

North East India

Assam & Arunachal Pradesh Inc. Higher Altitudes of Dirang

In association with:

Jennifer & Leio De Souza



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The nomenclature and Taxonomy used in this report is "The Birds of South East Asia – The Ripley Guide (2005)

February 1st

We departed Newcastle aboard the Emirates flight to Dubai where we had to catch an Emirates connection to Calcutta. Everything went smoothly and the flights were very enjoyable. On arrival in Calcutta we had to switch terminals, we saw Black Drongo, Black Kite, House Crow and Common Myna during the short walk to the domestic departures to catch our onward flight to Guwahati in Assam. The Kingfisher flight to Assam was delayed due to heavy fog in Assam. We departed Calcutta and headed North across Bangladesh. Distant views of Mount Everest were had from the plane. Eventually we arrived at Guwahati to be greeted by Leio and his team of 4x4 drivers. The first bird in Assam was an overflying Asian Openbill. We departed the airport and after a little confusion and some crazy traffic we arrived at the wonderfully named Hotel Ginger for a very short overnight stay.

February 2nd

A 02.30am start saw us on the road for the long drive to Nameri National Park. As the new day dawned we saw lots of Common and Jungle Mynas, House Crows and Cattle Egrets. Also seen from the vehicles were a couple of Smyrna Kingfishers, Rufous Treepees and a few Indian Pond Herons. At a small village we asked "why did the chicken cross the road" – well no one knows as in this case as it was demolished by one of the 4x4's.

Nameri National Park covering an area of about 200sq. kms is located at the foothills of eastern Himalayas about 35km from Tezpur, the nearest town. The park is the second Tiger reserve of Assam. The park consists of deciduous forests, hills and the river Jia Bhoroli flows through it. Nameri was set up as a sanctuary on 18th September 1985 with an area of 137 sq km which was actually a part of Naduar Forest Reserve. Later another 75sq km was added to it making it an area of 212 sq km and on 15th November, 1998 it was officially established as a National park.

Nameri is a haven for many rare animals. The rich wildlife includes Tiger, Black bear, elephant, Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Indian Bison, Pangolin, Indian wild dog, deer, Civet Cat, Capped Langur, and Jackals etc. We arrived at Nameri Eco Camp which was to be our base for the next couple of days. Immediately we began birding as the camp's staff unloaded the vehicles. One of the first birds was an Oriental Hobby which favoured a perch in a tall tree at the entrance.



Oriental Hobby © Alan Curry

Other birds around the entrance included Grey-backed and Long-tailed Shrikes, Indian Roller, Black-hooded Oriole, and Gray-headed Canary Flycatcher. The birds were coming thick and fast with species such as Verditer Flycatcher, Oriental White-eye, Blue-throated & Lineated Barbet, Himalayan Black Bulbul & Himalayan Swiftlet, Palm Swift, Greater Flameback, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo. Just outside the camp entrance a Daurian Redstart showed well and both Scarlet and Short-tailed Minivets were seen. A distant fly by Harrier could not be properly identified but the consensus was that it could have been a female Pied Harrier.

Back inside the camp entrance we saw Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Grey Wagtail, Streaked Spiderhunter, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Red-breasted Parakeet and Taiga Flycatcher. A squirrel Species was identified by Leio as a Hoary Bellied. At 08.00 we made our way to the dining area for a welcome breakfast of eggs and toast. After breakfast we put our bags in our tents before reconvening at the gate for our first trip of the day. Whilst we were waiting for everybody to arrive a Little Pied Flycatcher appeared affording great views. More birds appeared – Yellow-bellied Fantail, Yellow-vented Warbler, Olive-backed Pipit, Crested Goshawk, Asian Barred Owlet, Green imperial Pigeon, Barred Cuckoo-dove, and two Blue-bearded Bee-eaters.



Nameri Camp

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/locality/oriental/india/assam/sonitpur-district/nameri-eco-camp>

We left the camp and headed for the Bhoroli River a tributary of the mighty Brahmaputra River, where we were going to enjoy a river rafting trip. This trip turned out to be a great experience. We clambered aboard inflatable rafts ably manned by a skilful oarsman. The trip provided several highlights including many hundreds, if not thousands of Small Pratincoles. Also seen were River Lapwing, Ruddy Shelduck, a Blue-eared Kingfisher which turned out to be the only one of the trip, which was seen by Tim and Maurice, who were mercifully ribbed by the a couple of the team for stringing.

The main reason for the trip was to connect with the Ibisbill and all in all we seen 10 of these superb birds which seemed oblivious to our presence in the rafts. Close by were two excellent River Terns



Ibisbill & River Tern © Alan Curry



River Lapwing & Ruddy Shelduck © Alan Curry

Other good birds seen during the trip were Blue Rock Thrush, Hodgson's Redstart, Crested Serpent Eagle, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Large Cuckoo- shrike. Waders include Green & Common Sandpipers and Greenshank.



We headed back to camp for lunch – the first of many cauliflower dishes which were to become somewhat repetitive over the next couple of weeks. After lunch we met at the entrance for our first proper trip into the national park. Whilst waiting we had a calling Dusky Warbler and saw a Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike. We drove a couple of mile down to the river where we boarded a small boat and crossed t into the Park.

The Nameri National wildlife Park is 200 square kilometers and is the only National Park in Assam that you can only travel around by foot. No cars or cycles are allowed. It is the home of the Assam's national bird, the White Winged Wood Duck which is very elusive only coming out at night to feed, and roosting during the day.

Traditionally Nameri is known allover for its fishing and in particular the Golden Mahseer. The snow fed Jla Bhoroh river flows along the southern periphery of the Park adding to the scenery. On a clear day you can see the snowcapped peaks of the Eastern Himalayas. The swift river with its crystal clear waters is the home of the mighty Mahseer - the dream of every sports fisherman. The Bhoroli record on rod arid line is a 24.5 kg (52Ib) Golden Mahseer. The Forest Department regulates angling and accords permission to angling members on a select stretch of the river, strictly on a catch, record and release basis. Anglers from all over the world come here for the sports. The other sporting species of fish found in Bhoroli are Saal (Murrail), Gorua (Goonch), Korang or Sundarle (Indian Trout) and Boka (Chocolate Mahseer).

Because of the presence of dangerous animals Park Authorities don't allow free access so we were met and accompanied throughout our visit by a rifleman. As we walked across the dry river bed into the park we saw a Black Stork. Two Wreathed Hornbill flew by and nearby there was a single Peregrine Falcon, 4/5 Green Bee-eaters, Green Imperial Pigeon, & Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker. Also seen were Hill Myna (a Ripley Split involving Southern Hill Myna), White-vented Myna, Black-crested Bulbul, & Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush.

Our guard led us on a walk, which eventually reached an open area of tall grass which in turn held a couple of ponds. Our luck was in as almost immediately we arrive two elusive White-winged Duck took flight affording great views to all present. The duck was our main target and is the state bird of Assam it is evaluated as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. It is listed on Appendix I of CITES.

Present also around the fringes of a couple of the pools were Smoky & Dusky Warblers, Greater Painted Snipe, Red-wattled Lapwing and a surprise Wryneck. As the sun set we made our back across the river and back to camp.

February 3rd

We met at 05.30 for a quick coffee. Tim and Mo emerged from an eventful night having had their nights sleep interrupted by several mice which had been running around the rafters – ha ha Belta.

First birds around the camp were the resident Brown Hawk Owl and Asian Barred Owlets who roosted within the camp. We left and headed back to the river and crossed into the park once again met by our trusty armed guard. We saw 2 Great Hornbills and 3 Wreathed Hornbill. On the banks of the river were a single, Paddyfield Pipit, Little- ringed Plover and a Stone Curlew. A Black throated Thrush showed quite well in a nearby tree and also there were 16 Oriental-turtle Doves.

As we entered the forest we soon began to rack up the birds with Yellow-bellied, Buff-barred and Lemon-rumped Warblers spotted. There were also Taiga Flycatcher; Velvet-fronted & Chestnut bellied Nuthatch, Streaked-Spider Hunter and a possible Blyth's Leaf Warbler whose id proved an irresistible challenge to Alan. There was also debate over the id of a Dendrocopos Woodpecker which was either Fulvous or Stripe breasted.

Every now and then there were waves of Warblers appearing and disappearing almost as quickly and another puzzle emerged over another Warbler – Pale legged Leaf or Greenish. The id was never completely nailed. There were a several Vernal-hanging Parrots. At 08.15 an Orange-BELLIED Leaf Bird was spotted together with a Stripe-tit Babbler and two Abbott's Babbler's. As we walked along the path which ran parallel to the River a Black-backed Forktail flew into cover. White-throated Fantail, Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike and Blue-winged Leaf bird were all seen in this area.

It was also here that the mornings ID Problems resurfaced with the saying "unleash the Ripley" was born and was a reference to the Birds of South Asia -The Ripley Guide by Pamela C. Rasmussen and John C. Anderton and is a two-volume book, covering the birds of South Asia, published in 2005 by the Smithsonian Institution and Lynx Edicions. The geographical scope of the book covers India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, the Chagos archipelago and Afghanistan (the latter country had been excluded from previous works covering this region). In total, 1508 species are covered (this figure includes 85 hypothetical and 67 'possible' species, which are given only shorter accounts). Two notable aspects of Birds of South Asia are its distribution evidence-base — the book's authors based their distributional information almost completely on

museum specimens — and its taxonomic approach, involving a large number of species-level splits. During the remainder of the trip as “Unleash the Ripley” was uttered out popped the book and the text scutinised in order to solve the id dilemmas.



Wreathed Hornbill & Black-backed Forktail © Alan Curry

At 09.15 another Warbler party flitted through the trees, not that we were complaining as they were always welcome and quite a spectacle and included A Blyth's Leaf Warbler and several Western-crowned Warbler's. A Maroon Oriole and Little Pied Flycatcher were close by

and then one of the birds of the morning a Slaty-bellied Tesia was discovered on the floor under a dense bush. We relished the opportunity to watch the Tesia and everyone got good views. On the river were Ruddy Shelduck, Greenshank, River Lapwing, Common Sandpiper, Syrma, Common and Pied Kingfisher. We also spotted a Smooth-coated Otter. Along the track Leio spotted a Tibetan Blackbird and an Asian Fairy Bluebird and shortly after had an unwelcome guest attached itself to his leg – a Leech. At 11.25 another contender for bird of the day appeared in the shape of a White-browed Piculet – another cracker.



White-browed Piculet © Alan Curry

At 11.40am a Large Niltava, Slaty-backed Flycatcher and 3 Lesser Adjutants were added to the list and another contender for bird of the day – a high perched Pied Falconet.



Pied Falconet © Alan Curry

In the same tree was a Malayan Giant Squirrel an unusual bi-coloured, long tailed mammal. At 12.45 we returned to the Rangers lodge for lunch and rested until 14.15 as the heat intensified. An Osprey hunted on the river as we ate our lunch. After our rest we set out on another walk into the forest and soon saw Small Niltava and a couple of Silver- breasted Broadbills which showed well. Muntjac Deer were present and a Dark-breasted Thrush was spotted. At 15.55 a Pale-chinned Flycatcher was identified after another "Unleash the Ripley" moment and at 16.10 A Greater Yellow – Nape was observed. We entered an open area of tall grass and water and 32 Fulvous Whistling Ducks flew by and two Verditer Flycatchers, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo and Rufous Fronted Babbler were nearby.

It was now very close to sunset and the guard was becoming increasingly agitated as we lingered every few yards. He was keen to get the group out of the park as darkness brought the emergence of the large mammals. He led us back to the river and we crossed back in near darkness with hundreds of Small Pratincoles taken advantage of the last few minute of light to feed over the river. As we disembarked we heard a Large-tailed Nightjar calling and soon Leio had taped the birds into view. A quick stop on the way back to camp proved fruitless as we dipped an Oriental Scops Owl.

February 4th

A 05.30 meet with Massala Omelletes for breakfast saw the group depart at 06.30 to rendezvous with Rofiq our guide for the higher altitudes where we would be heading next. We motored towards the border of Arunachal Pradesh a much trouble region of North-east India.

Arunachal Pradesh borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south, and shares international borders with Burma in the east, Bhutan in the west, and the People's Republic of China in the north. The majority of the territory is claimed by the People's Republic of China as part of South Tibet. The northern border of Arunachal Pradesh reflects the McMahon Line, a controversial 1914 treaty between the United Kingdom and a Tibetan government, which was never accepted by the Chinese government, and not enforced, by the Indian government until 1950. The population is also fighting for Independence from India but being a Mineral and Oil rich area the Indian Government have thousands of troops station here to defend its territory. Every few hundred yards were armed soldiers which included several mine sweeping the verges. We stopped at an open area for a few minutes which looked out over an area of grassland and cultivated fields. It was here a Striated Grassbird, Long-tailed and Brown Shrike, Pied Starling, Scaly-breasted Munia and Indian Black-billed Roller were seen.

At the border our group was subject to strict passport controls and we waited for a half hour to get the necessary travel documents and clearance. While we waited we ticked off Eurasian Tree Sparrows which frequented the local garage. With permission granted we were cleared to proceed and soon were beginning to head north steadily climbing all the way. The drive was tough with the road becoming all most non existent and riddled with potholes. The road had been ravaged by the winter and many miles of it was being reconstructed. At 08.30 a Wall creeper was spotted and we enjoyed great views of this wonderful species

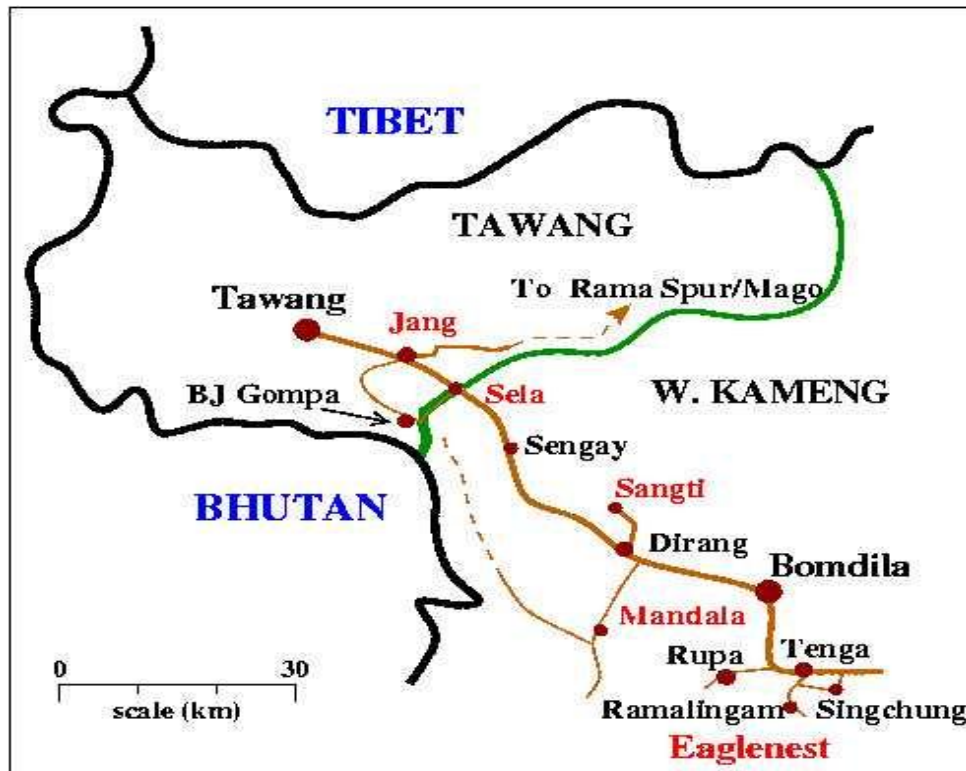


Wallcreeper © Alan Curry

The next few miles brought spectacular scenery and as we entered a forested area a Probable Red-headed Trogon flew across the road in front of one of the 4x4's. At a vista point we watched a Black Eagle and further up the road at a small montane village we saw Common Tailorbird, Siberian Stonechat, Blue-fronted Redstart and Grey Bushchat.

We entered into a long gorge / river valley and stopped to enjoy the views. On the river were two Brown Dippers, Plumbeous Water Redstart, White-capped Water Redstart and a

Little Forktail. Eventually we reached the Hotel Permaling, in Dirang, just as lunch was about to be served.



Situated at an altitude of 4910 ft above the sea level, Dirang is a hill station comprises of Tribal Mahayana Monapas sharing their traditions and heritage which are similar to Western Bhutan. Dirang is located on a picturesque valley in between Bomdilla and Tawang and due to its lower altitude than Bomdila the weather is much milder.

After lunch we headed off to the Sangti Valley to seek out one of the target birds of the trip and region the Black-necked Crane which is evaluated as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

Sangti Valley, located at 7 km from Dirang is one of the seasonal homes of the Crane that flies across from China and is locally termed as Tung Tung ka UK by the people. The Black-necked cranes, migrate into the valley during November and December, feeding and breeding during the winter months and then revert back to their original homes along with their young ones during the months of April and May every year. Sadly for us we failed to connect with the birds. A train of thought was that the region was still in the grip of winter and the Cranes had delayed their migration but more worrying was the possibility of the species being in serious trouble.

