town of Ponda. This was a popular choice. As we entered we were showered with marigold petals and dancers welcomed us. A tasty buffet lunch and a glass of *feni*, a Goan spirit made from cashew nuts, was well received and rounded off a most successful and enjoyable morning with over 20 species added to our list of birds seen.

By the time we arrived back at the Ronil Beach Resort it was 16.15 and it was decided that we had all had enough birding for one day. A relaxed and convivial dinner with our usual complementary wine was a rather more peaceful meal than had been our experience last night. With some packing to do for our two nights at the Backwoods Camp we retired early in anticipation of more good birds to come.

Monday 16 February

It was to be a really early start as the journey this morning was our longest yet. We were to have our breakfast much later at the camp, however, there was fruit juice and bread and marmalade available for those who wanted it.

We left at 05.30 for a drive that was to take an hour and a half to the Bhagwan Mahaveer Forest Reserve. Usually known simply as Mowlem, it is situated at the foot of the Sahyadri Hills, part of the Western Ghats, the tectonically raised western edge of the great tilted basalt plateau called the Deccan. The Backwoods camp

is situated near its northern edge near an ancient Hindu temple at Tambdi Surla.

The location is remote but before we reached it we had to contend with fleets of countless lorries carrying iron ore from the opencast mines to the great rivers where barges took it out to the waiting ships in the Arabian Sea. It seemed almost impossible that there could be so many lorries on such small roads. However we arrived at Backwoods Camp at 07.15 and Leio, the main partner in the enterprise and our bird guide for the three days here, awaited us. The camp is set within superb monsoon forest and birds were everywhere. We wasted no time in starting our day's birding and after a quick cup of tea or coffee went straight out. Even while we finished our drinks, Sue was off looking at Flame-throated and Yellow-browed Bulbuls in the camp.

Just yards back down the track Leio took us to see our first 'mega' – a pair of Ceylon Frogmouths at eye-level deep in a clump of bamboo. We watched them quietly and but for the occasional lazy opening of their eyes, they took no notice of our presence at all. One could hardly describe this nocturnal species as beautiful but they are one of the main birds people come here for and to see them in full daylight really is a delight. There are four pairs around the camp this year and we were to see another of them a bit later.

We continued along the track, red with laterite dust, and added other species steadily. Malabar Pied and Malabar Grey Hornbills flew over, the former perching obligingly for good scoped viewing. There were Common Rosefinches, one a brilliantly coloured male, in tall bamboo. A party of the Western Ghats endemic Malabar Woodshrikes appeared in the trees above our heads and a Malabar Barbet showed its red face well. Two huge Mountain Imperial Pigeons flew over and so did several Malabar Parakeets, a couple perching for long enough for everybody to see them well. John spotted a pair of delightful, tiny Heart-spotted Woodpeckers surely one of the world's quaintest members of the woodpecker family. Robert drew our attention to an Asian Fairy Bluebird and there was a Thick-billed Flowerpecker, a Brown Shrike, Grey-fronted Green Pigeons, Malabar White-headed Starlings and a Brown-breasted Flycatcher all craving our attention and testing our memories and ID skills and we had not even had our breakfast yet!

The open-air dining area allows birding to continue while one eats. After a late but tasty breakfast we had a short session walking in the forest adding Vernal Hanging Parrot before coming back for lunch, a delicious vegetarian meal. It was nice that we were the only guests. A well-earned rest followed and we met again at 15.30 for a cup of tea and biscuits. We then had a short drive to the Tambdi Surla temple, a tiny building carved from black basalt and dating from the 13th century.

We walked up the dry, boulder-strewn riverbed of the Ragada River in search of new species but brief views of a Malabar Whistling-thrush was the only reward. We walked out onto some dry paddies to end the day. Leio had heard a Grey-headed Bulbul calling and led most of the group away to see it. Robert and Pauline, at the back with me, saw their first Yellow-browed Bulbul instead.

The highlight of the session was, without doubt, a Great Pied Hornbill. Leio spotted it a long way off flying along the scarp. It seemed to fly behind the hills but John thought that it swept up as if to perch in a tree way in the distance. However, it was Pauline who found it by scanning the hill with her telescope. It was perched in a large tree and was clearly huge. Luckily it flew and eventually passed almost over our heads when its massive size really became apparent.

By the time we had walked back to the temple car park the light was going and although Leio saw a Blue-eared Kingfisher it was too dim to see it properly. We then returned to camp for dinner. Following our meal we did try to find a new owl but although an Oriental Scops-owl responded to Leio's recording we did not succeed in seeing it.

Tuesday 17 February

Our first night in the little cottages was quite comfortable but some found it a little cool. In the attached bathroom almost everyone had a resident tree frog but there were no insect problems to speak of.

