



Sri Lanka Woodpigeon (all photos by D.Farrow unless otherwise stated)

SOUTHERN INDIA and SRI LANKA

(WITH ANDAMANS ISLANDS EXTENSION)

25 OCTOBER – 19 NOVEMBER 2016

LEADER: DAVE FARROW

This years' tour to Southern India and Sri Lanka was once again a very successful and enjoyable affair. A wonderful suite of endemics were seen, beginning with our extension to the Andaman Islands where we were able to find 20 of the 21 endemics, with Andaman Scops and Walden's Scops Owls, Andaman and Hume's Hawk Owls leading the way, Andaman Woodpigeon and Andaman Cuckoo Dove, good looks at

Andaman Crake, plus all the others with the title 'Andaman' (with the exception of the Barn Owl) and a rich suite of other birds such as Ruddy Kingfisher, Oriental Pratincole, Long-toed Stint, Long-tailed Parakeets and Mangrove Whistler. In Southern India we birded our way from the Nilgiri Hills to the lowland forest of Kerala finding Painted and Jungle Bush Quail, Jungle Nightjar, White-naped and Heart-spotted Woodpeckers, Malabar Flameback, Malabar Trogons, Malabar Barbet, Blue-winged Parakeet, Grey-fronted Green Pigeons, Nilgiri Woodpigeon, Indian Pitta (with ten seen on the tour overall), Jerdon's Bushlarks, Malabar Larks, Malabar Woodshrike and Malabar Whistling Thrush, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Black-and-Orange, Nilgiri, Brown-breasted and Rusty-tailed Flycatchers, Nilgiri and White-bellied Blue Robin, Black-chinned and Kerala Laughingthrushes, Dark-fronted Babblers, Indian Rufous Babblers, Western Crowned Warbler, Indian Yellow Tit, Indian Blackbird, Hill Swallow, Nilgiri Pipit, White-bellied Minivet, the scarce Yellow-throated and Grey-headed Bulbuls, Flame-throated and Yellow-browed Bulbuls, Nilgiri Flowerpecker, Loten's Sunbird, Black-throated Munias and the stunning endemic White-bellied Treepie. We also found a mighty Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, Brown Fish Owls, Brown Wood Owl, Oriental Scops Owl and Brown Hawk Owls. Skipping across the straits to Sri Lanka we had a fine time seeing all of the endemics, some of the highlights being Serendib Scops Owl, Crimson-backed and the newly-split Red-backed Flameback, Green-billed Coucals, Chestnut-backed Owlet, Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Sri Lanka Woodpigeons, Brown-capped Babbler, Spot-winged Ground Thrush, mixed flocks at Sinharaja containing Ashy-headed Laughingthrushes, Red-faced Malkohas and Sri Lanka Scimitar Babblers, the super stealthy Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush, Sri Lanka Blue Magpies, the scarce White-faced Starling, Yellow-eared Bulbul, and Ceylon Whistling Thrush. We also saw Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Yellow-wattled Lapwings, Small Pratincoles, Great Thick-knees, Malabar Pied Hornbills, Grey-bellied and Jacobin Cuckoo, Blue-faced and Sirkeer Malkohas, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Jerdon's Leafbird, Kashmir Flycatcher, Jungle Prinia, Blyth's Pipits, Forest Wagtails, Black-throated Munias, and the nightbird theme continued with Ceylon Frogmouths both at roost and by night, Indian and Jerdon's Nightjars, Jungle Owlet, Indian Scops Owls, Brown Fish Owls and Brown Wood Owl, in fact there were so many Owls on this tour (almost all by day) that we ended up with an incredible 41 individual Owls of 14 species!



Andaman Hawk Owl



Andaman Treepie

Once we had assembled in Chennai airport for our Andamans extension, we took a two-hour flight to Port Blair, and once formalities had been completed (in great detail!) we headed to our hotel where on arrival we were greeted by our first endemic, Andaman Coucal, in a large tree over the hotel driveway. We were eager to get started on forest birding, and headed out to the south end of the island. An Andaman Drongo appeared, as did Scarlet Minivet and Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, then as the sun was slipping away we moved to a spot where we hoped to find Andaman Nightjar. As the Andaman Islands are still on Delhi time, it gets dark early, which means there is plenty of time for nightbirding before dinner! The Nightjars didn't show but we had a good look at an Andaman Hawk Owl, followed soon after by a Walden's Scops Owl. A little further down the road we found another Andaman Hawk Owl perched at head height at the roadside, then at least four Hume's Hawk Owls showed really well at the forest edge.