Small consolation came in the form of Rufous Breasted Accentor, Little Bunting, Tickells Leaf Warbler, Olive backed Pipit, Himalayan Buzzard and at 16.30 two Black tailed Crakes. Along the river Rofiq guided the group to an area where he soon located two Long-billed Plovers (Current IUCN Red List category – least concern).



Long-billed Plover (hand held digi-scope)

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/locality/oriental/india/arunachal-pradesh/west-kameng-district/sangti-valley>

At 16.55 a Himalayan Crested Kingfisher showed well as we made our back to the hotel.

Overnight Dirang

February 5th

A 04.00 start saw us meet up in complete darkness as the hotel was in the grip of one of many power cuts that affect the area. Outside it was bitterly cold as we set out to ascend to the high Himalayan pass called Sela. We made frequent stops during the ascent and connected with birds such as Rufous-vented & Gray crested Tits, Himalayan Red- Flanked Bush Robin, and White-throated Redstart. We ate breakfast and then drove further up the road until we came to a very steep conifer covered slope. Rofiq heard the call of a Blood Pheasant. The bird stubbornly refused to show, so Rofiq clambered down the slope and disappeared into the trees and drove out no less than 20 plus Blood Pheasants.

(Follow the links)

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/blood-pheasant-ithaginis-cruentus/male-feeding-exposed-vegetation-snow-line-forest-edge-then-r>

Rofiq got a round of applause from the lads when he returned to the roadside. He was totally out of breath due to the very poor oxygen levels.

Eventually we reached our goal - The Sela Pass, a high-altitude mountain road located in Tawang District. It has an elevation of 4170m (13,800 ft). It connects Tawang town to Tezpur and Guwahati and is the main road connecting Tawang with the rest of India. Tawang is situated at a distance of 78 km from Sela Pass while Guwahati is at a distance of 340 km. The weather was glorious as we disembarked at the top, although cold, clear blue skies and bright sunshine greeted us.



Sela Pass

One of the main reasons for visiting the area was to look for Tragopans and the Himalayan Monal sadly we dipped these species. We did however connect with Upland Buzzard, White-winged (Güldenstädt's) Redstart, and two flocks of very smart looking Snow Pigeons,

Wallcreeper and Alpine Accentor. A surprise bonus for the group was the presence of 3 adult male Kessler's Thrush



Kessler Thrush ©Chris Knox

We scoured the area for Galliformes but were totally out of luck. We returned to the vehicles and began our descent. At 12.30 we stopped when a flock of birds flew along the hillside. We piled out of the cars to be greeted by a flock of 50+ Grandala all females bar a single stunning male. The Grandala was a target species and as so was well received. Shortly afterwards we stopped for an hour to enjoy our lunch before driving to a roadside site which Rofiq knew. Here we bagged Spotted Laughing Thrush and Black-faced Laughing Thrush both welcome additions to the list. Further down the road we saw another fabulous Wallcreeper and Rufous-breasted Accentor. The end of the day brought time to reflect on a day to remember with glorious scenery and an atmosphere which at times was difficult to cope with as oxygen levels affected a few of the group in particular poor Leio who struggled badly.

February 6th

The Mandala Road

First Bird as we jumped out of the vehicles was an Grey-faced Leaf Warbler and a calling Rufous-chinned Laughing Thrush was close by. We quickly added 3 Green-backed Tits, 2 Stripe-throated Yuhina, 2 Hill Prinia's and 2 Olive-backed Pipits. At 06.50 we stopped at a small wood where we saw 2 Stripe-throated Yuhina, Lemon-rumped and Grey-faced Leaf Warbler, an unidentified Bullfinch species, Black-throated Prinia* and a Tibetan Siskin.

*Ripley was unleashed as the i.d of the earlier Hill Prinia had been troubling Alan and Chris. It was discovered that Hill Prinia occurs further east in Burma. Ripley split the bird as Black-throated Prinia. Further along the road we saw White-collared Blackbird, Dark-throated Thrush, 4 Bhutan Laughing Thrushes, Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler, Beautiful Sibia, Rufous-capped Babbler, Green-tailed Sunbird, 2 Speckled Piculet's, 2 White-tailed Nuthatches and a flock of Whiskered Yuhina.

07.50 am saw 10+ Russett Sparrow's and shortly afterwards a feeding flock of approx. 16 Black-faced Warblers went through and on a nearby hillside were a group of 30+ White-throated Laughing Thrushes. Other birds in the vicinity included Gold-throated Barbet, Grey-sided Laughing Thrush and both Yellow-cheeked and Yellow-browed Tits.

The highlight of the morning appeared in the shape of an exquisite Fire-tailed Myzornis which showed really well down to a few feet, a real peach of a bird and one which thrilled the boys. Also in the same tree was a Male Green-tailed Sunbird. At 10.40 a Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler was spotted and soon afterwards an unidentified Accipiter species flew by as a Nutcracker called loudly in the valley below. Two Rosefinches caused some debate with Dark-breasted Rosefinch being mooted as a possibility – distinguishing id features were Tawny supercillium together with an overall dark appearance. The birds were quite distant. A small flock of Crossbills flew into the pines – there were five birds in total with four being identified as Female Common Crossbill and the fifth being a possible Himalayan Species.



Grey-crested Tit

We stop for an Al fresco lunch of spicy pasta and salad ably prepared and served by time of intrepid support team. Shortly after lunch we were back on track and soon had a Nutcracker fly in and call loudly from a pine tree above us.



Rufous- vented Tit

The remainder of the afternoon saw the group continue its walk and close to the Mandala village we saw a single Darjeeling Woodpecker and both Rufous-fronted and Grey-crested Tits, also spotted was a small group of Red-throated Thrushes.

We descended down the hill but the remainder of the afternoon was rather quiet although we still managed to get a couple of good birds – Grey-winged Blackbird, Golden-naped Finch, Rusty-flanked Treecreeper, and Rufous-bellied Woodpecker. We also saw a few Red-flanked Bush Robins. As the light diminished we headed back to the digs, half way down the hill the ball joint on the wheel collapsed on one of the vehicles. We were miles from anywhere and we feared the worst. The drivers lit a warning fire close to the vehicle to warn any approaching traffic as it was stuck in the middle of the track. We all piled into the other two vehicles and drove back to the hotel.

February 7th

We met at 05.00 for breakfast and amazingly the third vehicle was waiting to escort us out for the day – how the guys managed to repair it was nothing short of amazing. But repair it they did and we were soon enroute for another days birding. We covered similar environments as before but it turned out to be a relatively quiet day. The early mornings highlights included a Slaty-backed Forktail, Taiga Flycatcher, Black-faced Laughing Thrush and a calling Collared Scops Owl. At 10.00 am we stopped for a short break before continuing on our walk. We added White-throated Laughing Thrushes, Darjeeling Woodpecker White-throated Fantail (split by Ripley from South Indian Species), Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler and a flock of Black-faced Warblers. At 11.30 Fire-tailed Myzornis was added to the day list together with a superb Golden-breasted Fulvetta. As lunch was being prepared we added White-collared Blackbird and Dark-throated Thrush. After lunch at approximately 13.15 we saw Red-flanked Bush Robins, Green-shrike Babbler and Mandelli's Treecreeper. A

somewhat disappointing afternoon followed with few birds seen – 14.30 Golden-fronted Leafbird, Beautiful Sibia, Mountain Hawk Eagle, and Upland Buzzard.
15.10 Small flock containing – Black-spotted Tits, Lemon-rumped Warbler and Grey-faced Warblers. 15.20 Black-throated Tits, Barred-cuckoo Dove and Great Barbet

The late afternoon period brought more Red-flanked Bush Robins (Inc. a stunning male), Yellow-bellied Fantail, Golden-naped Finch, Blue-winged and Red-tailed Minla's, Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher, Greater Yellownape and the last two confirmed species of the day were Mountain Bulbul and a single Plumbeous Water Redstart.

February 8th

We departed the hotel at 6am and headed directly to the Sangti Valley, hoping that we may see the Black-necked Cranes. We were again out of luck as it appeared that the birds had failed to turn up. We saw 4 Olive-backed Pipits and a single Barred-cuckoo Dove. We headed off down the valley towards Bomdilla en route we saw a single Black Redstart and a Bhutan Laughing Thrush. In Bomdilla, which is at an elevation of 8002 foot, we added Grey Wagtail and saw more Olive-backed Pipits. Eventually we reached Tenga town where we stopped for supplies and an hours break. Birds around the car park included Plumbeous Water Redstart, Black Drongo, Jungle Myna, Common Tailorbird, Hodgson's Redstart and both Grey and White Wagtails. We started our ascent towards Eaglenest and on our way we saw Northern Goshawk, Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, Rusty-fronted Barwing and Striated Laughing Thrush. At 12.15 we added Rufous-vented Yuhina, Green-backed Tit and Black-spotted Yellow Tit. A short while later a fabulous Golden-bush Robin was seen.

Other notable birds on the approach to Eaglenest were Rufous-winged Fulvetta, Red-tailed Minla, Black-eared Shrike-babbler and Fire-breasted Flowerpecker.

Eventually we reached the ridiculously basic Birding Paradise of Eaglenest Sanctuary. The first birds we saw were three Olive-backed Pipits who frequented the camp and were to be seen throughout our stay in Paradise. There were seven Beautiful Sibia's close by and once we had been allocated our suites we reassembled and headed off for a walk. The walk produced Rufous-fronted Barwing, Striated Bulbul, Black-spotted Yellow Tit, Rufous-capped Babbler, Green-backed Tit, Black-faced Warbler, Rufous-winged Fulvetta, and Chestnut-crowned Laughing Thrush. Rofiq, our guide, heard a distant calling Bogun Liocichla which could not be enticed into view.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/black-faced-warbler-abroscopus-schisticeps/perched-bird-photographed-along-road-bompu-camp>

February 9th

We met up at 06.00 for breakfast after a bitterly cold night – the first highlight of the day was a Greater Rufous headed Parrotbill followed shortly after by a flock of Barwings which contained two Bogun Liocichla. The Barwing flock moved swiftly through the vegetation and at times it was difficult to get good views of the Bogun. We were overjoyed to get this much sought after bird in the bag and spirits were high.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/bugun-liocichla-liocichla-bugunorum/dorsal-view-male-perched-branch>

Common Hill Partridge called from a nearby hillside and other birds in the vicinity included Chestnut-headed Babbler, 12 Black-faced Warblers Stripe-throated Yuhina and a short while later and further down the hill more Barwings were seen and another Bogun flew across the road in front of the group. At 07.15 a Rufous-breasted Bush Robin and two Great Barbets

were seen and shortly afterwards a Possible Chestnut-headed Tesia and 4 Striated Bulbuls. An unidentified raptor species went through and a calling Rufous – throated Wren Babbler couldn't be enticed into view.

A short while later we added Rufous breasted Accentor and a Black Eagle to the day list. Another highlight of the early morning appeared in the shape of a female Golden Bush Robin which showed well. Another Bogun was seen shortly afterwards again in the company of the Barwings. A quiet couple of hours followed with the only real action was after a short burst of a Collared Owlet MP3 recording which stirred the Yuhina's, Sunbirds and Tits into a bit of a frenzy. It also attracted a White-tailed Nuthatch and a Black-chinned Yuhina.

As the morning drew to a close birds were becoming scarcer with the only real highlights being singles of Yellow-throated Fulvetta, Red-tailed Minla, Chestnut-capped Babbler and Rusty-flanked Treecreeper.

As lunch approached we stumbled upon another Barwing Flock with a possible 5 Bogun's present amongst the flock. The final bird as we sat down for lunch was a Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler.

The afternoon was extremely quiet with hardly anything being seen. At Lama Camp we were lucky to see three Fire-tailed Myzornis which we were informed by Rofiq that this was the first sightings record for the Lama camp.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/fire-tailed-myzornis-myzornis-pyrrhoura/bird-was-feeding-sap-tree-bark>



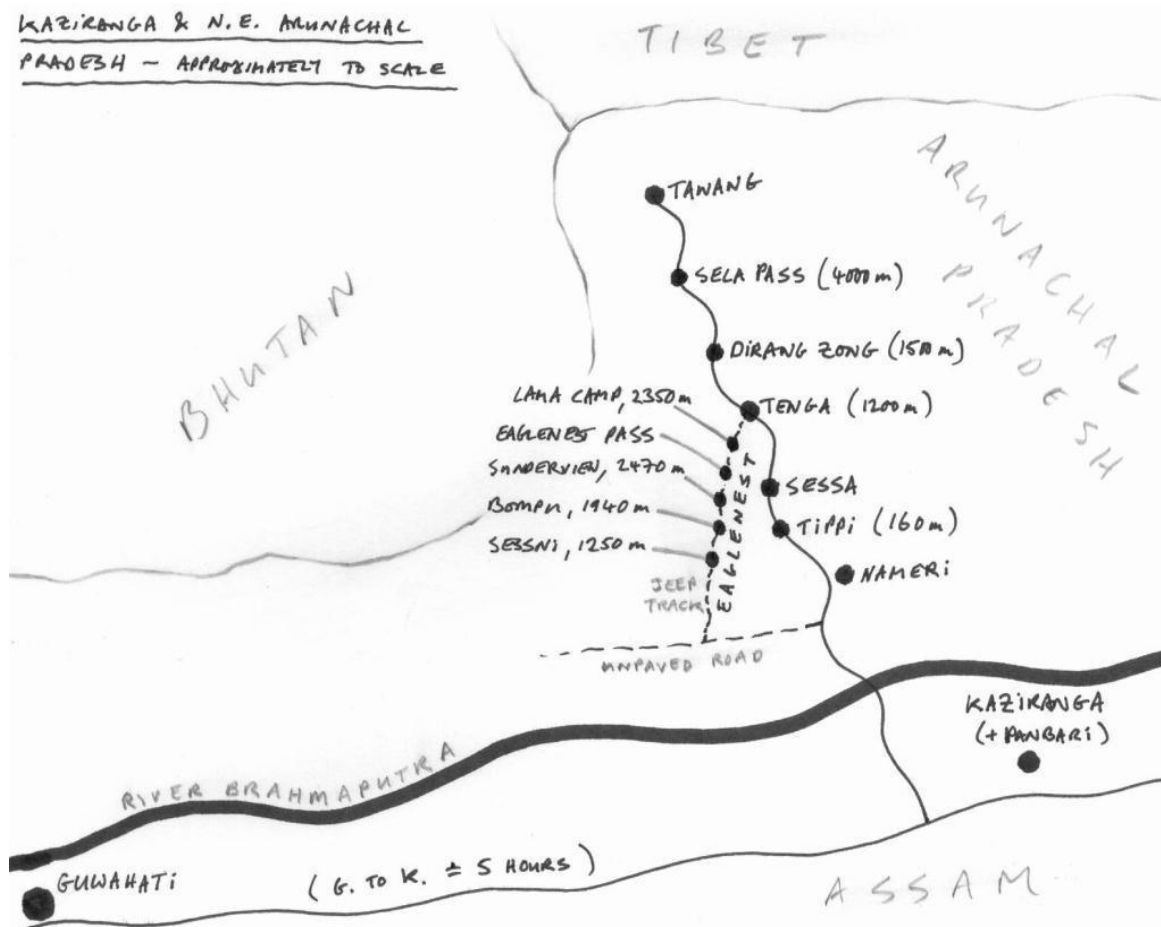
Fire-tailed Myzornis ©Alan curry



Beautiful Sibia & Rufous-breasted Bush Robin © Alan Curry

February 10th

At 05.30 we awoke and it took about half an hour to Thaw out (yes it was really that cold). After breakfast we left Lama Camp to travel to higher altitudes and the basic of all basic camps. First birds of the day include a distant Calling Hill-Partridge, Nutcracker and two cracking Yellow-billed Blue Magpies.



<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/yellow-billed-blue-magpie-urocissa-flavirostris>

A fly by Bar-winged Wren-babbler gave brief views but we had more luck with three rather smart Black-faced Laughing Thrushes. Birding was again difficult and by 08.30 the only notable species were Red-flanked Bush Robins White-browed Bush Robin and 3 Bar-winged Wren-babblers. We continued over Eaglenes Pass adding Rufous-vented Yuhina, More Black-faced Laughingthrushes and two Hoary throated Barwings.

A quick blast of the Collared Owlet recording brought out Yellow-browed Tit, Green-tailed Sunbird, a cracking Male White-browed Bush-Robin and a single Darjeeling Woodpecker. We walked for nearly 4 hours and added a few quality species but no great numbers. There were 15

Rufous-fronted Tits, 9 Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Crimson-browed Finch, Yellow-rumped Honeyguide and 3 White-throated Redstarts.