Tea, coffee and biscuits at 06.30 preceded the pre-breakfast birding session which started where we had ended last evening – in the temple car park. We wanted to see the Blue-eared Kingfisher near the bridge in

better light. We went down onto the almost dry riverbed where a Brown-breasted Flycatcher was our constant companion but the kingfisher was not in view although Leio felt sure that it was in a tangle of branches overhanging the stream.

While we waited for it to appear, Sheila spotted a White-bellied Woodpecker on a tree bole close to us but it flew off before everyone could see it properly. Meanwhile, Anthony had located a beautiful male Malabar Trogon that was very much more cooperative and gave wonderful views from every angle. It was even seen to catch and devour a praying mantis. Leio finally spotted the kingfisher deep in the tangle of branches and with judicious sighting of a telescope, everybody managed to see this lovely bird well.

We passed the temple and slowly progressed up the riverbed again, just as we had done yesterday. Several Indian Blackbirds were hopping about on the boulders and with them were two Tickell's Thrushes. A pair of Greater Flamebacks were very obliging and perched where we could see them. Eventually we left the boulder-strewn channel and walked out onto the dry paddies. From here we found a fruiting tree full of birds. Grey-headed, Flame-throated, Yellow-browed, Square-tailed Black and Red-whiskered Bulbuls all came and departed again. Anthony finally caught up with Tickell's Blue Flycatcher at last and Barbara spotted a fine Verditer Flycatcher. Two very obliging Little Spiderhunters gave Des the chance to catch up too as he had been at the back of the queue at Maem Lake. For half an hour we had a wonderful procession of species taking advantage of the ripe fruit.

By the time we got back to the camp it was 10.30. It was only Pauline, Robert and me who saw the Rufous-bellied Eagle fly over but we all had good views of a Crested Goshawk overhead as we walked to the dining area for a very late breakfast.

The short walk through the forest before lunch was less productive. After a promising beginning, when we saw Dark-fronted Babblers, a Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, a Heart-spotted Woodpecker and Black-rumped Flameback, it was rather quiet. A *Phylloscopus* warbler seemed at first to be just another Greenish but the trisyllabic call did not sound right. It was, in fact, a recent 'split' – Bright-green Warbler, (*Phylloscopus nitidus*), a species that breeds in N.W. Afghanistan and Baluchistan and winters in the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka. An Orange-headed Thrush awaited our arrival at lunch, actually sitting on the concrete by the serving area.

The late afternoon session saw us on our bus going back down the road towards Ponda and looking for new species. Leio spotted two lovely Hair-crested Drongos in a silk cotton tree as we drove along. The log, called at dinner, revealed that we had seen 12 new species today.

Wednesday 18 February

Another group were arriving this morning and a rendezvous outside a nearby school had been arranged. We arrived at Barabhumi High School first. While we awaited their arrival we watched about 20 Ashy Woodswallows sitting shoulder to shoulder in groups of three to five birds, in a leafless tree preening in preparation for their day's flights. There were Yellow-throated Sparrows in the same tree and opposite, a flock of Black-throated Munias landed in tall bamboo together with White-rumped and Scaly-breasted Munias too for easy comparison. However, the bird of the morning was a Nilgiri Flycatcher. This handsome Western Ghats endemic is usually only seen further south in southern Karnataka and Kerala.

When the other bus arrived we drove back to the camp for breakfast, leaving again at 10.35 to do a raptor-watch for birds of prey using the thermals and drifting along the scarp face of the Sahyadri Hills. We set up our telescopes, shaded by a couple of trees in a field by the roadside and watched the sky. Nine species were recorded, the best of which were Black Eagle, White-eyed Buzzard and four Crested Serpent-eagles but after an hour and half the midday heat was too much for us and we retreated to the camp to cool down before lunch.

Sadly, we said our farewells to Leio and the boys at Backwoods and at 14.00 drove away from this wonderful quiet retreat arriving back at the Ronil after just over a two-hour drive. We were greeted by the staff at the hotel like returning prodigals. Many of us had missed the wonderful fresh fish here on the coast, and at dinner seafood came high on the list of choices.

Thursday 19 February

This was to be our last full day's birding and everyone, punctual as ever, was ready to take full advantage of an early start. Reuben was back with us again like an old friend and we were off before 06.30 heading south to the Zuari River. We stopped at Courtalim where the Konkani Railway bridge and the road bridge cross the river. Here, down by the water on the south shore, we waited for our craft to appear to take us on a cruise upstream in search of a rare kingfisher. John noticed an all dark brown *Hirundine* flying with the Barn and Red-rumped Swallows overhead. It was a Dusky Crag-martin, our first new species of the day.