Back to the forests of Chiriyatappu in the early morning, our first stop was for White-headed Starlings, plus Blue-tailed Bee-eater and an Oriental Dollarbird. The forest livened up as it warmed up, and we began finding endemics such as Andaman Shama, Andaman Bulbul, more Andaman Drongos, Andaman Treepie, and some furtive Andaman Green Pigeons together with Green Imperial Pigeons in a fruiting tree. We saw Andaman Serpent Eagle, Andaman Cuckoo Dove, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Andaman Flowerpecker, Small and Scarlet Minivets, and noisy juvenile Changeable Hawk Eagles. In the afternoon we crossed the narrow bay on a roll-on roll-off ferry, and headed up the forested peak of Mount Harriet. After some persistence we tracked down a pair of Andaman Cuckooshrikes, and Andaman Woodpecker with its floppy red crest. Forest and Grey Wagtails skipped along the track, yet despite hearing Andaman Scops Owl, plus Andaman Hawk Owl and Walden's Scops Owl, we saw no Owls whatsoever and headed home on a late ferry.

This morning we took the long route around the bay, stopping at various wetlands en route, the final wetland being the one with a pair of much wanted Andaman Teal. Also here were Long-toed and Temminck's Stints, Wood, Marsh and Common Sandpipers, Little Ringed and Lesser Sand Plovers, Common Snipe, Common Redshank, Watercock, plus Oriental Reed and Dusky Warblers. We pressed on to Jirkatang where we walked along a rather busy road through some lovely forest, and diverted into the undergrowth when we heard some low grunting noises coming from an Andaman Crake. After teasing us with some very weird vocalisations, we were treated to an exceptional view as one came walking slowly past us, grunting and flicking its tail as it did so. Other birds seen were Scarlet and Small Minivets, the ubiquitous Andaman Drongo, and a brief glimpse of a Forest Wagtail before the building heat slowed everything down. Later in the day we returned to Chiriyatappu once more, where activity remained muted however we glimpsed an Andaman Cuckoo Dove and an Asian Brown Flycatcher, while the Green Imperial Pigeons kept up their growling from the treetops. At the forest edge we saw a tree full of Andaman Treepies, many Brown-throated Needletails, Alexandrine Parakeets flying to roost and the noisy Changeable Hawk Eagles. At dusk, as we waited for the night to fall, a Nicobar Pigeon flashed past (if you looking in the right direction!) and a hepatic Lesser Cuckoo appeared close by. We tried again for Andaman Nightjar, and soon one began calling and then gave us some great views as it perched repeatedly on the same branch. Following this we tried to find some Andaman Scops Owls that were calling vigorously from within the dark jungle, and eventually we managed to see one sat on a branch. Phew!