Our guides prepared a warm welcome lunch of noodles, potatoes and salad. During lunch three Red-headed Bullfinches landed nearby. The remainder of the afternoon was spent exploring some old growth forest but there was very little birdlife. At 15.50 the monotony was broken with the appearance of 20+ Red-tailed Minla's and a Rufous-capped Babbler. Shortly later Rofiq heard a bird calling and managed to entice a Female Wards Trogon into view. This was followed by a splendid second bird a wee while later.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/ward039s-trogon-harpactes-wardi/adult-male-below-sunderview-camp>

The night that followed will live long in the memory with a lively night spent in the hut drinking incredibly strong He-man Lager and homemade Rum Punch with Mango juice & Fruit salad. A hut full of drunken blokes 3000 meters in the Himalayas was a sight to behold.

All Hail the Cog (Please contact Tim Cleeves for the correct description of this old Bristolian Pot)

February 11th

We emerged from our tents following a bitterly cold night, crystal clear night. A Mountain Scops Owl had been calling throughout the night.

After breakfast we set off for the day, a day which would turn out to be quite memorable. First stop of the day brought a calling Wards Trogon which after careful scanning resulted in three birds which showed reasonably well. A great start!!!

Also nearby a Collared Owlet was calling quite loudly. At 07.30 and at an altitude of 1800 metres we hit a purple patch with some absolute cracking birds seen. First up were three Sultan Tits complete with their striking yellow Mohican's.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/sultan-tit-melanochlora-sultanea/perched-bird>

Then two Beautiful Nuthatches were spotted. These aptly named birds were gratefully received by the group. Close by were also 10 Cutia of the race nipalensis which has recently been split from the South Asian Vietnamese race. Although it is shrike like in its appearance the bird belongs to the Babbler Family (timaliids). The area was alive with birds and this kept the group on its toes. There were three Bronzed Drongo's, a single Black-winged Cuckoo-Shrike and three Grey-chinned Minivets. A Black Eagle flew overhead with nesting material in its beak.

A 150 strong feeding flock of Warblers moved swiftly through the trees including Lemon-rumped, Grey-hooded, Black-faced and White-spectacled, other birds included Green-tailed Sunbird, Rufous-vented Yuhina, White-gorgetted Flycatcher, Rufous-throated Fulvetta, Long-billed Wren-babbler. At 10.00 am we spotted a Red-headed Trogon, Red-flanked Bush Robins and a Chestnut-headed Tesia.



Himalayan Red-flanked Bush Robin © Tony Stewart

We stopped for a brew at 10.30 and reflected on a fantastic morning, which almost wiped out the memory of the last couple of difficult days. At 10.55 there were a series of possible's seen – Mountain Hawk-Eagle, Besra and Nepal Housemartins and/or Asian House Martins. Late morning went extremely quiet with only a couple of Grey-cheeked Warblers & a Little Forktail.

Lunch was served between 11.45 and 12.30 and we enjoyed Warm Pasta, Veg and Salad. After lunch we went walking again and added a single Yellow-browed Warbler and 3 Coral-billed Scimitar-Babblers. Alan Curry was lucky enough to see a Greater Rufous headed Parrotbill, which the rest of the group missed and close by were a Sultan Tit, White-naped Yuhina, Cutia and White-browed Shrike-Babbler.

The remainder of the early afternoon was spent travelling in the jeeps punctuated with frequent stops. Main highlights of the afternoon were a flock of White-crested Laughing Thrushes, very noisy and adept at keeping out of sight, Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler and Striated Laughing Thrush. Chris Knox bagged a Plain-backed Thrush (single observer☺) and a couple of Emerald Doves were seen.

At 15.45 a feeding flock of small birds went through and included the usual Black-faced Warblers and the addition of a few Golden Babblers and Black-throated Parrotbill. Close by

were Grey-sided laughing Thrush, Black-spotted Yellow Tit and Beautiful Sibias. The final notable bird came at 16.10 in the form of a Crimson-browed Finch.

Another cold night followed with the lads crowded around the camp fire, a tad worse for wear with the ultra-strong beer. Good belly laughs had by all.

February 12th

We met at 05.00 for a quick breakfast and we were on the road for 05.30 – first birds of the day were a splendid pair of Chestnut – bellied Rock Thrushes, a single Kaleej Pheasant, 10 Grey-sided Laughing Thrushes and a single Chestnut Crowned Laughing Thrush. During the next hour or so there were birds popping up all over the place and this kept everyone on their toes – raptors appeared in the shape of a couple of Black Eagles, Northern Goshawk and a single Crested Goshawk. There were more Red Flanked Bush Robins, Yellow-throated Fulvetta and a White-Gorgetted Flycatcher. This period of time turned out to be one of the highlights of the holiday with some superb birds being seen together with some fabulous habitat. Birds included Great Barbet, Greater Yellownappe, Racket-tailed Drongo, Rufous-backed Sibia and Greater Rufous Headed Parrotbill.

Then two top targets were seen again and admired. These were Beautiful Nuthatch and Cutia

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/beautiful-nuthatch-sitta-formosa/bird-foraging-trunk>
<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/himalayan-cutia-cutia-nipalensis/male-caterpillar-bill>

These fantastic birds showed well and were watched for several minutes. Close by and equally admired were a couple of Shrike Babblers - Black-headed & White- browed.

A Bird “Army” went through, numbering dozens and included species such as White- Spectacled Warbler, Black-faced Warbler, Yellow-browed Tit, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Yellow-throated Fulvetta, Grey-headed Warbler, White-throated Fantail, and Grey-throated Babbler. A calling Bay Woodpecker then flew over and an Eye browed Wren-Babbler put in an all too brief appearance. A short while later, with spirits high we again boarded the vehicles to drive to the bottom of the valley. We encountered two Black-breasted Sunbirds, 1 Himalayan Swiftlet, Bay Woodpecker and a Chestnut - headed Tesia. Rofiq heard a Long-billed Wren Babbler calling and a few of the lads who had dipped the bird the previous day all waited patiently for the bird to show. Sadly the bird failed to put in appearance refusing to show itself.



Frustration

At 09.45 a distant Mountain- Hawk Eagle flew by and a small flock of Asian House Martins circled. A rather drab Long-tailed Sibia flew in and perched at the top of tree affording decent views to all. A crashing in the undergrowth got everybody's attention and a short while later out popped an Indian Crested Porcupine which was oblivious to our presence on the track. Once it sensed that we were there it dived back into the under story. Tea was brewed at ten by the ever efficient crew. During our break a Yellow-bellied Warbler was seen together with a warbler which caused some debate as to whether it should be called a Buff-barred or Orange- barred Leaf Warbler – using Ripley Orange - barred. A Striated Bulbul flock went through with four Bronzed Drongo's. A flock of Barwing was also spotted in which CK picked out a Red – Faced Liocichla. Another flock of birds appeared, this time they were mostly Black-chinned Yuhina's with a single Lemon-rumped Warbler. Another difficult to see Long-billed Wren Babbler was heard but again proved elusive. An Accipiter flew through (Besra/ Shikra) which spooked all the passerines. Just before we broke for lunch there were two Rufous-throated Hill Partridges were seen. After lunch we headed to the Upper Camp Whereby a quiet afternoon ensued.

Birds were in short supply – two Plain – backed Thrushes and 12 Brown Parrotbill were the earlier afternoon, and only, highlights. A possible Siberian or Common Ibex was spotted and a Spotted Nut cracker graced us with its presence. As the day drew to a climax a female White-browed Bush Robin, Collared Scops, six Crimson-browed Finches were added to the list. The final meaningful birds of the day were another 12 Brown Parrotbills (possibly the same flock as before) and a Fire-tailed Myzornis. Another great night at Chateau Bamboo hut followed with rocket fuel masquerading as lager. Happy Days



All hail the Cog Hic!!!!

February 13th

After a great night only three of the group emerged for the pre breakfast ramble. The rest remained in camp nursing the effects of the He-Man super strength. The intrepid treble (ADMc, Mo & Paul) went off in search of the Bogun. We met up later and the lads had been lucky to see 5 smart Scarlet Finches, which included 3 males – these were the only ones of the trip so hats off to the three who shrugged off the He-Man to get these in the bag. They also saw Scaly-breasted Laughing Thrush, Bay Woodpecker, Hill Prinia, Striated Laughing Thrush and Golden-bush Robin.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/golden-bush-robin-tarsiger-chrysaeus/male-actively-feeding-ground-check-out-length-those-skin>



The Offending Liquid

An extremely quiet and cold day followed with birds in short supply. We left the Olive-backed Pipits behind at the camp and headed downhill. A Mountain Hawk Eagle and Mountain Bulbul were seen. Other pre-lunch birds spotted were Green-tailed Sunbird, Grey-faced Warbler, White-tailed Nuthatch, Ashy Bulbul, Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and Large-billed Crow.

As the crew prepared lunch 2 Muntjac were heard calling and Rufous-breasted Accentor was seen. A flock of Yuhina's came into view with 15+ Black-chinned and a single Stripe-throated in the group. A Great Barbet was perched in a nearby tree and two White-capped Water Redstarts were in a gully.



Stripe- Throated Yuhina ©Alan Curry

The afternoon yielded just a few species – 10 Olive-backed Pipits, two Orange-bellied Leaf birds, 12 Barwings which included 2 Bogun Liocichla. In a ravine a Rufous-breasted Bush Robin and Slaty-blue Flycatcher foraged for insects. At another hillside ravine a Spotted Forktail was observed and three species of Laughing Thrushes were seen Striated, Grey-sided and Chestnut Crowned. Later on another flock of Barwing was spotted containing a single Bogun Liocichla. Also in the vicinity were 6+ Cutia and a Blue-fronted Redstart. Little else was seen as the day drew to a close – the final highlight of a difficult day was the discovery of two more Bogun's.

February 14th

A 05.30 start for breakfast and on the road for 06.00 we left the Paradise of Eaglenest for the long journey to Kaziranga National Park. The usual bunches of Olive-backed Pipits were the last birds seen well as we left the camp and the Noisy Beautiful Sibias were in full voice. On reaching civilization at the foot of the mountain five Himalayan Greenfinches were watched at the top of some pine trees. We followed the Tenga River stopping frequently to bird. At the Gupta Village Police Checkpoint a Wallcreeper was spotted with a single male Daurian Redstart. Further on we stopped at 07.45 and birded for an hour highlights included two Slender-billed Scimitar Babblers, 12+ White-naped Yuhina's, three Blue-winged Laughing Thrushes and the one that got away an unidentified Flycatcher – possibly Orange-gorgetted. At another mountain stop around 10.15am we saw two Sultan Tits, Lesser Yellownappe, Short-billed Minivet, Blue-throated Barbet,

Yellow-bellied Warbler, Grey-throated Babbler. Two Needletail Swifts were possibly Silver-backed. Later on at a stop at roadwork's Two pair of Wreathed Hornbills were watched and two Yellow-bellied Warblers were having a hell of a tussle within arm's reach oblivious to all. As we neared Nameri NP we reached the grasslands which had produced Striated Grassbird on the way up the valley. We once again stopped hoping for Pied Harrier which is known to winter in the area. We did not see any Pied Harriers but caught up with an Eastern Marsh Harrier and a Crested Serpent Eagle. Four Lesser Adjutants were roosting just outside of a small village. We pulled into Nameri Lodge for lunch of Pork (No Cauliflower☺) within the camp boundary was a Barred Cuckoo Dove and the Oriental Hobby was perched in the same tree as previously. A small troop of Langur Monkeys were making a considerable racket at the top of the trees.

We were back on the road at 13.45 and almost immediately had pulled over to watch a flock of Indian Silverbill. Egrets started to reappear with Cattle Egret and Indian Pond Heron and the familiar Black/ Black-eared Kite was soon seen in abundance. At Tezpur we stopped for petrol and added a Brown Shrike as we waited for the vehicles to be filled up. Pied Starling, Common Kestrel and Spotted Dove were also seen from the Garage.

The day was drawing to a close as we reached the outskirts of Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We pulled over at a layby for our first view of this magnificent park and we got our first look at the Endangered Indian One- Horned Rhino which numbers only approximately 3000 animals of which two thirds are found in Assam.



The layby also held Rufous Tree-pie and there were a couple of Red-wattled Lapwings close by. Eventually we reached Kaziranga Wild Grass Lodge. Our Guide Rofiq now departed the tour and we said our goodbyes. The tour continued with Leio and guides from Kaziranga National Park.

The park operates a strict entry and exit protocols with entry via an official park vehicle and limited to two hour safaris. Although frustrated by the time constraints, the understandable pressure on the mammals of the park has seen the introduction of Safari Windows. If this results in the preservation of the park then it can only be a good thing.

We were assigned our rooms and the welcome sight of a comfortable warm bed, electricity and a hot shower awaited us. Spirits were high that night with a lovely meal enjoyed by all and he now obligatory Super Strengths downed.

February 15th

A pre breakfast walk around the lodge gardens added two Brown Hawk Owls. There were a smattering of Pied Starlings fed on the manicured grass lawn. The grounds also held Rufous Treepie, Oriental White-Eye Long-tailed Shrike, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon and an Asian Barred-Owlet.

At 07.05 two park jeeps arrived to take our group for our first foray into the park.





We arrived at the park and Leio duly complete the formalities of purchasing Entry Tickets.

Jeep Ride: Based on which part of the National Park one wants to visit, the jeep fare may vary. *Central Range*: Rs. 1100, *Western Range*: Rs. 1200, *Eastern Range*: Rs. 1500, *Kalapahar Range*: Rs. 2000 as of Jan 2012. It is recommended to visit the Western and the Central Ranges both by Jeep and Elephant.

Elephant Ride: Rs. 1000 [Rs. 450] per person (Central Range) + Rs. 25 guard fee. One can see Rhinos very up and close while on an elephant ride. There are two batches (0515-0615 Hrs & 0615-0715 Hrs) for the elephant ride. There are extra charges for carrying cameras (Rs. 500 [Rs. 50] still, Rs. 1000 [Rs. 500] video) inside the park. The charges are different for Indian and foreign tourists. First mentioned prices apply to foreigners; prices for Indian citizens follow in brackets. Higher charges apply for professional photographers and film makers. We were to visit all three ranges during our visit.

On entering the park we saw a White-throated (Smyrna) Kingfisher, Pied Wagtail, Asian Openbill and a Long-tailed Shrike of the eastern or Himalayan subspecies, *L. s. tricolor*, which is sometimes called the Black-headed Shrike. Also the Ripley Split of Indian Roller – the Black-billed Roller was seen well together with a familiar Hoopoe. We got our first sightings of wild Indian Elephant.



Red Jungle Fowl & Black-billed Roller (Defecating) © Alan Curry

There were one or two familiar waders – Wood Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Northern Lapwing and Greenshank in attendance, two Woolly-necked Storks and two species of Deer - Swamp and Hog.

We made frequent stops along the way and each stop rewarded the group with something to see. At the bridge we saw Grey - headed Starling, Bar-headed Goose and Red-rumped Swallow. Further on we saw White-vented Myna, Little Cormorant, Asian Openbill and Stork-billed Kingfisher.

Stopping at a pond Spot-billed Duck Gadwall and Rose-ringed Parakeet were added and across the far side were Spot-billed Pelican, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Bronzed-winged Jacana, Lesser Adjutant, Teal, Mallard and Grey Heron. There were several Elephant, Numerous Rhino and good numbers of Water Buffalo.

At one stop the armed guards allowed us to get out of the vehicles at an area of open grass, with good all round views. As we were scanning for birds a magnificent Male Pied Harrier flew in spending several minutes quartering the grassland in search of prey. At one point the Harrier landed and rested for a short time allowing us to get great telescope views. Another distant Harrier was possibly a female of the same species.



Pied Harrier © Alan Curry

As the excitement subsided a couple of Swamp Francolins emerged from the grass and a flyover Common Snipe and distant Wigeon were ticked. A couple of distant Vultures remained unidentified. We were beckoned by the Guards to return to the Jeeps and continue on our way.

Alexandrine Parrots fed on the budding trees and a Greylag Goose and Spotted Redshank were seen next to a nearby Black-necked Stork. A vast open area unveiled the true spectacle of the national park with the large mammals scattered all over. It was here that Indian Warthog was added to our mammal list. Continuing along the track we saw Yellow Wagtail, Citrine Wagtail, Oriental-magpie Robin and a distant Eagle provoked debate as to its identity with Greater Spotted or Indian Spotted being debated. A couple of Vultures failed to get close enough to clinch their identity and possible Long-billed Vulture was suggested but not ticked.

Two Rosy Pipits, Greater Flameback and several Eastern Baya Weavers were close to the vehicles. We completed our first circuit and then we left the park as dictated by the rules to return at 14.00pm for the afternoon session.

On our return to the park we again followed well-worn tracks taken every opportunity to absorb every moment. First birds were a Black-rumped Flameback, Green-backed Malkoa, Little Pied Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Tickells Leaf-Warbler, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird and a Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker. At a public watch tower we climbed to the top platform and scanned over the park. From our vantage point we saw Purple Heron, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Lesser Adjutant, Ferruginous Duck, A Pallas's Fish Eagle was watched hunting and catching a fish and a flock of Marsh Sandpiper



In the Ascendancy (CK Having a Tab)

From the top we could see over 50 Rhino and several Bar-headed Geese and more Red Junglefowl.