At 07.30 on the dot the small boat, just big enough to accommodate our group comfortably, appeared. Sitting beneath an awning to protect us from the sun, we cruised slowly up the huge river taking a channel to the north called the Cumbarjua Canal. It was blissfully peaceful and gulls and terns flew past us as we approached the north shore where lines of fishing nets were strung between large poles standing above the water. On almost every one sat an egret or a kingfisher. These birds really tolerated a close approach and we got very near to a wonderful Black-capped Kingfisher. Waders (Curlew, Whimbrel, Pacific Golden Plover, Common Redshank and Common Greenshank) and Brown-headed Gulls stood in the shallow water. In the mangroves we could see several immature Black-crowned Night-herons and Striated Herons but it was views of the species we had come to see that were the most exciting. Collared Kingfishers have a very strange distribution. They occur on the coast of Bangladesh and in West Bengal but the only place where they can be seen in peninsula India is on this river. Usually we only see them through tangled mangrove up creeks running into the main channel so to see at least five out in the open was quite remarkable. A tree full of Black-headed Ibis made a good photo opportunity.

Nudging slowly up a mangrove-fringed creek we saw two Marsh Muggers, the freshwater crocodile of the subcontinent and at least two more Collared Kingfishers before turning and heading back to Courtalim. We cruised past the two bridges to a long line of fishing poles further downstream. On these Great Crested Terns and a few Lesser Crested Terns were perched and we were able to get right up to them, the birds showing no fear at all.

We disembarked on the north bank of the river with some difficulty. The tide was falling and the boatmen had to drop laterite blocks and a large log into the water on which we clambered ashore where Chandrakant had our bus waiting for us. We had experienced two hours of sheer bliss.

Returning to Baga via Batim Marsh in the hope of a new duck or something better, we were out of luck. However the sight of a couple of hundred Garganey, Lesser Whistling-ducks, Bronze-winged Jacanas and Purple Swamphens was well worth the short diversion for a second look. The 'at leisure' break before lunch gave time to reflect upon a most enjoyable morning and the chance for a swim.

The last session was spent at Carambolim Lake again, a popular choice. Here Reuben found a pair of Jungle Owlets going off to search for them while the rest of us enjoyed the masses of water birds before us. He rang Chandrakant on his mobile to let us know that he had found them and we wasted no time in joining him in the woodland behind the lake. They were very flighty and it was Sue who spotted one amidst the tangle of branches. The second bird was easier to see sitting in the open, beautiful barred little owls staring back at us.

This was to be the last time we saw Reuben so we thanked him for his excellent spotting and said goodbye to him when we arrived back at the Ronil.

Friday 20 February

For the very first time at the Ronil we ate our breakfast in daylight. A last-minute bit of retail therapy was on the cards for this morning. Friday is market day at Mapusa. Unlike the tourist flea market at Anjuna, this is a genuine Indian market and I wanted everyone to see the 'real thing'. When we arrived midst the hustle and bustle at 08.45, the market was in full swing. The sights, sounds and smells (dried fish, spices, fresh fruit and vegetables) was possibly not everyone's 'cup of tea' and Des and John had opted out, preferring a couple of hours at the Beira Mar. However, most of the group enjoyed the experience and made purchases of leaf tea, cashew nuts, (a Goan speciality), fresh spices and small presents to take home. An hour was probably enough and the cool, air-conditioned bus and the Ronil, a welcome haven of tranquillity, were appreciated even

more.

Our final birding session ended where we had begun two weeks ago – at the Beira Mar Hotel. When we walked down to the hotel's terrace at 16.00 there were four Woolly-necked Storks feeding out on the paddies. Two Greater Painted Snipe crouched by tussocks of rough grass and the overhead wires were full of Rosy Starlings and Jungle Mynas, all so familiar now compared with a fortnight ago. Pauline spotted two very distant Ashy Woodswallows through her scope and we all assumed that our birdlist was closed – wrong! Goa is an amazing place. Right below us a lone Bluethroat hopped out onto the mud in full view, amidst the discarded polythene water bottles and other debris just feet away.

Our last dinner at the hotel was as delicious as ever. Everyone was light-hearted and happy and the conversation switched to trips past and others yet to come. Except for me, everybody had seen new species, some close to two hundred of them and my wish would be that some people would be tempted to return to the subcontinent again. With over 1,200 species, India still has much to offer the keen birder.

Saturday 21 February

Breakfast was ready for us well before 06.30 so we had a short wait for Chandrakant to appear with our ground agent to take us to the airport. At this relatively early hour the drive to Dabolim took just 55 minutes and as we got there before most of the other hotel buses arrived check-in was quick and easy.