Andaman Woodpecker

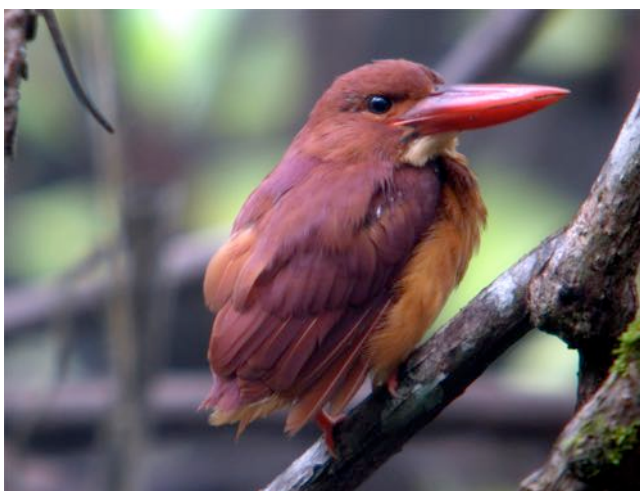


Andaman Teal

We took the dawn ferry across to Bamboo Flats the next morning, and were just in time to see the Glossy Swiftlets leaving their roost beneath the jetties at a rate of 150 per minute! We drove the relatively short distance to Ferrargunj and began birding along the road through magnificent forest. We managed to find a pair of Andaman Woodpeckers, Freckle-breasted Woodpecker, several Two-barred Greenish Warblers, Dusky Warbler, Taiga and Asian Brown Flycatcher, and a suite of endemic forest birds such as Andaman Treepie and Drongos, and numerous Scarlet and Small Minivets and Green Imperial Pigeons, plus a few Emerald Doves zipping back and forth. In the afternoon we made a leisurely survey of some of the wetlands around the bay, finding numerous shorebirds that included an Oriental Pratincole, many Lesser Sand and a couple of Greater Sandpipers, Long-toed Stints, Marsh Sandpiper, Eurasian Curlew, Whimbrel, Pin-tailed

Snipe and a Bar-tailed Godwit. There were many Pacific Golden Plovers, Common Redshank, and many of the local dusky looking Striated Herons. We found Grey-headed Swamphens and had a good look at Slaty-breasted Rail, and at last light we found a Mangrove Whistler. No joy at a city site for the Andaman Barn Owl, just a few Flying Foxes sweeping overhead to confuse us.

We returned to the south end of the island the next day, spending the morning scouring the humid forests for the outstanding endemic, the Andaman Woodpigeon. We found a tree full of Andaman Green Pigeons, three Andaman Serpent Eagles soaring together, a male Violet Cuckoo, and a perched Crested Serpent Eagle of the race *davisoni*. In the afternoon we returned, stopping along the way and scanning the shores at low tide, and returning to the forests in the late afternoon. We were surprised to find a big flock of Andaman Cuckoo Doves feeding in fruiting trees, with 28 counted. Continuing with low expectations as the light faded from the sky, it was a thrill when we found two Andaman Wood Pigeons in a huge tree together with Green Imperial Pigeons. Phew! Our final 'day' endemic seen, that just left one more to see, the Andaman Barn Owl. We tried for that once more nearby at a known site, but without success. Nevertheless we had scored 20 of the 21 endemics, a very respectable score indeed.



Ruddy Kingfisher



Stork-billed Kingfisher

At dawn on our last morning we crossed the bay to Bamboo Flats on the now familiar ferry, together with the ladies loaded with bowls of fish, and once more counted the Glossy Swiftlets leaving their roosts (600 per minute this morning!). We explored some quiet patches of forest near Mount Harriet where we had a great look at an Andaman Crake, Orange-headed Thrush, and a Ruddy Kingfisher sitting quietly in the mangroves. The butterflies here were striking with Andaman Tree Nymphs, gorgeous Common Birdwings, and many of the big Clippers, and a final bird flock produced Andaman Woodpecker, Andaman Cuckooshrike and Andaman Treepies. We headed back across to Port Blair and packed our bags, and began our journey to the next part of the tour, saying fond farewells to our guide Vikram and driver Gopal who had worked very hard on our behalf. We flew to Chennai, and then to Bangalore, and were met by our new guide, Sattesh (or S.K.) our guide for the next part, and headed to a hotel for the night.

The extension finished, we began our main tour with an early drive across Bangalore, with our first birding not far from the city at a scenic rocky outcrop crowned by a small temple. We found Blue-faced Malkoha, Red Avadavat, and before long, our target of the scarce Yellow-throated Bulbul, with at least three pairs seen. Also here were Egyptian Vulture, Green Bee-eater, Pale-billed Flowerpecker and Purple-rumped Sunbirds. We continued our journey, stopping for a tasty brunch of masala dosa and vadha, and on roadside ponds we saw Spot-billed Pelicans, Glossy and Black-headed Ibis, Indian Cormorant and Red-naped Ibis sat on the tops of roadside pylons. We drove slowly through Bandipur and Mudumalai National Parks, with Asian Elephants grazing at the roadsides along with Chital, Wild Boar and some Indian Peafowls. Reaching the Jungle Hut we went out for a walk with the local guide, and found a gorgeous Indian Pitta feeding calmly in front of us, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Plum-headed Parakeets, Greenish Warbler, a Brown Fish Owl, and after dark we had some very close views of a Jungle Nightjar sat on a rock. A fine start to our main tour.