On an exposed spit on the lake were Temmincks Stint, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Snipe and Common Sandpiper. There were also a couple of Gull-billed Terns, Spot-billed Pelican, Anhinga and Tufted Duck.

We were soon on the move again and at 15.15 a Lineated Barbet came into view. It was then we encountered a Rhino on the track. We pulled over to admire this wonderful creature and got within a few metres. The Rhino fed on the grass as we watched oblivious to our presence.....or so we thought. The wind must have momentarily shifted direction and it sensed our presence. It immediately adopted a very aggressive posture and threatened to charge the jeeps. The guards were up ready to fire off a warning shot but it was needed as the creature retreated along with our party who beat a hasty retreat. This was a Fantastic, unforgettable experience. It was fast approaching the 16.30pm closing time and all vehicles are expected to leave the park, but we managed to squeeze out another 45 minutes or so. During this time we saw two Streak-throated Woodpeckers, Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Greater Coucal, Osprey, Pallas's Fish Eagle, 2 Swamp Francolins and a Purple Heron. We also managed to see Samba Deer and more Wild Boars.



Indian Rhino

A memorable first day in the park was over with many highlights – the male Pied Harrier will live long in the memory, but also the whole ambience of the reserve. That night AC clinched the ID of the Spotted Eagle by analyzing a photo which he had managed to get. After a review on the laptop the photo clearly showed 7 fingered primary feathers which confirmed Greater Spotted Eagle.

February 16th

We met up at 05.30 for a quick coffee before heading out to the Eastern range of the N.P. The Brown Hawk Owls were calling loudly at the hotel and a Ripley split Eastern Jungle Crow's distinct call separated it from Large-billed Crow. En route to the Eastern Entrance we had 2 Asian Openbill, Stork-billed Kingfisher and Indian Pond Heron and as we approached the main entrance to the park a Hoopoe flew by. As we waited for our guard a Dusky Warbler showed really well in a ditch and there were Oriental Magpie-Robin, Black-billed Roller and Woolly-necked Stork near the car park. Today was the day designated for our Elephant Safari through the grasslands. This is part of the Kaziranga experience and our Safari was to try and catch up with one of our target birds of the trip.





Anybody seen a Florican???

Leio had arranged with the guides for our Elephants to get off line so that we could bird without the hassle of other people disturbing the birds.

It was here another memorable experience occurred. A herd of Water Buffalo strayed too close to one of the matriarch Elephants in our group which had a small calf which followed behind. The Standoff that followed was very exciting as the Buffalo and Elephant faced off and then the Elephant charged towards the Buffalo with the lads on top. The Buffalo saw sense and backed off allowing the Elephants to calm down.

Shortly afterwards as the excited was subsiding, the Elephants kicked up our target the Bengal Florican. We got great views as the bird flew across us and landed distantly in deep cover.

<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/bengal-florican-houbaropsis-bengalensis/male-flight>

Other birds seen from the Elephant were Richards Pipit, a displaying Singing Bushlark, Striated Grassbird, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper and an unidentified Snipe species. The Elephants returned to base and we again boarded the Jeeps to continue our quest around the park. As we headed back to the Eastern Gate we bagged 3 Bengal Bushlarks, and 35 Red Collared Doves were seen with an Alexandrine Parakeet. Three Spotted Owlets were observed in a tree including one in a cavity. Also seen were Oriental Honey Buzzard, Rufous Treepie, Grey-headed Lapwing Northern Lapwing Bar-Headed Goose and an Eastern Marsh Harrier.



Bar-headed Goose ©Alan Curry

We approached an area of open ground which afforded great views with large amounts of Water birds on the lake and big numbers of Mammals grazing on the plain. Good birds for our list seen here were Cotton Pygmy Goose, Northern Pintail, Garganey and an assortment of Egrets. We then headed towards a wooded area where we observed a Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Grey Headed Canary Flycatcher and an overhead Osprey. Further on another Marsh Harrier, Common Sandpiper and Spot-billed Duck were seen. We then saw a Hog Badger hiding in a set and two Pallas's Fish Eagles were at a nest. There were also several Wagtails – White, Yellow and Citrine and a few unidentified Rose Finch sp. At another bridge stop, another Spotted Eagle sp. was seen perched in a tree and another male Pied Harrier flew into view, disappearing into the distance. At the bridge near to the exit a Crested-Serpent Eagle and Brown Shrike were seen. We exited the park at 12 noon to return to the hotel for lunch after a great morning in the park.

At 14.00 we departed for the Central Range Safari, on arrival several Black-breasted Weavers were seen. A few hundred metres into the central range Three Kaleej Pheasants, two Female and one male, were spotted with six Striated Babblers in the nearby trees. The afternoon was spent birding from the jeeps with all the usual species seen including another glimpse of a Pied Harrier. Other good birds seen were Banded Bay Cuckoo, Rosy-headed Parakeet, 10 Spot-winged Starlings, Two Great Hornbill and Two Oriental Pied Hornbills and a superb Male Elephant c/w a glorious set of ivories was watched enjoying the coolness of the lake.

The day drew to a close and thus ended our Safari trips into Kaziranga NP, a fantastic experience and one which is highly recommended. We returned to our hotels and enjoyed a lovely meal and a couple of glasses of the hard stuff.



Grey-headed Fish Eagle © Alan Curry

February 17th

We left the hotel after breakfast and made our way to a nearby tree plantation with our guide Goulash for the day. On our way we spotted Great Tit, White-breasted Water Hen, Black-billed Roller, Oriental Magpie Robin, Daurian Redstart and Barred Owlet.

The tree plantation was neat and well organized with workers scattered all over. We wandered through the grounds in search of birds and saw Common Tailorbird, Oriental- White Eye, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Grey Bushchat, and Black-headed Oriole. There were a few Phylloscopus Warblers and a single Verditer Flycatcher.

Our walk also added a few Grey-headed Starlings and Green Imperial Pigeon. At around 07.30 we managed to lure out of its skulk a stunning Siberian Rubythroat which showed really well on top of a tea tree. It was an absolute belter. Shortly afterwards we added a Large Cuckoo Shrike. We wandered the paths in search of our target for the day which was the Blue-naped Pitta. We then walked towards a small riverine gully where there were Black-crested Bulbul and Rufous-necked Laughing Thrushes near to the stream banks. Our guide was alerted to a calling Pitta and tracked it to a dense thicket of Bamboo and shrub to the east of the tea garden. . After a few minutes he managed to locate the Pitta deep in the undergrowth. It was incredibly difficult to locate the bird and at times you had to be a bit of a contortionist to see it. Eventually everyone in the group had got onto the bird and better still Alan grabbed a cracking shot.



Blue- Naped Pitta ©Alan Curry



In search of Pitta

Spirits were high after bagging the Rubythroat and Pitta, especially after it was revealed that a couple of the lads had been “leeches” whilst standing in the undergrowth.

At 09.05 a Crested Serpent Eagle and Oriental Honey Buzzard flew across the tea gardens. We wandered further into the vast plantation and at 09.10 a single shot of gunfire rang out. This spooked Leio and Goulash who beckoned us to leave the area immediately. It emerged that the plantation is segregated and each area is run by a tribe. We had wandered into an area which was disputed between two tribes hence the warning shot.

We made our way back to the entrance and picked up Tickell’s Leaf Warbler, Large Cuckoo Shrike and Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker.

We made our way back to the hotel and had a single Scarlet-rumped Flowerpecker. A lazy hour then followed as we waited for lunch and a few guys went on a walk and managed to see Yellow, Grey and White Wagtail, Great Barbet, Crimson Sunbird and another Oriental Honey-Buzzard.

After lunch we assembled for another safari into the central range, we climbed aboard the jeeps and headed off to the Central Range.



All aboard the Skylark

The Central Range was relatively quiet; we did however see Common Kingfisher, Shikra, Stonechat, Striated Grassbird, Striated Babbler, and Rufous-capped Babbler. At 15.15 our guide received a message via his radio that a Tiger had been spotted about a half a mile away. We raced to the area where several jeeps had gathered but alas the beast had disappeared into the tall grass. We did however see a distant in-flight Greater Adjutant.

All the usual birds were seen in the Central Range plus a couple of the lads managed to claw back a Green-billed Malkoa and there was a much debated scenario of a two species of Grassbird being seen with the possibility of Rufous-vented as well as Striated. The last night at the hotel another fine meal was consumed along with the usual firebrand beers.

February 18th

We met up at 06.30 for breakfast as we prepared for the long 5 hour drive back to Guwahati. The last birds seen in the hotel gardens were Black-hooded Oriole and Pied Starling.

We left the hotel and the Kaziranga National Park at 07.30 and headed off. At 09.00 we stopped at a village where the highlight was a small Lesser Adjutant colony. We saw three birds really well. We pushed on and eventually came upon a major Indian rarity, a pothole free, brand new motorway - the Dhaba Highway. This enabled us to pick up speed and make good time. The lads birded on the move, with nothing out of the ordinary being seen but a gathering of 50+ Asian Openbills, a possible Dark-rumped Swift was seen but could not be positively identified.

We stopped at a service area for Chai and a single Black-shouldered Kite was spotted and at Nagpigon Paper Mill there were 50+ Black Kites.

Eventually we reached the outskirts of Guwahati and our guides took us to the city refuse dump. An extraordinary sight greeted us upon arrival – a city within a city. Hundreds of people had set up home on the dump foraging for plastics and metals. There dozens of small children amongst the filth and stench of the dump. It was a very profound moment. Ethically it was hard to comprehend with India close to being one of the largest Economies of the world. The children ran over to greet us with a mixture of curiosity and hope and were rewarded with our packed lunches and the odd 100 rupee note.

Cattle ran wild eating anything they could – there wasn't a blade of grass insight. The main reason to visit the dump was to see the magnificent Greater Adjutant at close quarters. There were approximately 100 birds which were unnerved by the presence of the locals but extremely nervous of our approaches. There were also 100's of Black Kites.







Eventually we arrived at Guwahati Airport for our flight back to Calcutta. We said our goodbyes to Leio and soon we were aboard our kingfisher flight and heading home towards Calcutta/Dubai/Newcastle.

An eventful, memorable holiday that delivered on several fronts but perhaps the late onset of spring prevented it from being a true classic. However Assam will live long in the memory.

BIRDING PARADISE (HA HA) HAPPY MEMORIES





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>																✓	✓		
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		✓													✓				
Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>																			
Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>			✓																
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>		✓	✓					✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		✓												✓	✓	✓	✓		
Great Egret	<i>Egretta alba</i>														✓	✓	✓	✓		
Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>		✓												✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	✓	✓												✓	✓	✓	✓		
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>		✓		✓										✓	✓	✓	✓		
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>																			
Chestnut Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>																			
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	✓													✓	✓	✓	✓		
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>																			
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>		✓																	
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>																			
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilus javanicus</i>		✓	✓											✓	✓	✓	✓		
Greater Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilus dubius</i>																	✓		
Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>															✓	✓			
Fulvous Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i>			✓																
Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>																			
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		✓																	
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
White-winged Duck	<i>Asarcornis scutulata</i>		✓	✓																
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>																✓			
Falcated Duck	<i>Anas falcata</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Chinese Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas zonorhyncha</i>																			
Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓													✓	✓	✓		
Tufted duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>															✓	✓			
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>															✓				
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>																			
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>																			
Cotton Teal	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>																✓			
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>		✓	✓																
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>																			
Jerdon's Baza	<i>Aviceda jerdoni</i>																			
Black Baza	<i>Aviceda leuphotes</i>																			
Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>																			
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>																			
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans migrans/govinda</i>	✓	✓												✓					
Black-eared Kite	<i>Milvus [migrans] lineatus</i>																			
Besra Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>											✓								
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>								✓				✓							
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus melaschistos/nisosimilis</i>																			
Crested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>		✓			✓														
Himalayan Buzzard	<i>Buteo burmanicus</i>			L	✓			✓												
Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>																✓	✓		
Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>		✓	✓									✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>																			
Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus kienerii</i>																			
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>																			
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>																			
Mountain Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>							✓					✓	✓						
Changeable Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus limnaeetus</i>															✓	✓			
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>				✓					✓		✓	✓	✓						
Indian Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila hastata</i>																			
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>															✓	?			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>																			
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>																			
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>			✓												✓	✓	✓		
Grey-headed Fish-eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>			✓												✓	✓	✓		
Pallas's Fish-eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucoryphus</i>		✓													✓	✓	✓		
White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>																			
Slender-billed Vulture	<i>Gyps tenuirostris</i>																			
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>															✓				
Himalayan Vulture	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>																			
Red-headed Vulture	<i>Aegypius calvus</i>																			
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>																			
Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>																			
Pied Harrier	<i>Circus melanoleucos</i>		?													✓	✓			
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>																			
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>																			
Pied Falconet	<i>Macrohierax melanoleucos</i>			✓																
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓						✓		✓			
Oriental Hobby	<i>Falco severus</i>		✓	✓											✓					
Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>																			
Shaheen Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus peregrinator</i>																			
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus calidus</i>		✓	✓																
Black Francolin	<i>Francolinus francolinus</i>																			
Swamp Francolin	<i>Francolinus gularis</i>															✓	✓			
Snow Partridge	<i>Lerwa lerwa</i>																			
Common Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila torqueola</i>							H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H					
Chestnut-breasted Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila mandellii</i>																			
White-cheeked Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila atrogularis</i>										H	H								
Rufous-throated Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila rufogularis</i>																			
Yellow-legged Buttonquail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>																			
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>		H	H												✓	✓	✓		
Blood Pheasant	<i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>					✓														
Satyr Tragopan	<i>Tragopan satyra</i>																			
Temminck's Tragopan	<i>Tragopan temminckii</i>																			
Blyth's Tragopan	<i>Tragopan blythii</i>																			
Himalayan Monal	<i>Lophophorus impejanus</i>																			
Kaleej Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>																✓			
Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Black-necked Crane	<i>Grus nigricollis</i>																			
Sarus Crane	<i>Grus antigone</i>																			
Bengal Florican	<i>Houbaropsis bengalensis</i>																✓			
Slaty-breasted Rail	<i>Rallus striatus</i>																			
Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Porzana fusca</i>		✓																	
Brown Crake	<i>Porzana akool</i>																			
Black-tailed Crake	<i>Porzana bicolor</i>				✓				H											
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>																✓	✓		
Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio [porphyrio] poliocephalus</i>																			
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓																	
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>																✓			
Greater Painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>		✓																	
Ibisbill	<i>Ibidorhyncha struthersii</i>		✓																	
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>																			
Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>																			
Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>		✓	✓																
Great Thick-knee	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>																			
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>		✓	H	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
River Lapwing	<i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i>		✓	✓	✓															
Grey-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus cinereus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>																			
Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>																			
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius curonicus/jerdoni</i>			✓													✓	✓		
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus</i>																			
Long-billed Plover	<i>Charadrius placidus</i>				✓															
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>																			
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		✓	✓	✓											✓	✓	✓		
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>																✓			
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		✓	✓	✓											✓	✓	✓		
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>																			
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>															✓	✓			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>																			
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>															✓	✓			
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>																			
Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>																			
Great Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ichthyaetus</i>																			
Brown-headed Gull	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>																			
Common Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>																			
Black-bellied Tern	<i>Sterna acuticaudata</i>																			
River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>		✓																	
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>																			
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	✓		
Green Imperial-pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Mountain Imperial-pigeon	<i>Ducula badia</i>											H		✓						
Speckled Woodpigeon	<i>Columba hodgsonii</i>																			
Ashy Woodpigeon	<i>Columba pulchricollis</i>																			
Pale-capped Woodpigeon	<i>Columba punicea</i>																			
Oriental Turtle-dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis meena</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓								✓					
Red Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>		✓														✓			
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>		✓	✓	✓										✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>			✓												✓	✓			
Barred Cuckoo-dove	<i>Macropygia unchall</i>		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓					
Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>											✓	✓			✓				
Pompadour Green-pigeon	<i>Treron phayrei</i>																			
Thick-billed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron curvirostra</i>																			
Orange-breasted Green-pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>																			
Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron sphenurus</i>																			
Yellow-footed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus phoenicopterus</i>		✓													✓	✓	✓		
Pin-tailed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron apicauda</i>																			
Vernal Hanging-parrot	<i>Loriculus vernalis</i>			✓																
Finsch's Parakeet	<i>Psittacula finschii</i>																			
Rosy-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula roseata</i>																✓	✓		
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>		✓												✓	✓	✓	✓		
Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>																			
Banded Bay Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sonneratii</i>																			
Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo	<i>Surniculus lugubris</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>																			
Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>																			
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>																			
Oriental Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>																			
Small Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>																			
Large Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx sparveriioides</i>																			
Common Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>																			
Green-billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>															✓		✓		
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>																✓			
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Brown Hawk-owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>			✓	✓												✓	✓		
Common Barn-owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>																			
Brown Fish-owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>																			
Forest Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo nipalensis</i>																			
Dusky Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo coromandus</i>																			
Collared Scops Owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>																			
Oriental Scops-owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>																			
Mountain Scops-owl	<i>Otus spilocephalus</i>							H		H	H									
Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>																	✓	✓	
Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>		✓	✓																
Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium culoides</i>			✓												✓	✓	✓		
Collared Owlet	<i>Glaucidium brodiei</i>							H				H	H							
Hodgson's Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus hodgsoni</i>																			
Grey Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus jotaka</i>																			
Large-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus macrurus</i>			✓																
Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>																			
Asian Palm-swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>		✓													✓	✓			
Himalayan Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus brevirostris</i>		✓	✓								✓	✓							
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>																			
Dark-rumped Swift	<i>Apus acuticauda</i>																			
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>																			
Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>																			
White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>																			
Silver-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus cochinchinensis</i>														L					
Brown-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>																			
Black-billed Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis affinis</i>				✓										✓	✓	✓	✓		
Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa e. epops/ceylonensis</i>															✓	✓			
Red-headed Trogon	<i>Harpactes erythrocephalus</i>				✓							✓	✓							
Ward's Trogon	<i>Harpactes wardi</i>										✓	✓								
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>															✓	✓	✓		
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>		✓	✓	✓										✓	✓	✓	✓		
Himalayan Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle lugubris</i>				✓															
Lesser Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓			
Blue-eared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>		✓																	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		✓	✓											✓	✓	✓	✓		
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>																			
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>																			
Little Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>		✓													✓				
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>		✓	✓																
Rufous-necked Hornbill	<i>Aceros nipalensis</i>																			
Great Pied Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>			✓																
Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>			✓												✓				
Wreathed Hornbill	<i>Aceros undulatus</i>		✓												✓		✓			
Yellow-rumped Honeyguide	<i>Indicator xanthonotus</i>										✓									
Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>																			
Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>		✓	✓											✓	✓		✓		
Blue-eared Barbet	<i>Megalaima australis</i>		✓	✓																
Golden-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima franklinii</i>					✓														
Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>		✓													✓	✓			
Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>							✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>		✓							✓										
Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>					✓														
White-browed Piculet	<i>Sasia ochracea</i>			✓																
Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos canicapillus</i>		✓	✓														✓		
Fulvous-breasted Pied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>			✓																
Stripe-breasted Pied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos atratus</i>			✓																
Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Hypopicus hyperythrus</i>					✓								✓						
Crimson-breasted Pied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos cathpharius</i>											✓								
Darjeeling Pied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos darjellensis</i>					✓	✓				✓		H							
Streak-throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>																✓			
Greater Yellownappe	<i>Picus flavinucha</i>			✓				✓					✓			✓				
Lesser Yellownappe	<i>Picus c. chlorolophus</i>														✓					
Grey-faced Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>																			
Bay Woodpecker	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>									H		H	✓	✓						
Pale-headed Woodpecker	<i>Gecinulus grantia</i>																			
Himalayan Flameback	<i>Dinopium shorii</i>																			
Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>															✓	✓			
Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>		✓	✓	✓											✓	✓	✓		
Long-tailed Broadbill	<i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i>																			
Silver-breasted Broadbill	<i>Serilophus lunatus</i>			✓																
Blue-naped Pitta	<i>Pitta nipalensis</i>																	✓		
Bengal Bushlark	<i>Mirafrass assamica</i>																✓			
Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulula</i>																			
Sand Lark	<i>Calandrella raytal</i>																			
Common Sand-martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>																			
Grey-throated Sand-martin	<i>Riparia chinensis</i>		✓	✓											✓					
Eurasian Crag-martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>																			
Nepal House-martin	<i>Delichon nipalense</i>																			
Asian House-martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>											✓	✓							
Streak-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo fluvicola</i>																			
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		✓													✓	✓	✓		
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>															✓	✓			
Striated Swallow	<i>Hirundo striolata</i>															✓				
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>																			
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla beema</i>																✓			
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla thunbergi</i>																✓	✓		
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla feldegg</i>																			
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla leucocephala</i>																			
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		✓						✓									✓		
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla c. citreola/calcarata</i>																✓	✓		
Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>																			
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba dukhunensis/personata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓	✓		✓		
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus h. hodgsoni/yunnanensis</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Rosy Pipit	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>																✓			
Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>			✓	✓															
Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>																✓			
Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>																			
Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis gularis</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Pied Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>																			
Black-winged Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>		✓	✓								✓	✓							
Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>		✓															✓		
Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>			✓																
Short-billed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus brevirostris</i>		✓	✓								✓			✓					
Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus</i>		✓	✓																
Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>											✓								
Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>																			
Rosy Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus roseus</i>																			
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>		✓	✓											✓	✓				
Himalayan Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys</i>																			
Himalayan Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓					
Ashy Bulbul	<i>Hemixos flava</i>		✓	✓										✓						
Mountain Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes mccllellandi</i>							✓		✓				✓						
White-throated Bulbul	<i>Alphoixus flaveolus</i>														L					
Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i>		✓	✓						✓								✓		
Striated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus striatus</i>								✓			✓	✓	✓						
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>			✓																
Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓						
Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>		✓	✓																
Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>			✓																
Asian Fairy Bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>			✓																
Long-tailed Shrike (Black capped)	<i>Lanius schach tricolor/erythronotus</i>		✓		✓	✓			✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius c. cristatus</i>		✓		✓										✓		✓	✓		
Black-naped Blue Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>			✓											✓					
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>																			
Yellow-bellied Fantail	<i>Chelidorhynch hypoxantha</i>		✓	✓				✓	✓			✓								
White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>							✓	✓			✓	✓							
Brown Dipper	<i>Cinclus pallasi</i>				✓								✓							
White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>																			
Purple Cochoa	<i>Cochoa purpurea</i>																			
Green Cochoa	<i>Cochoa viridis</i>																			
Grandala	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>					✓														
Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>		✓				✓		✓				✓							
Blue Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>		✓		✓		✓													