Monarch's Airbus A330 had been put back into service so the Premium upgrade people got their seats on the return non-stop flight. We took off a few minutes before the scheduled departure time and arrived at Gatwick 40 minutes early. It was a lovely early spring afternoon in complete contrast to the weather we had left behind two weeks ago. Our luggage appeared without a hitch and after we had all said goodbye we set off for home.

Acknowledgements

This has been a most successful and enjoyable tour thanks to many people. The ground agents and especially Lino were very efficient and arranged a smooth arrival and departure. All the staff at the Ronil Beach Resort were exceptionally helpful and friendly as were the Backwoods people and I am most grateful to them all. Chandrakant was always on time, never let us down and his driving on often poor and crowded roads was careful and inspired confidence in us all. To Reuben and Leio I owe special thanks. We all know one another very well and their style of birding suits our clients well. Most of all however, I would like to thank you, the clients, for choosing Ornitholidays, for your amazing punctuality, your good humour, skill and patience. I really hope that I have the opportunity to travel with you all in the near future. Thank you.

I am grateful to Des, Anthony and Robert for allowing me to use their excellent pictures in this report.

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March 2009

Itinerary and Weather

The weather in Goa was remarkably consistent. Clear skies and hot, sunny days with the temperature rising from a pleasant 16°C at dawn to the low 30's by mid-morning, high humidity and hardly even a wisp of cloud to be seen all day, made birding after 11.00 difficult. A rest in the shade until 15.30 or 16.00 pm was imperative.

Friday 06 February	Fly from Gatwick early evening.
Saturday 07 February	Arrive Dabolim Airport, via Bahrain, late morning. Transfer to our hotel at Baga in north Goa. pm. Birding at the Beira Mar Hotel.
Sunday 08 February	am. Arpora Hill. pm. Fort Aguada.
Monday 09 February	am. Saligao Zor. pm. Dona Paula Plateau.
Tuesday 10 February	am. Carambolim Lake & village. pm. Baga Hill & Beira Mar Hotel.
Wednesday 11 February	am. Morjim Beach & Barshim Marsh. pm. Return to Barshim Marsh.
Thursday 12 February	am. Maem Lake & Pombutpa grassland. pm. Baga paddyfields.
Friday 13 February	am. Curtorim Tank, east of Margao & Batim Marsh. pm. Pilerne Marsh & Saligao Zor.
Saturday 14 February	am. Barshim Marsh & Morjim Beach. pm. Arpora Hill. Valentine's Night festivities.
Sunday 15 February	am. Bondla Forest Reserve. Lunch at spice garden. pm. At leisure.
Monday 16 February	Transfer to Backwoods Camp. am. Birding the forest. pm. Tambdi Surla Temple & Ragada River channel.
Tuesday 17 February	am. Tambdi Surla Temple area. pm. Birding the road towards Barabhum High School.
Wednesday 18 February	am. Birding the road and raptor watching along the Sahyadri scarp. pm. Transfer back to Baga.
Thursday 19 February	am. Zuari River cruise & Batim Marsh. pm. Carambolim Lake.
Friday 20 February	am. Mapusa market. pm. Beira Mar Hotel.
Saturday 21 February	Direct return flight to London (Gatwick) arriving late afternoon.

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING TOUR

No. of days recorded	Locations	Abundance Scale
		Maximum for any one day
1 2h means seen on 1 day and heard on 2 other days	A = All coastal locations. B = Transition Zone: Maem, Carambolim, Curtorim, Pomburpa, Pilerne Marsh and Zuari River. C = Western Ghats; Bondla & Backwoods.	1 = 1 - 4 2 = 5 - 9 3 = 10 - 100 4 = 101 - 1,000 5 = > 1,000