The next morning we went on bus safari around the lanes through the scrub jungle of Mudumalai N.P., as we were not allowed to walk in the area, it being designated as a Tiger Reserve. Our local guide however knew all the good places and we had a very successful morning. We began with an impressive White-naped Woodpecker, and found a tree full of Nilgiri Wood pigeons that showed really well, saw Grey-capped Green Pigeon, Booted Warbler, White-browed Fantail, Common Woodshrike, a lovely group of Jungle Bush Quail, Grey Junglefowl, and an impressive group of Gaur at the roadside. Around a small temple we were allowed to get down and walk into the scrub, where we found a male White-bellied Minivet at fairly close range. Near our hotel we found Indian Scimitar Babbler, Puff-throated Babbler and Brown-breasted Flycatcher, another Indian Pitta, and a Golden Tree Snake in one of our rooms - a flying snake that must have *flown* into the room that was raised on stilts! In the afternoon we found Malabar Lark and Jerdon's Bushlark, Rosy Starling, Yellow-wattled Lapwing and Crested Hawk Eagle, and we finished off with a Jerdon's Nightjar giving us a flypast at dusk.

Up on the slopes of the Nilgiri escarpment, we searched around some rather polluted paths and fields edges trying to find Painted Bush Quail. We glimpsed a covey of these delightful birds scurrying through the bushes, then found them trying to cross the track, pausing until the school run had finished before they scurried across, diving headlong into the next bit of cover. We headed back downhill to the environs of our hotel, where we were shown a roosting Brown Wood Owl, and around our camp we saw Indian Scops Owl, Malabar Whistling Thrush, Orange-headed Thrush, Western Crowned Warbler, Spotted Owlet, Brown-breasted Flycatcher and Nilgiri Flowerpecker. Then the time came to leave this idyllic place (with its most excellent cuisine) and head up the winding Sigur Ghat road with its 36 hairpin bends, to Ooty, the hill station sat high in the hills. We spent the afternoon in the curious environment of Doddabetta Peak (2637m) and its hordes of local sightseers, where Nilgiri Laughingthrushes and Indian Blackbirds fed within inches of the path. We also glimpsed a Black-and-Orange Flycatcher, saw Greenish and Tickell's Warblers, Oriental White-eyes and Grey-headed Canary Flycatchers, and some more Nilgiri Wood pigeons.



Cinereous Tit

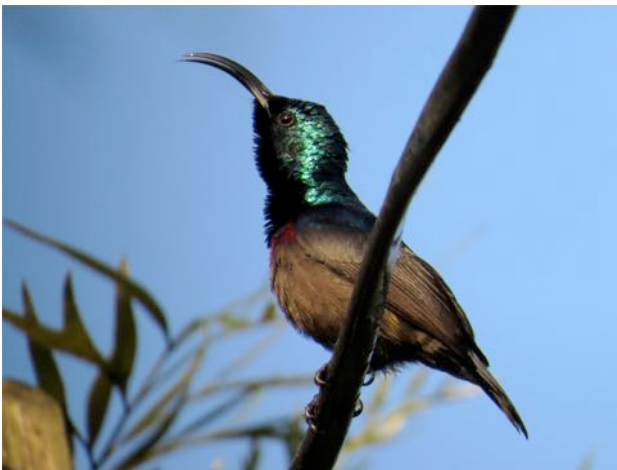


Black-and Orange Flycatcher (D. Williamson)

We began our birding in the hotel garden (actually just the rough hedge by the car park) where a Nilgiri Blue Robin was singing, and he eventually gave himself up for some nice views. We also saw our only White-spotted Fantail here, plus another Booted Warbler. We then proceeded to our main birding site for the morning, a scrappy bit of secondary growth under eucalyptus where we saw Black-and-Orange Flycatchers, Large-billed Leaf Warblers, Indian Yellow Tit and some gorgeous Indian Giant Squirrels, and our first Nilgiri Langur that sat nearby unconcerned by us. The habitat is going ever further downhill and we found little else, and after lunch at our hotel we headed onwards. Some winding roads took us down to Coimbatore, and brief stops produced a Yellow-browed Bulbul, Blue-capped Rock Thrush and Orange Minivet, a Common Hawk Cuckoo, Grey-headed Swamphen and Oriental Darter. Just here as a convenient (and very comfortable) night stop, we left early and headed towards Munnar. We paused for a very fine South Indian breakfast en route (yes, more masala dosa please), while various roadside birding stops yielded Grey Francolin, Large