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Blue-headed Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola cinclorhynchus</i>																			
Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>																			
Blue Whistling-thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓					
Black-throated Thrush	<i>Turdus [ruficollis] atrogularis</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓							
Red-throated Thrush	<i>Terdus [ruficollis] ruficollis</i>						✓	✓												
Eyebrowed Thrush	<i>Turdus obscurus</i>																			
Dusky Thrush	<i>Turdus [naumanni] eunomus</i>																			
Black-breasted Thrush	<i>Turdus dissimilis</i>			✓	✓															
Tibetan Blackbird	<i>Turdus maximus</i>					✓	✓													
White-collared Blackbird	<i>Turdus albocinctus</i>					✓	✓	✓			✓									
Grey-winged Blackbird	<i>Turdus boulboul</i>						✓	✓												
Chestnut Thrush	<i>Turdus r. rubrocanus</i>													✓						
Plain-backed Thrush	<i>Zoothera mollissima</i>																			
Long-tailed Thrush	<i>Zoothera dixonii</i>																			
Small-billed Scaly Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>																			
Dark-sided Ground-thrush	<i>Zoothera marginata</i>																			
White-browed Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx montana</i>																			
Lesser Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx leucophrys</i>																			
Rusty-bellied Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx hyperthra</i>																			
Gould's Shortwing	<i>Heteroxenicus stellatus</i>																			
White-tailed Blue Robin	<i>Myiomela leucura</i>																			
Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger rufilatus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Rufous-breasted Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger hyperythrus</i>								✓	✓				✓						
White-browed Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger indicus</i>										✓		✓							
Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>																			
Golden Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger chrysaeus</i>								✓	✓				✓						
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia s. svecica/pallidogularis/abbotti</i>		H																	
Himalayan Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia pectoralis</i>																	✓		
Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>															✓				
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>				✓							✓								
Little Forktail	<i>Enicurus scouleri</i>																			
Slaty-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>							✓												
Black-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus immaculatus</i>		✓	✓																
Spotted Forktail	<i>Enicurus maculatus</i>									✓										
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris</i>					✓			✓					✓						
Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus aureus</i>		✓												✓			✓		





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Hodgson's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓											
Blue-fronted Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
White-throated Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus schisticeps</i>					✓	✓	✓			✓									
Plumbeous Water-redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosa</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓											
White-capped River-chat	<i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>				✓	✓			✓					✓						
Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>		✓																	
Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus indicus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
White-tailed Stonechat	<i>Saxicola leucurus</i>																			
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferreus</i>				✓					✓								✓		
Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>																			
Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>																			
Rusty-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa ruficauda</i>																			
Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>		✓	✓												✓		✓		
White-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula monileger</i>											✓	✓							
Ultramarine Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula supercilialis</i>																			
Red-throated Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓								H	✓	✓		
Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophilata</i>							✓							✓					
Slaty-blue Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula tricolor</i>							✓	✓					✓						
Slaty-backed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hodgsonii</i>			✓																
Snowy-browed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hyperythra</i>																			
Pygmy Blue Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapella hodgsoni</i>																			
Sapphire Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula sapphira</i>																			
Pale-chinned Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis poliogenys</i>			✓																
Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>																			
Blue-throated Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis rubeculoides</i>																			
Hill Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis banyumas</i>																			
Rufous-bellied Niltava	<i>Niltava sundara</i>																			
Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>		✓	✓												✓		✓		
Pale Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis unicolor</i>																			
Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>			✓											✓					
Large Niltava	<i>Niltava grandis</i>			L																
Bhutan Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron imbricatum</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
Blue-winged Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron squamatum</i>														✓					
Scaly Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron subunicolor</i>									✓				✓						
Red-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron erythrocephalum</i>							✓					✓	✓						
Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush	<i>Ianthocincla rufogularis</i>																			
Red-faced Liocichla	<i>Liocichla phoenicea</i>												✓							





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Bugun Liocichla	<i>Liocichla bugunorum</i>								H	✓				✓						
Rufous-necked Laughingthrush	<i>Dryonastes ruficollis</i>																	✓		
Spotted Laughingthrush	<i>Ianthocinclia ocellata</i>				✓							✓								
Black-faced Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron affine</i>				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓						
Rufous-vented Laughingthrush	<i>Dryonastes gularis</i>																			
Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Grammatoptila striata</i>							✓				✓		✓						
White-throated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax albogularis</i>					✓	✓													
Grey-sided Laughingthrush	<i>Dryonastes caerulatus</i>					✓	✓		H			✓	✓	✓						
White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>											✓								
Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>																			
Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax monileger</i>																			
Jerdon's Babbler	<i>Chrysomma altirostre</i>																✓			
Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>																			
Chestnut-capped Babbler	<i>Timalia pileata</i>															✓		✓		
Striped Tit-babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>			✓																
Rufous-capped Babbler	<i>Stachyris ruficeps</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓				✓						
Rufous-fronted Babbler	<i>Stachyris rufifrons</i>			✓																
Golden Babbler	<i>Stachyris chrysaea</i>									✓		✓	✓							
Grey-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigriceps</i>														✓					
Slender-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides longirostris</i>															H				
Striated Babbler	<i>Turdoides earlei</i>																✓	✓		
Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i>																			
Slender-billed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Xiphirhynchus superciliaris</i>							H							✓					
Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>					✓	✓		✓											
White-browed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus schisticeps</i>												✓					H		
Coral-billed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ferruginosus</i>											✓								
Long-billed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ochraceiceps</i>																			
Fire-tailed Myzornis	<i>Myzornis pyrrhoura</i>					✓	✓		✓				✓							
Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argenteauris</i>																			
Red-billed Leiothrix	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>																			
Black-chinned Yuhina	<i>Yuhina nigrimenta</i>									✓			✓	✓						
White-bellied Erpornis	<i>Erpornis zantholeuca</i>																			
Striated Yuhina	<i>Staphida castaniceps</i>																			
Whiskered Yuhina	<i>Yuhina flavicollis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓							✓				
White-naped Yuhina	<i>Yuhina bakeri</i>											✓			✓					
Rufous-vented Yuhina	<i>Yuhina occipitalis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Stripe-throated Yuhina	<i>Yuhina gularis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						





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Rufous-winged Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe castaneiceps</i>								✓	✓		✓								
Yellow-throated Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe cinerea</i>									✓			✓							
Golden-breasted Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe chrysotis</i>							✓		✓	✓									
White-browed Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe vinipectus</i>																			
Chinese Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe striaticollis</i>																			
Brown-throated Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe ludlowi</i>										✓									
Rufous-throated Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe rufogularis</i>																			
Nepal Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>																			
Rusty-fronted Barwing	<i>Actinodura egertoni</i>								✓	✓		✓		✓						
Hoary-throated Barwing	<i>Actinodura nipalensis</i>										✓									
Streak-throated Barwing	<i>Actinodura waldeni</i>																			
Rufous-backed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia annectans</i>												✓							
Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>																			
Grey Sibia	<i>Heterophasia gracilis</i>																			
Long-tailed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia picaoides</i>												✓							
Beautiful Sibia	<i>Heterophasia pulchella</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					
Indian White-hooded Babbler	<i>Gampsorhynchus rufulus</i>																			
Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>							✓												
Bar-throated Minla	<i>Minla strigula</i>					✓					✓	✓	✓	✓						
Red-tailed Minla	<i>Minla ignotincta</i>							✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
Green Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius xanthochlorus</i>							✓		✓										
Black-eared Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius melanotis</i>								✓			✓								
White-browed Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius flaviscapis</i>											✓	✓							
Black-headed Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius rufiventer</i>												✓							
Cutia	<i>Cutia nipalensis</i>											✓	✓	✓						
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓											
Scaly-breasted Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga albiventer</i>						✓	✓		✓										
Pygmy Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>																			
Nepal Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>																			
Rufous-throated Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis caudatus</i>									✓		✓								
Spotted Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis formosus</i>																			
Bar-winged Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis troglodytoides</i>										✓									
Eyebrowed Wren-babbler	<i>Napothera epilepidota</i>												✓							
Long-billed Wren-babbler	<i>Rimotor malacoptilus</i>											✓	✓							
Sikkim Wedge-billed Babbler	<i>Sphenocichla humei</i>																			
Buff-breasted Babbler	<i>Pellorneum tickelli</i>																			
Spot-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum albiventris</i>																			





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Abbott's Babbler	<i>Malacocincla abbotti</i>			✓														H		
Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>																			
Fulvous Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis fulvifrons</i>																			
Black-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis nipalensis</i>											✓								
Grey-headed Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis gularis</i>																			
Brown Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis unicolor</i>												✓							
Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis atrosuperciliaris</i>																			
Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis ruficeps</i>									✓		✓	✓							
Black-breasted Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis flavirostris</i>																			
Bright-capped Cisticola	<i>Cisticola exilis</i>														H		✓			
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>														H					
Rufous-rumped Grassbird	<i>Graminicola bengalensis</i>																			
Striated Grassbird	<i>Megalurus palustris</i>				✓											✓	✓	✓		
Bristled Grassbird	<i>Chaetornis striata</i>																			
Rufescent Prinia	<i>Prinia rufescens</i>																			
Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>																			
Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>																			
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>																			
Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>																			
Striated Prinia	<i>Prinia crinigera</i>																			
Black Throated Prin	<i>Prinia superciliaris</i>					✓								✓						
Hume's Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia brunnescens</i>																			
Himalayan Aberrant Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia flavolivacea</i>																			
Strong-footed Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia fortipes</i>																			
Grey-sided Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia brunnifrons</i>																			
Russet Bush-warbler	<i>Bradypterus mandelli</i>																			
Indian Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus [stentoreus] brunnescens</i>																			
Thick-billed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus aedon</i>																			
Blyth's Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>																			
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>		✓	✓	✓										✓		✓	✓		
Black-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>				L										H					
Mountain Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus cuculatus</i>																			
Slaty-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia olivea</i>			✓					✓											
Yellow-browed Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>																			
Chestnut-headed Tesia	<i>Tesia castaneocoronata</i>											✓	✓							
Broad-billed Warbler	<i>Tickellia hodgsoni</i>																			
Black-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓						