Species	No of days recorded	Location	Abundance Scale	Scientific Name
Oriental Darter	3	A B	1	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
Little Cormorant	8	A B	2	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
Indian Shag (Cormorant)	2	A	1	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
Little Grebe	2	A B	1	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Egret	7	A B	3	<i>Egretta alba</i>
Intermediate Egret	6	A B	2	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
Little Egret	11	A B C	3	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Western Reef Egret	4	A B	1	<i>Egretta gularis</i>
Eastern Cattle Egret ¹	14	A B C	4	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>
Grey Heron	6	A B	1	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	7	A B	1	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Indian Pond Heron	15	A B C	4	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
Striated Heron ²	5	A B	1	<i>Butorides striatus</i>
Chestnut (Cinnamon) Bittern	1	A	1	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	B	2	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Woolly-necked Stork	5	A B	2	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
Lesser Adjutant	2	B	1	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
Black-headed Ibis	3	A B	3	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
Glossy Ibis	3	B	4	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	1	A	1	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Comb Duck	1	B	3	<i>Sarkideiormis melanostus</i>
Lesser Whistling-duck	3	B	4	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
Northern Pintail	2	B	2	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Common Teal	2	B	1	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Spot-billed Duck	2	B	1	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>
Garganey	3	A B	3	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
Northern Shoveler	1	B	4	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Cotton Teal	3	B	3	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>
Oriental Honey-buzzard	7	A C	1	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
White-eyed Buzzard	1	C	1	<i>Butaster teeser</i>
Black-winged (shouldered) Kite	5	A B C	1	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Brahminy Kite	15	A B	3	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
Black Kite	11	A B	4	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Black-eared Kite ³	1	A	1	<i>Milvus (migrans) lineatus</i>
Shikra	8	A B C	1	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
Crested Goshawk	2	C	1	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>
Rufous-bellied Eagle	2	C	1	<i>Hieraaetus kienerii</i>
Booted Eagle	3	A B	1	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Greater Spotted Eagle	2	B	1	<i>Aquila clanga</i>
Tawny Eagle	1	B	1	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
Black Eagle	2	B C	1	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>
Osprey	3	A B	1	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
White-bellied Sea Eagle	5	A B	1	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
Montagu's Harrier	1	A	1	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
Western (Eurasian) Marsh Harrier ⁴	8	A B	1	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Common Kestrel	1	A	1	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Crested Serpent Eagle	3 1h	B C	1	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>

Red Spurfowl	1			C	1	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>	
Grey Junglefowl	1	3h		C	1	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i>	
Indian Peafowl	3		A	C	1	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	
White-breasted Waterhen	6		A	B	C	1	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
Common Moorhen	3		A	B		1	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Common Coot	3			B		1	<i>Fulica afra</i>
Ruddy-breasted Crake	1		A			1	<i>Porzana fusca</i>
Purple Swamphen	3			B		4	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	3			B		2	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
Bronze-winged Jacana	4		A	B		3	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>
Black-winged Stilt	3		A	B		2	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Small Pratincole	1			B		2	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
Red-wattled Lapwing	11		A	B	C	3	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
Yellow-wattled Lapwing	2		A	B		2	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
Greater Sand Plover	1		A			3	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
Lesser Sand Plover	1		A			4	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Little Ringed Plover	2		A	B		2	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Kentish Plover	2		A			2	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Pacific Golden Plover	2		A	B		2	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Eurasian Curlew	2		A	B		3	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Whimbrel	2			B		2	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Terek Sandpiper	1		A			2	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Common Redshank	5		A	B		3	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Spotted Redshank	1			B		1	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	1		A			1	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Common Greenshank	5		A	B		2	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Wood Sandpiper	7		A	B		2	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Green Sandpiper	6		A	B	C	1	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Common Sandpiper	5		A	B		2	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Greater Painted-snipe	3		A			1	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>
Common Snipe	4		A			1	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	1		A			1	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Ruff	1			B		2	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Dunlin	1		A			1	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Little Stint	1			B		1	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Temminck's Stint	1			B		1	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Slender-billed Gull	2		A			2	<i>Larus genei</i>
Black-headed Gull	3		A	B		3	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Brown-headed Gull	6		A	B		4	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>
Great Black-headed (Pallas's) Gull	2		A			3	<i>Larus ichthyaetus</i>
'Steppe' (Caspian) Gull ⁵	2		A			4	<i>Larus heuglini barbarensis</i>
Heuglin's Gull	2		A			2	<i>Larus heuglini heuglini</i>
Great Crested Tern	2		A	B		3	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
Lesser Crested Tern	3		A	B		3	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
River Tern	1			B		1	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>
Gull-billed Tern	6		A	B		3	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
Spotted Dove	14		A	B	C	2	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
Emerald Dove	2				C	1	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
Grey-fronted Green Pigeon ⁶	4			B	C	1	<i>Treron pompadora</i>
Mountain Imperial Pigeon	1				C	2	<i>Ducula badia</i>
Rock Dove (feral)	12		A	B	C	3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Malabar Parakeet	3				C	2	<i>Psittacula columboides</i>
Plum-headed Parakeet	9		A	B	C	3	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
Rose-ringed Parakeet	5		A	B		1	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
Alexandrine Parakeet	2		A	B		1	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
Vernal Hanging Parrot	3				C	1	<i>Loriculus vernalis</i>
Grey-bellied Cuckoo	1		A			1	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
Asian Koel	11	1h	A	B	C	2	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>
Southern (Greater) Coucal ⁷	6		A	B	C	1	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Frogmouth	1				C	1	<i>Batrachostomus monileger</i>
Indian Jungle (Grey) Nightjar ⁸	1				C	1	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>