Grey Babblers and Brown-throated Needletails. We then headed on to the Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, just across the border into Kerala, and here we set off for a walk with a couple of rangers. They led us along a jungle river lined with large trees, and showed us a roosting Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, its huge form sat among a bushy thicket high in a tree. Awesome. Also here we saw Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Brown-breasted Flycatcher, and a roosting Brown Fish Owl. Back on the bus, we pressed onwards and uphill, pausing at 1850m where we found Kerala Laughingthrush and White-bellied Blue Robin, just as rain came in. Another stop closer to Munnar produced a nice pair of Malabar Flameback, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Black-and-Orange Flycatcher and some Nilgiri Flycatchers, before we reached our lodgings in this hill town set among the tea estates.

In order to visit Eravikulam National Park, one must ride up a narrow road in National Park buses along with all the other visitors. Despite our best efforts we weren't to be the first on the scene, and visitors are only allowed to walk along the road at the top where a few Nilgiri Tahr grazed on the slopes, easy to find unlike our target of Nilgiri Pipit. We eventually found a bird perched up on a distant rock, but clearly the huge volume of visitors pouring up and down the track has had an effect on their formerly confiding behaviour. We also saw Hill Swallow and Kerala Laughingthrush, a Eurasian Sparrowhawk male that dived after some Oriental White-eyes, and some distant Nilgiri Langurs. Back by the bus stop we had some great views of a White-bellied Blue Robin, before we headed back downhill on the National Park bus. A brief stop on the way back to town produced a Nilgiri Flycatcher and some great views of Kerala Laughingthrush, and in the afternoon we made a trek up through the tea plantations to access a grassy ridge. We couldn't find any Pipits or Grassbirds, however we did have a great look at a Stripe-necked Mongoose among the tea bushes, plus an Indian Muntjac, Alpine and Little Swifts, and a covey of Painted Bush Quails that flushed in front of us, one showing well as it scuttled down the path.



Loten's Sunbird



Birdquesters scanning the hillsides

This morning we travelled south towards Periyar Tiger Reserve, with a pause in the high country to search some rocky and grassy hillsides. We found a showy Indian Rufous Babbler feeding atop some tea bushes, and Hill Swallows and Dusky Crag Martins swooped low over the boggy plateau. In the air we saw both Himalayan and Steppe Buzzards, and a Pallid Harrier that stooped on a Kestrel. We reached our destination at lunchtime, checked into our comfortable hotel and then set off with a ranger into the forest. We found a Red Spurfowl that played hard to get, Jungle Owlets of the *malabaricum* race, and a roosting Oriental Scops Owl. We also saw our first elegant White-bellied Treepies, a rather tame Malabar Grey Hornbill and a roosting Oriental Scops Owl. We crept through denser margins, finding a male White-bellied Blue Flycatcher, along with some confiding Greater Racket tailed Drongos that were catching some emerging Termites. This hatch turned into an orgy of feeding, with birds coming in from every direction, with Bronzed Drongo, Asian Fairy Bluebird, a juvenile Jacobin Cuckoo, many Southern Hill Myna, Malabar Starlings, White-cheeked Barbets, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Black-rumped Flamebacks, Rufous Woodpecker, White-bellied and Rufous Treepies. As the day grew to a close, we saw a fine male Malabar Trogon, and Malabar Grey Hornbills that were catching termites in mid-air! On our way back we found a Brown Hawk Owl, and hundreds of Indian Flying Fox that were leaving their roosts.

The next morning we headed back to the forests, starting with good views of Loten's Sunbird and Malabar Barbets, Malabar Starlings and Parakeets all sitting up in the morning sun for a preen. We found Dark-fronted Babblers, Little Spiderhunter, Malabar Woodshrikes, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, Malabar Whistling Thrush and Malabar Trogon, and best of all, Nilgiri Marten that scampered across the path next to us, a rare animal and a lifer for all. We saw a small herd of Gaur at rather close quarters, and also had to make an detour in the forest when our local ranger reported that a herd of Elephants had been spotted nearby. Once we were sure they were heading away from us, we were able to scuttle past rather nervously! Another Brown Fish Owl and Malabar Trogon were seen, but little other activity in the afternoon