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Rufous-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus albogularis</i>																			
Yellow-bellied Warbler	<i>Abroscopus superciliaris</i>														✓					
Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>											✓								
Grey-hooded Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus xanthoschistos</i>											✓								
Grey-cheeked Warbler	<i>Seicercus poliogenys</i>											✓								
White-spectacled Warbler	<i>Seicercus affinis</i>											✓	✓							
Green-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>												✓							
Whistler's Warbler	<i>Seicercus whistleri</i>																			
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>		✓	✓																
Siberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus [collybita] tristis</i>																			
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus f. fuscatus</i>		H															✓		
Smoky Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuligiventer</i>		✓													✓				
Tickell's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus affinis</i>				✓											✓		✓		
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus</i>			✓												?				
Large-billed Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>																			
Blyth's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>																			
Western Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus occipitalis</i>		✓	✓											✓					
Yellow-browed Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>		H	✓								H	✓		✓	✓	H	H		
Hume's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>																			
Orange-barred Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>																			
Lemon-rumped Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Grey-faced Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus maculipennis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						
Yellow-vented Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus cantator</i>		✓	✓																
Rufous-vented Tit	<i>Parus rubidiventris</i>					✓	✓	✓												
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>							✓		✓										
Grey-crested Tit	<i>Parus dichrous</i>					✓	✓	✓												
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓															✓		
Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓											
Red-headed Tit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>					✓	✓		✓					✓						
Rufous-fronted Tit	<i>Aegithalos iouschistos</i>					✓				✓										
Black-spotted Yellow Tit	<i>Parus spilonotus</i>					✓		✓	✓			✓	✓							
Sultan Tit	<i>Melanochlora sultanea</i>											✓			✓					
Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris mandellii</i>					✓		✓					✓							
Rusty-flanked Treecreeper	<i>Certhia nipalensis</i>					✓														
Brown-throated Treecreeper	<i>Certhia discolor</i>																			
Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>				✓	✓		✓							✓					
Yellow-browed Tit	<i>Sylviparus modestus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Fire-capped Tit	<i>Cephalopyrus flammiceps</i>																			
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>			✓																
White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>						✓	✓		✓				✓						
Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta cinnamoventris</i>			✓																
Beautiful Nuthatch	<i>Sitta formosa</i>											✓	✓							
Plain Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum minullum</i>																			
Yellow-vented Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum chrysorrheum</i>															✓				
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>		✓															✓		
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>								✓											
Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	<i>Chalcoparia singalensis</i>			✓												✓				
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>																			
Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>			✓														✓		
Fire-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga ignicauda</i>																			
Mrs Gould's Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga gouldiae</i>																			
Black-breasted Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>											✓	✓							
Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>		✓	✓	✓															
Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>																			
Alpine Accentor	<i>Prunella collaris</i>					✓														
Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophiata</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓						
Maroon-backed Accentor	<i>Prunella immaculata</i>																			
Crested Bunting	<i>Melophus lathamii</i>				✓															
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>				✓															
Chestnut-eared Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>																			
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>																			
Black-faced Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>																			
Plain Mountain-finch	<i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>																			
Brandt's Mountain-finch	<i>Leucosticte brandti</i>																			
Himalayan Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis spinoides</i>														✓					
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus e. erythrurus</i>									✓										
Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus thura</i>																			
Dark-rumped Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus edwardsii</i>																			
Dark-breasted Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus nipalensis</i>																			
Blanford's Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus rubescens</i>																			
Crimson-browed Finch	<i>Propyrrula subhimachala</i>										✓	✓	✓							
Scarlet Finch	<i>Haematospiza sipahi</i>													✓						





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Gold-naped Finch	<i>Pyrrhoptes epauletta</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓									
Red-headed Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula erythrocephala</i>																			
Grey-headed Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula erythaca</i>																			
Brown Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula nipalensis</i>																			
Collared Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas affinis</i>																			
White-winged Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas carnipes</i>																			
Spot-winged Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas melanozanthos</i>																			
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>																			
Chestnut Munia	<i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>																			
White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>																			
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>				✓										✓					
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓					✓								✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>				✓				✓						✓	✓	✓			
Cinnamon Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>						✓	✓		✓										
Eastern Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus p. philippinus</i>															✓	✓			
Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i>																			
Black-breasted Weaver	<i>Ploceus benghalensis</i>																✓			
Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>			✓																
Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>		✓	✓	✓											✓		✓		
Slender-billed Oriole	<i>Oriolus tenuirostris</i>																			
Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis diffusus</i>																			
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucocephaeus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓							
Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>			✓								✓	✓	✓						
Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>		✓	✓																
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>			✓									✓							
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>		✓	✓																
Spot-winged Starling	<i>Saroglossa spiloptera</i>																✓			
Grey-headed Starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>			✓												✓	✓	✓		
Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>		✓		✓											✓	✓	✓		
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓		
White-vented Myna	<i>Acridotheres grandis</i>		✓													✓	✓	✓		
Common Hill-myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>		✓														✓			
Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>						✓	✓			✓		✓							
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>																			
Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>																			





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓	✓												✓					
Eastern Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus [macrorhynchos] levaillantii</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus [macrorhynchos] japonensis</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓						
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax tibetanus</i>																			
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>							H												
Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>																			
Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa flavirostris</i>							✓		✓										
Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>																			
Collared Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta frontalis</i>																			
Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>		✓		✓										✓	✓	✓	✓		
Write Ins / Additional Species																				
Black-billed Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis affinis</i>		✓	✓												✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indian Stone Curlew	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>			✓																
Snow Pigeon	<i>Columba leuconata</i>					✓														
Upland Buzzard	<i>Buteo hemilasius</i>																			
Kessler's Thrush	<i>Turdus kessleri</i>					✓														
Guldenstat's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogastrus</i>					✓														
Steppe Gull	<i>Larus barabensis</i>		✓																	
Tibetan Siskin	<i>Serinus thibetanus</i>						✓													
Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>						✓	✓												
White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>			✓																
Eastern Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus spilonotus</i>														✓		✓			
Indian Silverbill	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>														✓					
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>															✓				
Blue-breasted Button Quail	<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>																✓			
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>															✓				
Spotted Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus thoracicus</i>																	✓		
Mammals																				
Hoolock Gibbon	<i>Bunopithecus hoolock</i>																			
Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>			✓											✓	✓				
Assamese Macaque	<i>Macaca assamensis</i>																✓			
Arunachal Macaque	<i>Macaca munzala</i>																			
Capped Langur	<i>Trachypithecus pileatus</i>											✓								
Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>															✓				
Swamp Deer	<i>Cervus duvaucelii</i>															✓	✓	✓		





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>			✓				H						H						
Hog Deer	<i>Axis porcinus</i>														✓	✓	✓	✓		
Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>																			
Asiatic Wild Buffalo	<i>Bubalus arnee</i>															✓	✓	✓		
Gaur	<i>Bos gaurus</i>																			
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>															✓	✓			
Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>											H				✓	✓	✓		
Greater One-horned Rhinoceros	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>														✓	✓	✓	✓		
Red Panda	<i>Ailurus fulgens</i>																			
Sloth Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>																			
Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>																			
Indian Wolf	<i>Canis lupis</i>																			
Dhole (Wild Dog)	<i>Cuon alpinus</i>																			
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>																			
Common Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>																			
Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>																			
Hog Badger	<i>Arctonyx collaris</i>																✓			
Eurasian Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>																✓	✓		
Smooth-coated Otter	<i>Lutrogale perspicillata</i>			✓																
Yellow-throated Marten	<i>Martes flavigula</i>																			
Small Indian Civet	<i>Viverricula indica</i>																			
Little Indian Civet	<i>Viverra zibetha</i>																			
Common Palm Civet	<i>Paradoxurus hermaphroditus</i>																			
Himalayan Palm Civet	<i>Paguma larvata</i>																			
Grey Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>																			
Small Indian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes javanicus</i>																			
Indian Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>																			
Indian Porcupine	<i>Hystrix indica</i>																			
Himalayan Crestless Porcupine	<i>Hystrix brachyura</i>												✓							
Malayan Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i>			✓																
Five-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennantii</i>					✓	✓													
Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel	<i>Dremomys lokriah</i>				✓							✓		✓						
Hoary-bellied Himalayan Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus pygerythrus</i>	✓		✓				✓		✓		✓		✓						
Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus</i>																			
Indian Bush Rat	<i>Golunda ellioti</i>																			
Little Indian Field Mouse	<i>Mus booduga</i>			✓																
Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>	✓																		





Species name	Scientific name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Fulvous Fruit Bat	<i>Rousettus leschenaulti</i>																			
Greater False Vampire	<i>Megaderma lyra</i>																			
Indian Pipistrelle or Pygmy Bat	<i>Pipistrellus coromandra / Pipistrellus te</i>	✓	✓											✓		✓	✓	✓		
Marsh Mugger	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>																			
Common Indian Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>																			
Indian Tent Turtle	<i>Kachuga tentoria</i>		✓																	
Spotted Black Terrapin	<i>Geodemys hamiltonii</i>																			
Nupra Pika				✓		✓														
Himaylayan Striped Squirrel										✓	✓									
Takin													✓	✓				✓		
H = HEARD ONLY																				
L = LEIO ONLY																				



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Suhel Quader, PhD.**Aims & Objectives**

- To publish a newsletter that will provide a platform to birdwatchers for publishing notes and observations primarily on birds of South Asia.
- To promote awareness of bird watching amongst the general public.
- To establish and maintain links/liaison with other associations or organized bodies in India or abroad whose objectives are in keeping with the objectives of the Trust (i.e. to support amateur birdwatchers with cash / kind for projects in ornithology).

**Indian Birds**

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Front cover: Bugun *Liocichla*—a stunning new babbler from Arunachal Pradesh [Photo: Ramana Athreya.]

A new species of *Liocichla* (Aves: Timaliidae) from Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Ramana Athreya

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This paper describes a new bird species of the genus *Liocichla* discovered near Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in western Arunachal Pradesh, India. While the taxon most closely resembles *L. omeiensis*, an endemic of China, the many points of difference in plumage, size and vocalisations indicate a new species. The known population is very small and only three (breeding?) pairs responded to song playback in May 2006. The plumage and the vocalisations are distinctive and therefore the paucity of records suggests a small and highly localized population.

1. A new species of *liocichla*

1.1 The genus *Liocichla*

Liocichlas are an Asian babbler genus hitherto comprising three allopatric species. Red-faced *Liocichla* *Liocichla phoenicea* (Gould, 1837) [formerly Crimson-winged Laughingthrush *Garrulax phoeniceus*] is widely distributed from north-eastern India to north-western Vietnam through northern Myanmar, southern Yunnan (China), north-western Thailand and northern Laos (Ali & Ripley 1987; Dickinson 2003). Emei Shan *Liocichla* *Liocichla omeiensis* Riley, 1926 (also spelt Omei Shan) was for long thought to be confined to the Emei Shan Mountain in Sichuan (China) though recent observations have extended its range north-westward and southward (BirdLife International 2006). Steere's *Liocichla* *Liocichla steerii* Swinhoe, 1877 is endemic to Taiwan (Dickinson 2003). The genus was erected by Swinhoe (1877) while describing *L. steerii*, which he said was, "...in general characters a *Liothrix* [sic], but with the stronger legs and shorter wings of a *Garrulax*..." Though not uncommon, *L. omeiensis* is classified as Vulnerable (BirdLife International 2001) because of its localized distribution and attractiveness to the bird trade. The other two species are not at risk.

1.2 Discovery of the Eaglenest taxon

On 12.i.1995, while birdwatching in Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (27°02'–09'N 92°18'–35'E; 200–3,300 m), West Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh, India, I had brief views of a pair of *liocichlas* which did not fit any description in Ali & Ripley (1987). My next sighting was of a flock on 3.i.2005 in the same locality. I saw them a second time on the same day and again on the next. From my field sketch Dhananjai Mohan identified the bird as *L. omeiensis* using MacKinnon & Phillips (2000), though it was not clear whether the bird was identical or merely very similar. The nearest record of *L. omeiensis* is over 1,000 km from Eaglenest. Pratap Singh, Dhananjai Mohan and I obtained mist-netting permits from the Forest Department, but failed to see the birds during two spells of observation, 23–28.i.2005 and 5–10.v.2005. I renewed my efforts on 21.v.2006 and finally netted a bird on 25.v.2006,

releasing it in the same area on the same day after obtaining photographs and detailed notes on its plumage. The similarities between the Eaglenest taxon and *L. omeiensis* suggest that they are closely related, but the many differences in plumage and vocalisations—especially song—indicate a new species and therefore I propose to name it:

Bugun *Liocichla* *Liocichla bugunorum* sp. nov.

2. Description of the new species

2.1 Holotype and associated material

The holotype is the bird from which a few feathers were obtained and which is the subject in a series of photographs presented in this paper. The holotype was captured, photographed, measured and released on 25.v.2006 at Lama Camp (27°15'71"N 92°46'01"E) near Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh, India. Rectrices from the distinctive tail, which distinguish it from its congeners, one secondary flight feather from the wing and the photographs included here have been deposited in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, India (D.B. No. 3/2006, Reg. No. 28981).

2.2 Diagnosis

The new species, an obvious *Liocichla* (including the marked *Leiothrix*-like jizz), has the overall colour olive with a black cap, prominent orange-yellow lore (between the eye and the upper mandible, not including the forehead) and yellow post-ocular spot (Pic. 4), and patches of golden yellow, crimson and white on the wing (Pic. 1). The olive is greyer above (Pic. 6) and bright yellowish on the breast (Pic. 9). The closed tail is blackish above and flame-coloured below with a prominent orange-red tip (Pics. 10 & 12). The bird is very different from the sympatric Red-faced *Liocichla* but more similar to the other two species, especially *L. omeiensis* (Pic. 2). This latter species has a grey cap, less prominent loreal and post-ocular markings, grey underparts, and an olive tail with black bars above (Pic. 11) and just a hint of red on the underside with yellow tips to the outer rectrices (Pic. 15). *L. steerii* shares the brighter underparts and, to an extent, the prominent lores of



Pic. 1. The holotype of **Bugun Liocichla Liocichla bugunorum** sp nov. It was photographed on 25.v.2006 at Lama Camp just outside the boundaries of Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh, India. The overall colour of the bird is olive which tends to look greener in the shade (see Pic. 6) and neutral grey in bright light (a camera flash for instance). This is probably a male bird.

L. bugunorum but its wing pattern, tail and cap are very different.

2.3 Description of the holotype

Overall: Olive; the duller greyish-olive above (Pic. 6) appears greener in the shade and greyer in bright light (including camera flash—Pic. 1); a grey band separates the yellow-olive of the chin from the brighter yellow-olive of the breast (Pics. 1, 3 & 8); the bright colour of the breast fades into dull olive grey on the lower abdomen.

Head: The black feathers of the cap are erectile (Pics. 3–4); the ear coverts are grey while the rest of the sides of head including the chin and a crescent behind the ear are different shades of brighter olive (Pic. 3); a prominent triangular orange-yellow loreal patch and a bright yellow post-ocular streak (against upper half of eye) give a spectacled appearance (Pic. 3); the two striking features are separated by a black area about half the diameter of the eye.

Wing: There is extensive golden yellow at the base of remiges (with some reddish tinge), on adjacent coverts and along the

lower edge of the closed wing (Pics. 1 & 6); there are 17 remiges with nine primaries (Pic. 7); the sixth primary is the longest but the seventh and eighth are only a little shorter (Pic. 7); the tips of remiges vary from acute (first primary) to flat (last secondary); the remiges have black shafts (any white on the shaft in the photos being camera flash highlights) and are mostly slaty-black with the amount of yellowish-olive increasing inwards from the first primary; all the secondaries have a crimson drop on their outer edges, close to the tip, which form the sub-terminal crimson patch on the closed wing; all the remiges are tipped white, the secondaries more prominently (Pic. 8); the yellow on the primaries is narrower than that on the secondaries but extends further along the outer web resulting in the yellow lower edge of the closed wing (Pic. 1). The secondaries also have a white streak between the crimson drop and the golden-yellow at the base.

Tail: Square-tipped central tail feathers with outer rectrices progressively shorter resulting in a graduated appearance; the holotype had nine tail feathers; Pic. 12 clearly shows that

some feathers are missing; the tail is mostly blackish above with indistinct darker bars (Pics. 6 & 10); the tips of the outer feathers have some olive; all the feathers end in a spray of orange-red barbs, which emerge as a tuft at the point of the shaft (Pics. 10, 12 & 13); the underside of the tail (Pics. 12 & 14) is spectacularly colourful—the outer two pairs are flame-coloured while the inner feathers progressively become more olive (with some black barring) and finally black (Pic. 12); the shafts change from brownish to bright yellow in the outer third of the tail; the outer pair of undertail coverts are black with broad red terminal edges and bright yellow lateral margins while the inner pair lacks the yellow.

Bare parts: The eyes are dark reddish-brown; the bill is pale translucent horn in colour distally and darker and more opaque in the basal half (Pic. 3); the legs and feet are flesh coloured.

Measurements: The total length was measured with the squirming bird stretched out and hence should be treated as approximate. Other measurements were taken with the bird held more securely and with Vernier calipers and hence are accurate to a millimeter or better. Total length 220 mm (approx.); bill: skull to tip 14 mm, along gape 18.5 mm, maximum depth 6 mm; wing chord 85 mm; tarsus 32 mm; tail 95 mm.

2.4 Other individuals

Another bird "Bird #2" had been netted earlier on 21.v.2006 in the same area (within 10 m of where the holotype was netted) but escaped after only a few photographs had been taken. It differed from the holotype in the duller yellow-olive on its wings, much duller copper-red on underside of tail, no red in undertail coverts and in having broad yellow tips to tail feathers. The colours of the bare parts of Bird #2 were as of the holotype. Bird #2 has been depicted in some photos in this work.

Though the two birds were not sexed, the plumage differences between the holotype and Bird #2 are perhaps due to their differing sex. All the birds seen in May 2006 (breeding season at 2,300 m) were in pairs, while small flocks were seen in January 2005. Furthermore, the holotype was distinguishable in the field on account of its missing tail feathers and I never saw it outside that area nor did I see any other "male" in that area. These two factors suggest that the two netted birds were an adult (breeding?) pair and not an adult-subadult combination. The plumage differences between the two—bright red on the ventral side of the tail of the holotype being replaced by fainter red or yellow in Bird #2, and the duller wings of the latter suggest that the holotype is a male and Bird#2 a female. It may be noted that the male and female labels in the photo captions are enclosed in quotes, indicating that proper sexing was not carried out.