Brown Hawk-owl	1		B	1	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
Common Barn-owl	2	A		1	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Brown Wood-owl	1	A		1	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>
Oriental Scops -owl	1		C	1	<i>Otus sunia</i>
Spotted Owlet	2		B	1	<i>Athene brama</i>
Jungle Owlet	1		B	1	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>
Indian Swiftlet	2	A		2	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i>
Indian White-rumped Spinetail	1		C	1	<i>Zoonavena sylvatica</i>
Asian Palm Swift	2	A		1	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
Little (House) Swift ⁹	4	A	B	3	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Crested Treeswift	2		C	1	<i>Hemiprocnis coronata</i>
Indian Roller	5	A	B	1	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
Malabar Trogon	1		C	1	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
Lesser Pied Kingfisher	4	A	B	1	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
White-throated Kingfisher	15	A	B	3	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
Stork-billed Kingfisher	7	A	B	2	<i>Halcyon capensis</i>
Black-capped Kingfisher	2		B	1	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>
Common Kingfisher	6	A	B	2	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Blue-eared Kingfisher	1		C	1	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>
Collared Kingfisher	1		B	2	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	8	A	B	2	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
Little Green Bee-eater	11	A	B	3	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	3		C	3	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
Brown-headed Barbet	3		C	1	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>
White-cheeked Barbet	7	lh	A	1	<i>Megalaima viridis</i>
Coppersmith Barbet	5	A	B	1	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
Malabar Barbet ¹⁰	3		C	1	<i>Megalaima rubricapilla</i>
Common Hoopoe	2	A		1	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Malabar Grey Hornbill	4		C	1	<i>Ocyroceros griseus</i>
Great Pied Hornbill	1		C	1	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>
Malabar Pied Hornbill	4		B	1	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
Rufous Woodpecker	2		C	1	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>
Black-rumped Flameback	7	A	C	1	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
Greater Flameback	2		C	1	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>
White-bellied Woodpecker	1		C	1	<i>Dryocopus javensis</i>
Heart-spotted Woodpecker	3		C	1	<i>Hemicircus canente</i>
Common Iora	4	A	C	1	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
Gold-fronted Leafbird	7	A	B	1	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
Jerdon's Leafbird ¹¹	1	A		1	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
Asian Fairy-bluebird	2		C	1	<i>Irena puella</i>
Indian (Eurasian) Golden Oriole ¹²	12	A	B	2	<i>Oriolus kundo</i>
Black-hooded Oriole	9	A	B	1	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
Black-naped Oriole	1		B	1	<i>Oriolus chinensis diffusus</i>
Indian Pitta	2	A		1	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>
Ashy-crowned Finch-lark ¹³	1	A		2	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>
Oriental Skylark	1	A		1	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>
Malabar Lark	4	A	B	1	<i>Galerida malabarica</i>
Common Sand-martin	1		B	1	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Dusky Crag-martin	1		B	1	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>
Barn Swallow	12	A	B	3	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Wire-tailed Swallow	8	A	B	3	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	14	A	B	3	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Streak-throated Swallow	8	A	C	2	<i>Hirundo fluvicola</i>
Black Drongo	9	A	B	3	<i>Dicrurus macrocerus</i>
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	4		C	2	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
Spangled Drongo	1		C	1	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
Ashy Drongo	12	A	B	2	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>
White-bellied Drongo	3	A	C	1	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>
Bronzed Drongo	6	A	B	2	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>
Common Woodshrike	1	A		1	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>
Malabar (Large) Woodshrike ¹⁴	2		C	3	<i>Tephrodornis sylvicola</i>