The next morning we chose to dodge any further encounters with herds of Elephants, and spent a couple of hours birding in the lakeside forest where we found Mountain Imperial Pigeon, Malabar Grey Hornbill, more White-cheeked and Malabar Barbets, Woolly-necked Storks, Malabar Starlings and Black-hooded Oriole, before it was time to head on our way. At a roadside stop we found a much-needed Grey-headed Bulbul that was perched right by where the bus had stopped. Further explorations found Yellow-browed (a lifer for Sattesh) and Large-billed Leaf Warblers, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta and Indian Golden Oriole. We continued our ongoing search for Grassbirds on a grassy hillside, saw Jacobin Cuckoo and flushed some more Painted Bush Quails, but no Grassbirds were active. Further along the roads we found a Booted Eagle and Pallid Harrier, then day was slipped by and made our way to Cochin for our last night in India.



Blue-winged Parakeet



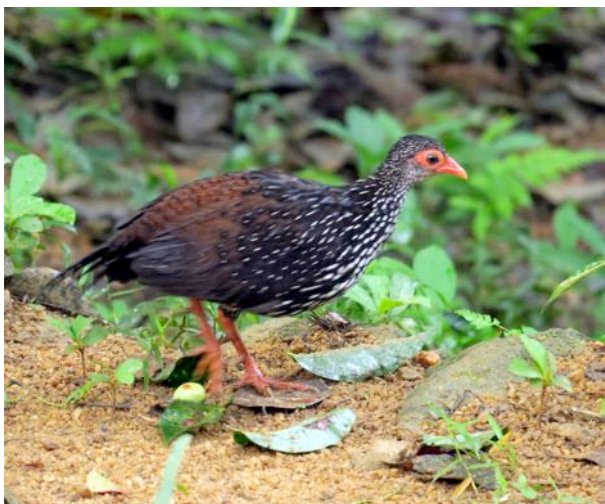
Malabar Trogon

Greeted by the news the following morning that there was a transport strike, we made a quick getaway across town to the airport. Also this morning we discovered (at the same time as another one billion people) that the Indian government had withdrawn all 500 and 1000 rupee notes as legal tender. Time to leave this chaos! We flew to Colombo in Sri Lanka, and were greeted to this altogether calmer world by Perry our host and Chaminda our guide, or 'Chammy' as he is known. Chammy was doing the driving this year, and we slowly wove our way along the hill roads to reach Kitulgala, stopping en route to view our first Sri Lankan endemics in the form of Layard's Parakeet and Black-headed Bulbul. Once we had checked in at the hotel, we headed up a nearby slope to view the edge of a rubber plantation where a few trees stood overlooking a fairly unbecoming landscape. Here we saw Legge's Flowerpecker, Sri Lanka Swallow, Crimson-throated and Yellow-fronted Barbet, the newly-split Red-backed Flameback, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Barred Buttonquail, Black-hooded Oriole, Small Minivet and Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike. Not a bad start to our Sri Lankan holiday!

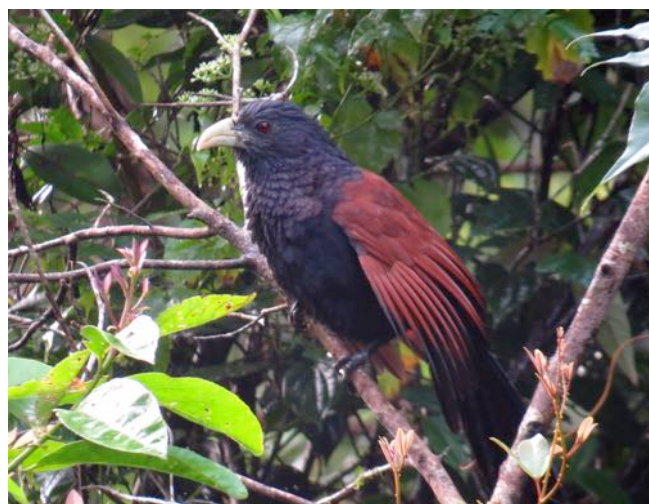
At dawn among the cultivations along the banks of the Kelani River, our first bird was a Spot-winged Thrush, followed shortly after by Orange-billed Babblers. We found a pair of Brown-capped Babblers, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrots, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon and Green Imperial Pigeon, and after much searching we found a splendid Chestnut-backed Owlet. After breakfast we crossed the river, and climbed up into the Makandawa forest. We found Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Drongo and