During observations on 3.i.2005 I had noted a second reddish wing patch at the base of the remiges (as had Fredrik Ellin in March 2006, *verbally*), similar to that in *L. omeiensis*, but this was not seen on any bird in May 2006. The crimson at the base of remiges in *L. omeiensis* has been reported to abrade by Hewston (2004) who also claims that if present the second wing patch is an easier means of sexing a bird but the constant difference in tail colour is more reliable in this respect. Pic. 1 does show a reddish tinge on the golden-yellow base of remiges.

2.6 Vocalisations

The song of *L. bugunorum* was first noted by Ellin and Peter Schmidt at Lama Camp on 24.iii.2006. Subsequently, at the same location on 9.iv.2006 Margaret Widdowson, Michael Catsis and I recorded the song on tape and played it back to call the birds out. Pic. 16 displays sonograms of four different vocalisations. The bottom-right portion of the montage shows them juxtaposed for comparison. The vocalisations may be

Pic. 2. *Liocichla omeiensis* male (Natural History Museum, Tring, U.K.). Note the lack of any yellow-olive on the grey underparts, and the barely noticeable pale eye markings.



Pic. 3. *L. bugunorum* holotype (left) and Bird #2 (right). The holotype and Bird #2 are probably male and female, respectively. The crests of both sexes are erectile.



transcribed as: **16.A** “weee-keew” **16.B** “yu-weee-keew” **16.C** “wieu.u-wee.i-tuu.i-tuu.uw-tu.oow”, these notes on a descending scale, slightly slurred and inflected at the end **16.D** “weei.u-tuuu.i-tuu.uw-tu.oow”, these notes similar to the last four of 16.C but higher in pitch and more stressed. The initial consonant is barely audible in all these notes.

All the notes are fluty, usually with a terminal inflection and quite distinctive. The vocalisations 16.A–16.C are part of a longer sequence of a bird responding to song playback on 9.iv.2006. 16.C is similar to that described by Ellin & Schmidt (*pers. comm.*) and is probably the “normal” song. However, the song can start from any of the five notes and end at any subsequent note but always with the notes in that sequence. 16.D was the bird’s preferred response to playback in May 2006; it is similar to 16.C but higher in frequency and missing the first note. 16.A seems to be a subset of 16.B with a minor variation.

2.7 Similar species

L. bugunorum is very different in plumage from the sympatric *L. phoenicea*. It has a mixture of features of the other two *liocichlas* though it seems to be closer both vocally and visually to *L. omeiensis*.

The principal morphological differences between *L. omeiensis* and *L. bugunorum* are listed in Table 1. The latter is about 10% larger in size in all measurements, except the bill which is smaller. However, it must be noted that with just a single specimen I have no information on the intra-specific variations of these values. *L. bugunorum* has a black cap vis-à-vis grey with dark brown forehead in *L. omeiensis*; two clearly separated features straddling the eye vis-à-vis a somewhat broken eye-ring—including a large, bright, orange-yellow triangular lore spot vis-à-vis most of the lores being dark

brown; forehead black vis-à-vis brownish; crescent behind ear coverts olive vis-à-vis reddish-brown; bright yellow-olive underparts vis-à-vis grey; mostly blackish uppertail with indistinct darker bars vis-à-vis olive with black bars; underside of tail (essentially the underside of the two outermost tail feathers) flame-coloured vis-à-vis olive with a faint reddish tinge; tips of outer rectrices have orange-red tips vis-à-vis broad yellow tips.

L. steerii differs from *L. bugunorum* in having a grey crown streaked with white, a differently shaped pre-ocular spot, grey rump contrasting with olive back, an olive upper tail with white tip and lack of red in under tail coverts.

Sonograms of *L. omeiensis* and *L. steerii* from recordings in Scharringa 2006 are shown in Pic. 17 and 18, respectively. Another version of the *L. omeiensis* song has been transcribed as “w’yii-i-w’yii-u-w’yiiwi-w’yii-u” (BirdLife International 2003). The *L. omeiensis* recordings in the British Library Sound Archives and others provided by Per Alström are similar to those in Pic. 17. The vocalisations of *L. steerii* are clearly different from those of *L. bugunorum*. *L. omeiensis* vocalisations have a similar quality to those of *L. bugunorum* but the individual notes of the latter are simpler, i.e. with less modulation vis-à-vis multiple peaks, and more rounded vis-à-vis sharper structures, and the notes of the song descend farther in pitch.

3. Ecology

3.1 Sight records of the species

Prior to May 2006 *L. bugunorum* had been seen on:

- i. 12.i.1995. A pair in late afternoon at Lama Camp, Location 1. (Fig. 2).
- ii. 3.i.2005, 15:00 hrs., 2,320 m. A flock of six with *Cutias Cutia nipalensis* at Lama Camp, Location 1.
- iii. 3.i.2005, 15:45 hrs., 2,250 m. A flock of four with Red-headed Laughingthrushes *Trochalopteron erythrocephalus*¹ at Lama Camp, Location 2 (Fig. 2).
- iv. 4.i.2005, 15:15 hrs. A flock of six at location of sighting iii.
- v. 24.iii.2006, 06:00 hrs. A pair at Lama Camp, Location 2 (Ellin, *pers. comm.*).
- vi. 24.iii.2006, 07:30 hrs. A singing pair, close to sighting v (by Ellin & Schmidt, *pers. comm.*)
- vii. 5.iv.2006, 07:00 hrs. More than two birds with Blue-

¹ Rasmussen & Anderton 2005.



Pic. 4. *L. bugunorum* holotype "male" (top) and Bird #2 "female" (bottom).

winged Laughingthrushes *Trochalopteron squamatum*¹ at Location 3 (Fig. 2) and on 7.iv.2006, 11.00 hrs., over three birds with Red-headed Laughingthrush and Bar-throated Minla *Minla strigula* between Locations 1 & 2 (Marques 2006; Ritschard 2006).

- viii. 8.iv.2006, 07:00 hrs., 2,060 m. A flock of four, 2 km above Bompu, 27°04'32"N 92°24'07.6" (Simon Allen, Michael Catsis, Margaret and William Widdowson, and I).
- ix. 9.iv.2006, 07:00 hrs. A singing pair, Lama Camp, Location 2 (observers of viii).

3.2 Habitat and habits

All sightings except one have been on heavily disturbed hillsides (2,060–2,340 m) with dense shrubbery and small to medium sized trees (remnants after extraction of tall timber). Only the Bompu sighting was at the edge of primary forest. Clearly, the species can exist in disturbed areas and utilize a variety of vegetation types. This is more or less identical to the habitat preference of *L. omeiensis* (BirdLife International 2003). In both cases, this versatility regarding habitat usage is somewhat at odds with the small, highly localised population. *L. bugunorum* has been observed at all heights—from the ground to the canopy of tall trees (30 m), hopping on the ground, working through the undergrowth, in tangled vines and even tree-creeping like *Cutia nipalensis*.

L. bugunorum have been observed in flocks of 2–6 birds in January. In April, they were seen in pairs as well as in small flocks. In May, all sightings were of pairs. They have been seen by themselves or in the company of, variously, *C. nipalensis*, *T. erythrocephalus*, *T. squamatus* and *Minla strigula*.

While they frequent dense shrubbery they seem not to be particularly shy and a substantial fraction of the sightings have been in exposed situations.

During the week starting 21.v.2006 three pairs of birds responded to song playback—one (Pair 1) right at the Phua Rung camp site, another (Pair 2) about 400 m lower down the ravine, and the third (Pair 3) at Location 2 (Fig. 2). Pair 1 readily responded to playback on most days, especially early in the morning and in the afternoon. On the first day, the birds approached quite close, moving about in shrubbery just a few meters from the audio-player. However, after the first capture / escape there was a noticeable increase in their aversion to showing themselves openly and after the first couple of days they mostly called back from the top of a nearby tree, almost never descending to the undergrowth. Pair 2 responded strongly to playback on the first two attempts, coming in from about 150 m away to investigate, but on subsequent days confined themselves to an occasional response from far away. Pair 3 always responded to playback but they rarely approached closer than 50 m from the observers. Therefore, while playback seems to be a good tool

Pic. 5. *L. omeiensis* male (top) and female (bottom). Note the grey crown unlike the black crown of *L. bugunorum*. (Photo: Nigel Collar. Specimen courtesy: Natural History Museum, Tring, U.K.)



¹ Rasmussen & Anderton 2005.



Pic. 6. *L. bugunorum* holotype "male". The upper plumage is dull greyish-olive.. This photo also shows a reddish tinge on the golden secondaries (see text).

for drawing out birds, the intensity of the response varies between individuals and perhaps on the relative locations of the audio-player and the centre of their territory. The male of Pair 1 (the holotype) lacked two of its outermost right-side rectrices, which made it readily distinguishable in the field. I never saw this bird anywhere else and no other male was seen in its area. I also never saw or heard more than one pair of birds at a time at any of the three locations. While one cannot make a definitive statement in the absence of individually marked birds, these observations are consistent with pairs inhabiting well-defined territories.

The first two pairs inhabited the same ravine separated by about 400 m distance (along the slope) and *c.* 100 m alt.. The third pair frequented the adjacent ravine about 300 m away. These pairs readily responding to playback, at least initially, and vocalised on their own several times daily. Therefore, the lack of vocalisations including response to playback from other areas with similar habitat is surprising.

The only numbers one can put against the population are four birds near Bompou on 8.iv.2006 and the ten separate individuals seen on 3.i.2005 near Lama Camp. Despite repeated attempts at finding the birds using tape playback in May 2006 I encountered only three (breeding?) pairs near Lama Camp and none near Bompou. While the population is unlikely to be just 14 birds, clearly, the species is far from numerous.

Pair 1 (May 2006) were observed feeding on small berries one morning. On another day, they were seen exploring the tangled vines on a tree and feeding (insects or vegetable matter?)

4. Discussion

4.1 Taxonomic status

Evaluating the relative status of taxa is not easy (Helbig et al. 2002), especially when all other congeners are allopatric. Visually and aurally, *L. bugunorum* is most similar to *L. omeiensis* but there are many points of difference between them: in vocalisations, ten features of plumage, and size (Table 1). While future surveys may extend their ranges towards each other the balance of probability of finding intermediate populations, showing a cline in all the above differences is low. Furthermore, *L. bugunorum* differs from *L. omeiensis* and from *L. steerii* in its plumage as much as the latter differ between themselves. *L. omeiensis* was elevated from subspecies (of *L. steerii*) to species (Cheng 1987). These factors make a strong case for assigning specific rank to the Eaglenest taxon.

4.2 Status and conservation

L. bugunorum is presently known only from Eaglenest. The species may eventually be discovered in adjacent Bhutan and also further east in central and eastern Arunachal Pradesh but the fact remains that despite being spectacularly colourful and quite distinctive in both plumage and vocalisations the species was unknown to science until now. Choudhury (2003) did not encounter this species while surveying Eaglenest for birds over many visits across several years, which suggests that the population, even in Eaglenest, may not be large.

All sightings of *L. bugunorum* except one have been in Lama Camp, a heavily logged tract, within the Bugun community forest area just outside Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary; the one exception falls inside the boundaries of



Pic. 7. Spread-out upper wings of *L. bugunorum* holotype "male" (top) and Bird #2 "female" (bottom)



Eaglenest. Eaglenest is part of the much larger Kameng protected area complex spread over 3,500 km² of contiguous closed canopy forest in East and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh and adjacent Assam covering an altitudinal range of 50–3,300 m, the largest such area in western Arunachal. Eaglenest (218 km²) and Sessa (100 km²) sanctuaries are a small critical constituent of the complex since all the high altitude areas (> 2,000 m; where *L. bugunorum* has been seen) of the Kameng complex lie within them. Furthermore, Eaglenest is a microcosm of the entire complex as it contains within itself all altitudes and vegetation types between 100–3,300 m.

Eaglenest has remained largely untouched despite lack of efforts towards its conservation. The Eaglenest Biodiversity Project (Athreya 2005, 2006; and references therein) has focused on bringing together the Forest Department and the local Bugun community into protecting the area jointly. The Buguns are keen on preserving the area to attract birdwatchers to augment their community finances. We are also looking at ways and means of reducing the community's dependence on forest timber for fuel and construction.

A more potent threat to the area has been the plan to build a major highway through Eaglenest, passing right through Lama Camp, with

Pic. 8. Progressive close-ups of the upper wing pattern of *L. bugunorum* holotype "male"





Pic. 9. *L. bugunorum* holotype "male". Both sexes have yellow-olive underparts, brightest on the breast and fading into a duller shade on the belly.

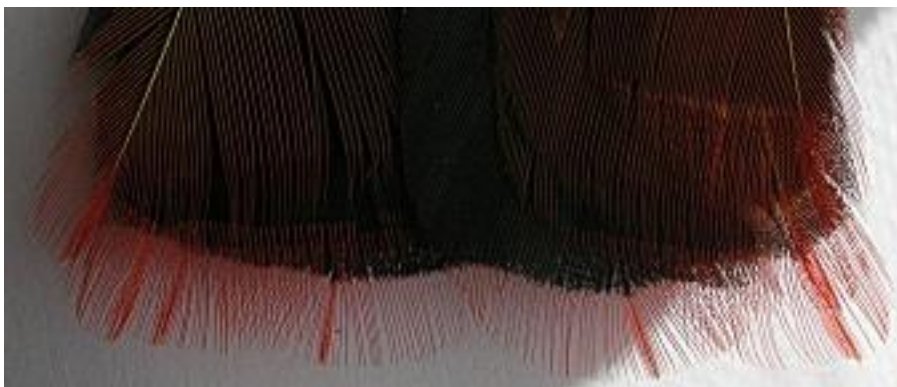
Pic. 10. (below) *L. bugunorum* holotype "male". The upperside of tail is predominantly black with indistinct darker bars. The fraction of olive green increases towards the outer rectrices.



Pic. 11. *L. omeiensis* male. The barring on the upperside is more prominent as the ground colour is lighter.



Pic. 12. (right) *L. bugunorum* holotype "male". The pattern on right-most feather makes it the counterpart of the third outer feather on the left suggesting that two feathers on the right are missing. The odd count suggests that a third feather may also be missing.



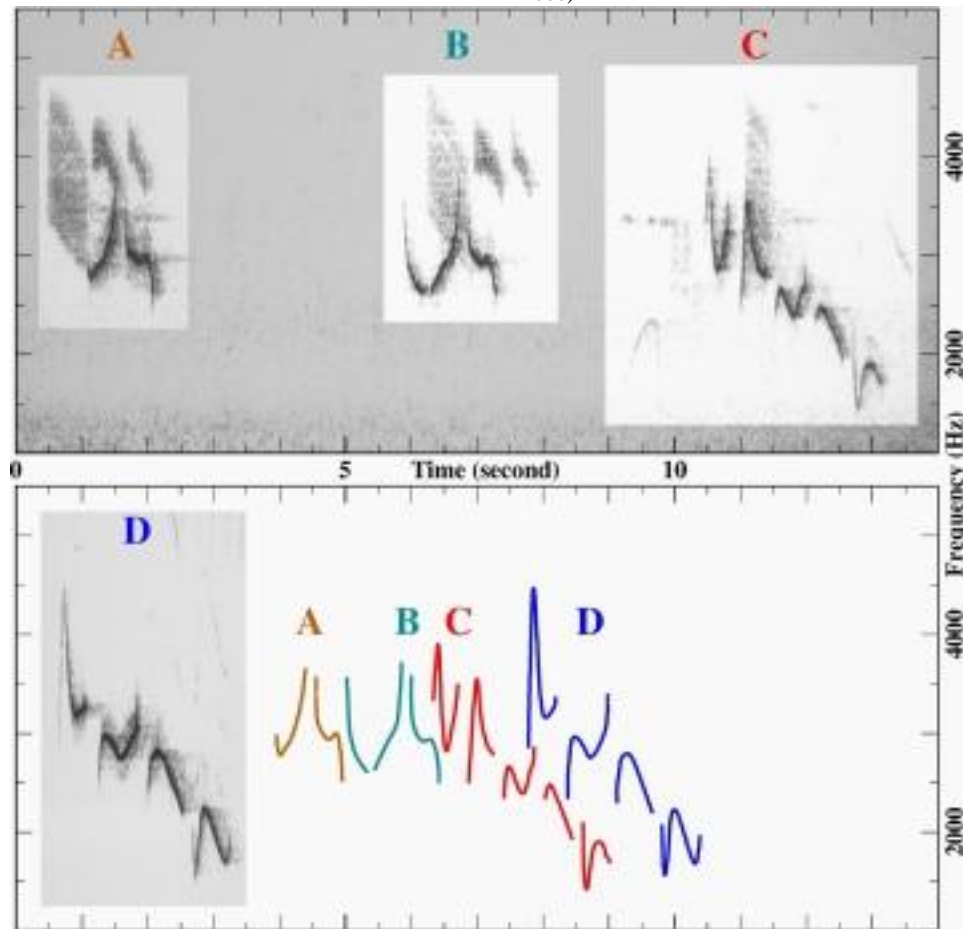
Pic. 13. (left) *L. bugunorum* holotype "male". The terminal orange-red barbs form a denser tuft at the location of the shaft. The terminal section of the shafts are yellowish.