'Rufous-backed' Long-tailed Shrike	9	A	B	C	1	<i>Lanius schach</i>
Brown Shrike	3	A		C	1	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
Ashy Woodswallow	7	A	B	C	1	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>
Grey-headed Starling ¹⁵	5	A			3	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>
Malabar White-headed Starling¹⁵	4			C	3	<i>Sturnia blythii</i>
Rosy Starling	8	A	B		3	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>
Common Myna	5	A	B		1	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
Jungle Myna	8	A	B		4	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>
Rufous Treepie	7	A	B		1	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>
House Crow	11	A	B	C	4	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
Indian Jungle Crow¹⁶	10	A	B	C	3	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
Pied (Bar-winged) Flycatcher-shrike	2	A		C	1	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
Black-headed Cuckooshrike	3	A		C	1	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
Small Minivet	3	A			1	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>
Orange (Scarlet) Minivet¹⁷	4			C	1	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
Yellow-browed Bulbul	2			C	1	<i>Iole indica</i>
Red-vented Bulbul	9	A	B	C	3	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
Red-whiskered Bulbul	12	A	B	C	3	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>
Flame-throated Bulbul¹⁸	4			C	1	<i>Pycnonotus gularis</i>
Grey-headed Bulbul	1			C	1	<i>Pycnonotus priocephalus</i>
Square-tailed Black Bulbul¹⁹	1			C	3	<i>Hypsipetes ganeesta</i>
White-browed Bulbul	3	A	B		1	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i>
Puff-throated Babbler	5	A	B	C	1	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>
Indian Scimitar-babbler	3h		B	C	1	<i>Pomatorhinus horsfieldii</i>
Tawny-bellied Babbler	1			C	1	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>
Dark-fronted Babbler	3			C	1	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>
Jungle Babbler	3	2h	A	B	3	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>
Brown-cheeked Fulvetta	5	1h	A	B	2	<i>Alcippe poliocephala</i>
Brown-breasted Flycatcher	2			C	1	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>
Asian Brown Flycatcher	4	A	B		1	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
Red-throated Flycatcher ²⁰	1			C	1	<i>Muscicapa albicilla</i>
Verditer Flycatcher	1			C	1	<i>Muscicapa thalassina</i>
Nilgiri Flycatcher	1			C	1	<i>Eumyias albicaudatus</i>
White-bellied Blue Flycatcher	2			C	1	<i>Cyornis pallipes</i>
Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	6	A	B	C	1	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	8	A	B	C	1	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
Black-naped Blue Monarch	2			C	1	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
White-spotted (throated) Fantail ²¹	3	A	B		1	<i>Rhipidura albogularis</i>
Grey-breasted Prinia	1	A			2	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>
Ashy Prinia	7	A	B		1	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
Plain Prinia	2		B	C	1	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
Common Tailorbird	6	5h	A	B	1	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
Indian (Clamorous) Reed Warbler ²²	1	A			1	<i>Acrocephalus brunnescens</i>
Blyth's Reed-warbler	7	A	B	C	2	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
Greenish Warbler ²³	6	A	B		1	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
Bright-green Warbler ²³	2			C	1	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>
Western-Crowned Warbler	2			C	1	<i>Phylloscopus occipitalis</i>
Bluethroat	1	A			1	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>
White-rumped Shama	1			C	1	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
Oriental Magpie Robin	12	A	B	C	1	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
Indian Black Robin	4	A			2	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i>
Black Redstart	1			C	1	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris</i>
Siberian (Common) Stonechat ²⁴	6	A	B		1	<i>Saxicola torquatus maura</i>
Pied Bushchat	6	A	B		1	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
Blue Rock-thrush	1	A			1	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
Malabar Whistling Thrush	2	1h	B	C	1	<i>Myophonus horsfieldii</i>
Orange-headed Thrush	4	A		C	1	<i>Zoothera citrina cyanota</i>
Tickell's Thrush	1			C	1	<i>Turdus unicolor</i>
Indian Blackbird²⁵	3	A	B	C	2	<i>Turdus simillimus</i>
Indian Yellow (Black-lored) Tit	4	A	B		1	<i>Parus xanthogenys</i>
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	3			C	1	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>

Tree Pipit	3	A		C	1	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
Paddyfield Pipit	8	A	B	C	2	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
Richard's Pipit	2	A	B		1	<i>Anthus richardi</i>
White-browed Wagtail	5	A	B		1	<i>Motacilla madaraspatensis</i>
Western Yellow Wagtail	1		B		1	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>
Grey Wagtail	4		B	C	1	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Little Spiderhunter	3		B	C	1	<i>Arachnothera longirostris</i>
Purple-rumped Sunbird	8	A	B	C	2	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>
<u>Small (Crimson-backed) Sunbird</u>	5	A		C	1	<i>Nectarinia minima</i>
Loten's Sunbird	2	A		C	1	<i>Nectarinia lotenia</i>
Purple Sunbird	9	A	B	C	1	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>
<u>Vigors's (Crimson) Sunbird</u> ²⁶	3	A			1	<i>Aethopyga vigorsii</i>
Thick-billed Flowerpecker	3			C	1	<i>Dicaeum agile</i>
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	2	A	B		1	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
<u>Nilgiri (Plain) Flowerpecker</u> ²⁷	6	A	B	C	1	<i>Dicaeum concolor</i>
White-rumped Munia	10	A	B	C	3	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
Black-throated Munia	1			C	3	<i>Lonchura kelaarti</i>
Scaly-breasted Munia	4	A		C	2	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
House Sparrow	5	A	B		3	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Yellow-throated Sparrow ²⁸	5			C	3	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>
Baya Weaver	1	A	B	C	4	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
Common Rosefinch	2			C	2	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>

TAXONOMIC NOTES (following *Birds of South Asia - The Ripley Guide*. Pamela Rasmussen & John Anderton).