Scimitar Babbler, and a Legge's Hawk Eagle flew overhead. We paused by a paddyfield while Chammy went searching the forest, re-emerging from the forest after 90 minutes with a thumbs-up, and he was able to show us a roosting Serendib Scops Owl that was sat in an almost impossible place. After we had spent a while watching this great bird, we noticed that there was a second bird just behind it! What a thrill! After a pause for lunch, further birding in the afternoon produced a Green-billed Coucal and we heard Slaty-legged Crake. More than half the endemics seen, after just a day and a half in country!

The next morning we explored a small patch of forest on a hillside near the town, and found a responsive Chestnut-backed Owlet, and we duelled with Sri Lanka Spurfowl though just one of us had a glimpse. A Barred Buttonquail ran down the road in front of our van, and we saw a juvenile Indian Cuckoo. We then made the slow and winding journey towards Sinharaja, arriving in time to find Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Asian Brown and Brown-breasted Flycatchers, but heavy rain for two hours in the afternoon slowed us down somewhat. We did find our first Sri Lanka White-eyes, had close views of a fine Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, plus Legge's Flowerpecker, Green Imperial Pigeon and a very tame Ruddy Mongoose.



Sri Lanka Spurfowl (D. Williamson)



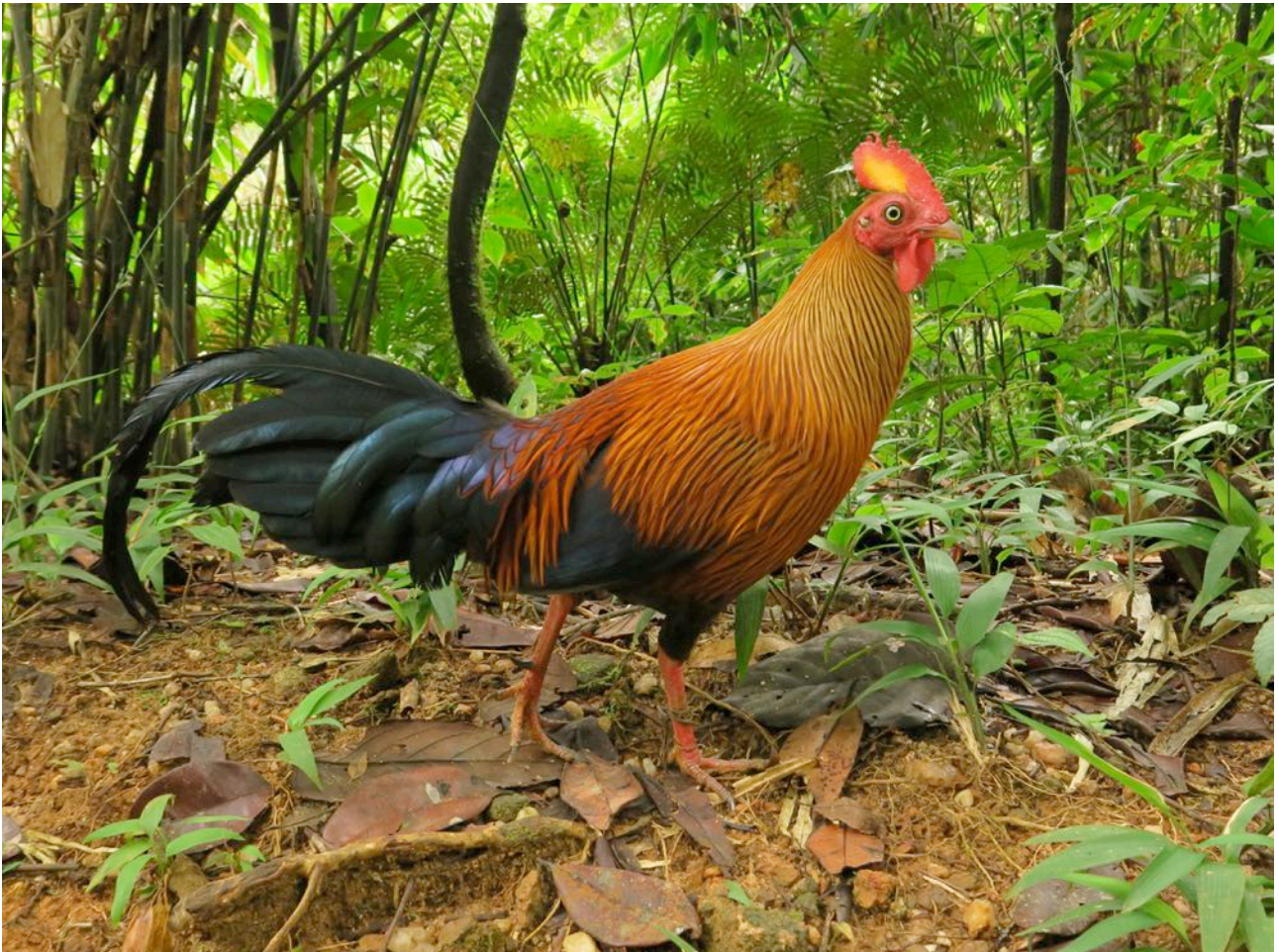
Green-billed Coucal

The following day we began early, hearing the curious screams of Sri Lanka Frogmouth as we waited for dawn. We huddled around a window in the kitchen of an isolated house in the forest, looking out onto the yard where Emerald Doves, Sri Lanka Junglefowls, Indian Blue Robin and Spot-winged Thrushes fed in the open. A Green-billed Coucal also popped in for a visit, but alas no Spurfowl for us today. Nearby we saw Sri Lanka Blue Magpies, Dark-fronted Babbler and Crimson-backed Flameback, then bumped our way along the track in an ancient jeep and headed up to the Sinharaja reserve. We walked the trails, encountering two or three busy bird flocks and eventually extracting our target birds such as the mighty Red-faced Malkoha, Ashy-headed Laughingthrush, the decidedly unsociable White-faced Starling, and a supporting cast of Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Orange-billed Babbler, Sri Lanka Drongo, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Legge's