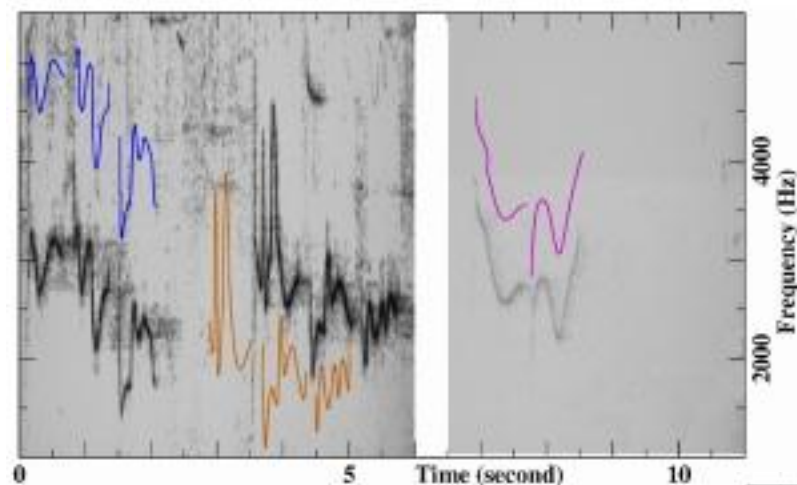
Pic. 14. *L. bugunorum* holotype "male" (top) and Bird #2 "female" (right). The closed underside of tail appears as a solid sheet of orange-red flame in the "male". The blue shade in the "female" undertail coverts is a camera flash artifact – the actual colour is black.



Pic. 15. *L. omeiensis* male (top) and female (right). The ground colours are duller than in *L. bugunorum* but the terminal bands on the tail feathers are broader.

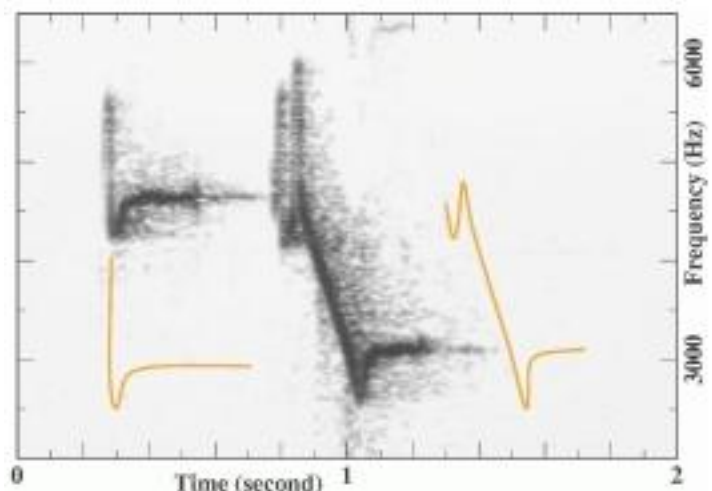


Pic. 16. This montage of sonograms displays four different vocalisations of *L. bugunorum*. All were in response to tape playback though sonogram C (red) is very similar to the un-elicited song of the bird. The bottom right collection depicts colour coded tracings of the same four vocalisations for easy inter-comparisons—they retain the temporal and frequency scale and are faithful reproductions of the ridges on the sonograms. The diffuse 3-note structures seen in sonograms A (brown) and B (cyan) are interlopers produced by a nearby Streaked Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron lineatum*¹, as is the similar single diffuse spur sitting above the second note of C (red). A, B, and C were part of a sequence from the same bird but the display transfer functions have been modified to minimize the contamination due to *T. lineatum*. The notes are very fluty, their quality distinctive when once heard, and usually have an inflected tail.



Pic. 17. Sonograms of *L. omeiensis* from (Scharringa 2006). The temporal and spectral scales are as in Pic. 16. The overall quality of the notes are somewhat similar but look and sound quite different. The colour tracings of the ridges show the overall structure of the vocalisations but have been shifted in time and frequency from the actual ridges for clearer delineation.

Pic. 18. Sonogram of *Liocichla steerii* from recordings in Scharringa (2006). The call is at a higher frequency than that of *L. bugunorum*. The colour tracing and spectral scale of the plot is the same as for the previous sonograms but time axis is greatly magnified.



¹ Rasmussen & Anderton 2005.

unpredictable consequences for the *L. bugunorum* population. The birds survive in the Lama Camp scrub but, clearly, they do not thrive, which suggests (unknown) ecological obstacle(s) to an increase in their population; a busy highway could well push this spectacular bird into local extirpation, which could also be extinction.

4.3 On the lack of a full specimen

Given the very small known population, I felt it would be inappropriate to collect a specimen, especially as that would have affected one of only three known (breeding?) pairs. So only some feathers which had worked loose (after the photographs were taken) were collected as type material. Should the census planned for next season indicate a larger population, steps will be taken to obtain a full specimen after seeking permission from the appropriate authorities.

One could have described the taxon only after collecting a specimen after the census but several factors argued against a delay:

- i. publicity from the formal description of a new and spectacular bird species would significantly facilitate our ongoing conservation efforts at Eaglenest;
- ii. the areas where the birds have been seen are the subject of litigation over the construction of a major highway;
- iii. our efforts at conservation-oriented ecotourism resulted in a surge in visitors last season and a new taxon whose description is only hinging on the collection of a specimen may tempt a visitor into an illegal collection effort disrupting the small population there as well as prejudice the authorities against the ecotourism effort; and
- iv. I have enough material to satisfy the technical requirements of description of a new species according to the International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature.

4.4 Etymology

All observations of this taxon, except the first, were carried out during field work under the Eaglenest Biodiversity Project (Athreya 2005, 2006). Local community participation and development have been the cornerstones of our conservation efforts there and Mr Indi Glow of the Bugun tribe has played a very critical role throughout the project. Furthermore, all sightings of the taxon except one have been in Bugun community forest. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the contribution of Mr. Indi Glow and others by naming the new taxon after their Bugun tribe. The word Bugun (both 'u' rhyme with "put") is a masculine term used by the community to refer to themselves. It is believed to mean "people of the valley = valley dwellers" but the etymology is uncertain and its origins may lie in another language. The specific name *bugunorum* [= (*Liocichla*) of the Buguns] is the invariable genitive plural of the latinised noun *Bugunus*.

Acknowledgements

Dorje Raptan, while netting the bird, and Nigel Collar, during the preparation of this manuscript, made crucial contributions to this work. Nigel also provided photos and measurements of the two *L. omeiensis* in the Natural History Museum, Tring, U.K. After my initial sightings Fredrik Ellin

and Peter Schmidt provided the major breakthrough by identifying the song of the species. Goutam Narayan, Nandita Hazarika, Vidya Athreya, Aasheesh Pittie, Mike Catsis, Simon Allen, William and Margaret Widdowson, Herman Mays, Mathias Ritschard, Aniruddha Belsare and Neelim Khaire helped at various stages. David Normand helped in getting the Latin correct. Jelle Scharringa, Mike Catsis, Cheryl Tipp (British Library Sound Archives) and Per Alström provided cuts of *L. omeiensis* vocalisations for comparison. A special thanks to Dhananjai Mohan and Pratap Singh for their contribution, and an apology – they traversed the subcontinent at short notice to mist-net the bird in January 2005. Unfortunately, the call I had recorded earlier, that they used, proved to be not of the *Liocichla* but of a *Leiothrix* in the same bush—I wish things had turned out otherwise! The Forest Department of Arunachal Pradesh has been very supportive of our work at Eaglenest and patient and liberal with our several requests for mist-netting this bird since January 2005. The Eaglenest Biodiversity Project, during which the new taxon was observed in detail, was supported by grants from the Rufford-Maurice-Laing Foundation (U.K) and Ford Foundation/Winrock, India. Comments and suggestions from the referees, Edward Dickinson, Pamela Rasmussen and Jochen Martens, were of great help—any shortcomings of this paper are in spite of their efforts. Dr Rasmussen strongly disapproved of naming a new species without a full specimen but nonetheless was kind enough to review the manuscript. My thanks to everyone!

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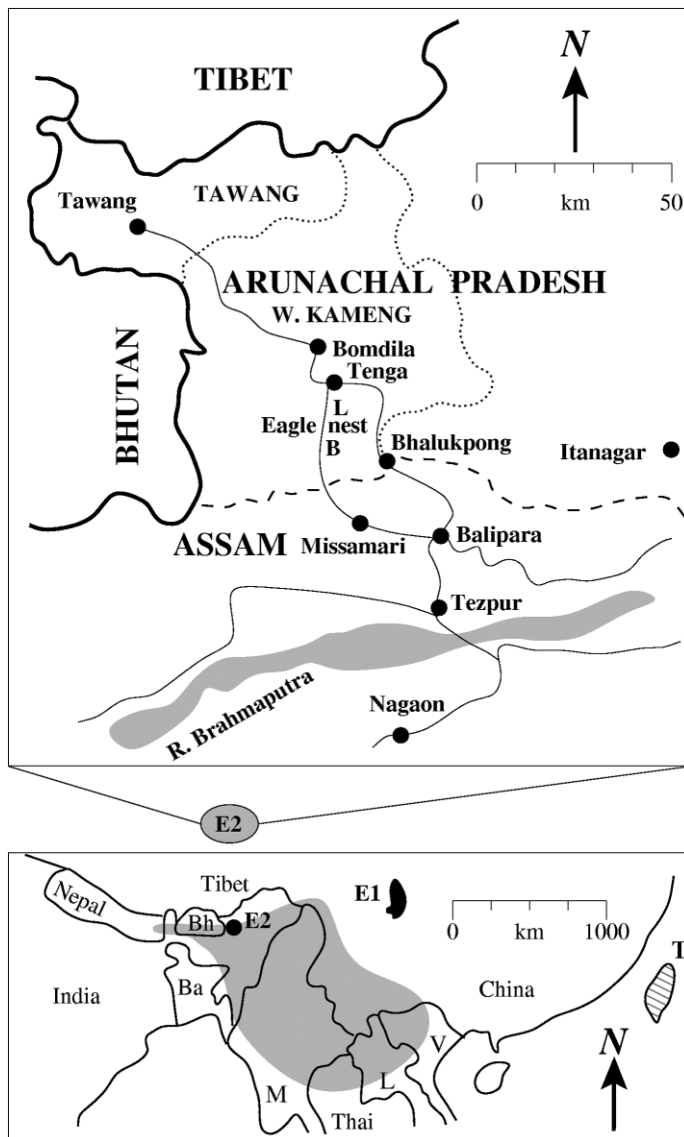


Figure 1. The bottom panel (adapted from BirdLife International 2006) shows the known ranges of the four species of *Liocichla*. The abbreviations are Bangladesh (Ba), Bhutan (Bh), Laos (L), Eaglenest (E2), Emei Shan and its neighbouring areas (E1), Taiwan (T), Thailand (Thai) and Vietnam (V). *L. steerii* is endemic to Taiwan; *L. omeiensis* is confined to E1; Bugun *Liocichla* is known only from E2; the grey-shaded area delineates the range of Red-faced *Liocichla*. The upper panel provides a more detailed view of the Eaglenest area. The Bugun *Liocichla* has been recorded from Lama Camp (L) and Bompou (B), which lie along the Eaglenest road north and south of the Eaglenest ridge, respectively.

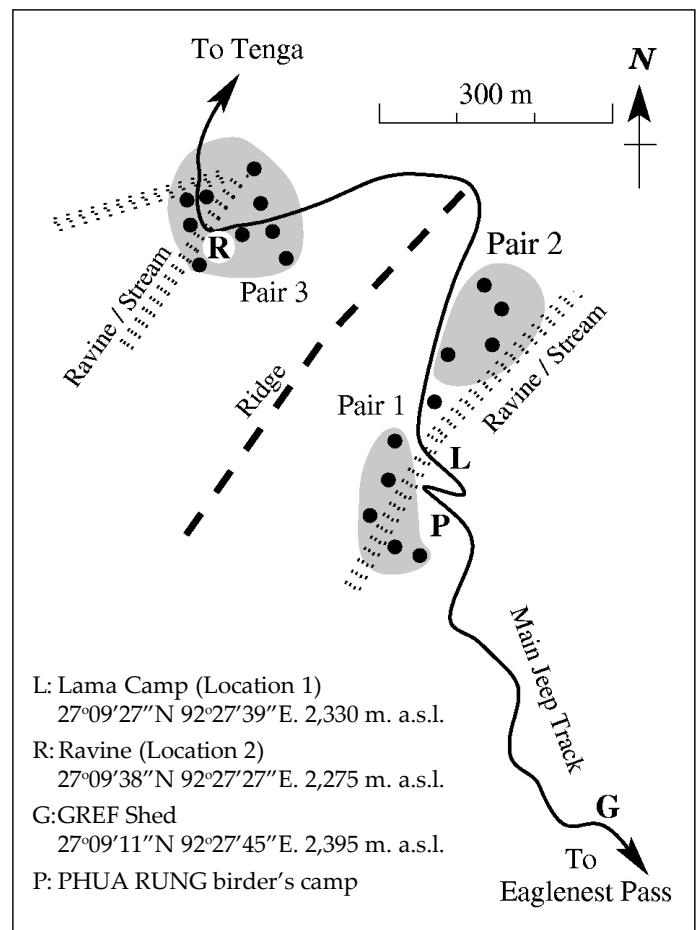


Figure 2. Lama Camp area, outside Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary. The dots in the grey-shaded areas denote the approximate locations of sightings of the three pairs of Bugun *Liocichla* seen in May 2006. All the other sightings, except the one near Bompou (27°04'32"N 92°24'07.6"E, 2,060 m. a.s.l.) have also been in this area.

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Table 1. Principal morphological differences between *L. omeiensis* and *L. bugunorum*

Morphological part	<i>L. omeiensis</i>	<i>L. bugunorum</i>
Crown	Grey	Black
Forehead	Bright brown	black
Crescent behind ear coverts	Reddish-brown	Bright olive
Eye markings	Pale-yellow broken eyering	Two separate prominent spots – a large triangular orangish-yellow loreal spot and a bright yellow post-ocular streak.
Breast	Neutral grey	Bright yellow-olive
Underside of tail – “male”	Just a hint of reddish	Bright orange-red
Outer tail, below – “male”	prominent yellow tips	Concolorous with rest of feather
Underside of tail “female”	1. grey with just a hint of olive 2. Broad white tips	1. olive with a strong shade of copper 2. narrow yellow tips
Uppertail	Olive with black bars	Mostly black with indistinct darker bars
Red tip to tail	Not on outer feathers	On all feathers
Total length	205 mm	approx. 220 mm
Bill from skull	17 mm	14 mm
Tarsus	30 mm	32 mm
Wing (curved)	77 mm	85 mm
tail	85 mm	95 mm

Nigel Collar provided the measurements (except total length, which was obtained from BirdLife International 2006) and photographs of two specimens of *L. omeiensis* in the Natural History Museum, Tring, U.K. The *L. omeiensis* plumage description is based on these photos and on MacKinnon & Phillipps (2000). It may be noted that the measurements are based on just one individual of each species.

The Bugun Liocichla was discovered during the field visits of the Eaglenest Biodiversity Project. Ramana Athreya initiated this project in November 2003 to improve the long-term conservation prospects of Eaglenest wildlife sanctuary. The three principle components of the conservation strategy include (i) documenting the flora and fauna (ii) identifying the factors which can affect their long-term survival and (ii) co-opting the local communities (Bugun and Sherdukpen tribes) in the conservation effort. The last component necessarily involves understanding the socio-economic needs of the two communities, their dependence on forest resources and identifying alternatives to non-sustainable exploitation of such resources. Generating employment and community revenue from ecotourism has so far been the focus of the community initiative.

The first phase of the project was completed recently and the targets achieved (to a greater or lesser extent) included basic inventories of some of the fauna of Eaglenest, demonstrating the ecotourism potential and convincing the local communities that conservation of Eaglenest can yield economic benefits. In the coming years the project will continue to carry out faunal inventories and community-organised ecotours, while expanding into nature/conservation education, understanding and reducing the dependence of the communities on forest resources and employment of local people in forest protection roles in partnership with the Forest Department.

Participation in the project is open to anyone with time, skill, resources and motivation. In fact, so little is known of the biodiversity of the area that skill is not a critical requirement – even people with minimal skills can contribute significantly towards the project goals.

Professional and amateur ornithologists may be interested in the Vacations-for-Conservation programme being organised as part of this project. Under this scheme, the project organises non-profit vacations in Eaglenest for naturalists. In return, the participants are expected to help with the faunal documentation. The participants get an opportunity to enjoy an inexpensive, organised vacation with experienced co-coordinators in a spectacular wilderness. The project gains human resources at no extra cost for the documentation work. The activity generates local employment and the local communities earn some revenue as a whole.

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