Birds in **bold** are Indian sub-continent endemic species. Those underlined are endemic to the Western Ghats.

Names from *Birds of Southern India* –Richard Grimmett & Tim Inskipp in parenthesis in the checklist if not mentioned below.

- (1) Cattle Egret split into two species, Eastern (*Bulbulcus coromandus*) & Western (*B. ibis*). Only Eastern occurs in India.
- (2) Name change from Little to Striated Heron.
- (3) Black-eared split from Black Kite, *Milvus migrans*.
- (4) Marsh Harrier split into Eastern *Circus spilonotus* & Western.
- (5) Caspian Gull probably does not occur in India. R&A describe the 'Herring Gull Complex' as a "taxonomic nightmare". Yellow-legged Herring-type gulls are either 'Steppe' Gulls or Heuglin's Gulls.
- (6) Pompadour Green Pigeons now split into three species. Only Grey-fronted Green Pigeon occurs in Western India.
- (7) The Coucal of peninsula India, split from Greater that occurs in Northern India.
- (8) Grey Nightjar, *Caprimulgus jotaka*, occurs only in the Himalayas, Orissa & the N.E. Ghats.
- (9) Name change. House Swift is now an African species.
- (10) Crimson-fronted Barbet split into Malabar & Ceylon, both endemics.
- (11) Blue-winged Leafbird (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*) that occurs only in N.E. India, now split from Jerdon's.
- (12) European Golden Oriole is a vagrant in India. *Oriolus kundoo* is the common species in India.
- (13) Ashy-crowned Finch-lark is called Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark by Grimmett & Inskipp.
- (14) Large Woodshrike occurs only in the North East. Malabar Woodshrike is a Western Ghats endemic species.
- (15) Chestnut -tailed Starling split into Grey-headed & the Western Ghats endemic Malabar White-headed Starling, *Sturnus blythii*.
- (16) Large-billed Crow now split into three species. Only Indian Jungle Crow occurs in peninsula India.
- (17) Scarlet Minivet, *Pericrocotus speciosus*, does not occur in Western India. This split gives Orange Minivet endemic status.
- (18) Formerly thought to be a sub-species of Black-crested Bulbul, *Pycnonotus melanicterus*, Flame-throated Bulbul is now a full and endemic Western Ghats species.
- (19) Black Bulbul now split into Himalayan (*Hypsipetes leucocephalus*) & Square-tailed (*H. ganeester*) endemic in the Western Ghats.
- (20) Red-breasted, *Ficedula parva*, and Red-throated or Taiga Flycatcher are now considered to be separate species.
- (21) White-spotted split from White-throated Fantail, *Rhipidura albicollis*, and is an endemic species in peninsula India.
- (22) It is proposed to split Indian from Clamorous Reed-warbler, *Acrocephalus stentoreus*.

- (23) Bright-green Warbler (*P. nitidus*) split from Greenish Warbler (*P. trochiloides*).
- (24) R & A suggest that the stonechat , Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura*, that occurs in India might best be considered a separate species from Common Stonechat.
- (25) Indian Blackbird is split from Eurasian Blackbird, *Turdus merula*, that does not occur in India.
- (26) Vigors's Sunbird split from Crimson Sunbird of the Himalayas & the North East. It is a Western Ghats endemic.
- (27) Nilgiri Flowerpecker, another Western Ghats endemic, is split from Plain Flowerpecker, the latter only being found in the North East in India.
- (28) Formerly called Chestnut-shouldered Petronia.

MAMMALS

Common Langur	4	A	C	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>
Bonnet Macaque	4		C	<i>Macaca radiata</i>
Indian Flying Fox	1	B		<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>
Indian Giant Squirrel	4		C	<i>Ratufa indica</i>
Three-striped Palm Squirrel	4	A	B	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>
Spotted Deer (Chital)	1		C	<i>Axis axis</i>
Common Mongoose	3	B	C	<i>Herpestes edwardsi</i>

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Mugger (Marsh Crocodile)	1	B		<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>
Draco (Gliding Lizard)	3		C	<i>Draco dussumieri</i>
Common Indian Bronzeback	1		C	<i>Dendrelaphis tristis</i>
Leith's Frog	2		C	<i>Indirana leithii</i>
Common Tree Frog	3		C	<i>Polypedates maculatus</i>

This list represents those birds and other animals seen by party members of this tour.



Little Green Bee-eater



Orange-headed Thrush



Indian Jungle Nightjar



Plum-headed Parakeet



Indian Pond-heron



Oriental Scops-Owl



Black-capped Kingfisher



Collared Kingfisher

**Front cover: Brahminy Kite – Robert Blewitt
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