Flowerpecker, and Orange Minivet. We reached the damp forest at the far end where our hot-shot guide Chammy was able to find a fine Sri Lanka Thrush, super stealthy, and so camouflaged it confuses the eye just to look at it! Later in the afternoon we started walking downhill out of the reserve, finding Sri Lanka Grey Hornbills and a couple of flyover Sri Lanka Mynas, and heard another two Slaty-legged Crakes before the rain came down and put an end to the day.

We set off again in the pre-dawn darkness, and checked several places for Sri Lanka Bay Owl to no avail. We positioned ourselves at 'Spurfowl House' at first light, and began our vigil. Spot-winged Thrushes and Emerald Doves littered the bare ground, along with Indian Blue Robin and Sri Lanka Junglefowl. After an hour suddenly a pair of Sri Lanka Spurfowl appeared, running in to feed on the bare ground behind the house. Best views ever! Further birding produced Sri Lanka Blue Magpies in palm trees, a showy calling Green-billed Coucal, meanwhile Chammy was diving in and out of the bushes in search of roosting Frogmouths. We again drove up to the Rainforest reserve, where we found some tame Sri Lanka Junglefowls, another Red-faced Malkoha and more Orange-billed Babbler. Our local tracker whistled to us

from the bushes, and we went off-trail through the dense wet jungle to where he had located a pair of Sri Lanka Frogmouths, sat roosting in a dense bush. Smiles all around, we watched them for a while before heading back down the hill. In the afternoon we found Sri Lanka Myna showing well by our lodgings, Black-throated Munia, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Brown-breasted Flycatcher, and along a rough ditch behind the kitchen we had some great views of a Slaty-legged Crake that lurked around under the bushes, pausing in a gap to have a preen. Late afternoon rain slowed things down, but the evening was clear, and we headed out under the glare of a full 'super moon', unsuccessfully looking for Owls, however we had superb views of two Sri Lanka Frogmouths.

A leisurely start to the days' birding produced Indian Pitta, Crested Hawk Eagle, Sri Lanka Swallow and Brown-breasted Flycatcher, plus a second showing by the Slaty-legged Crake. We set off eastwards for our next destination, en route seeing Legge's Hawk Eagle, Crested Serpent and Black Eagles, and arrived at our hotel in Embilipitiya situated on the shores of Chandrika Wewa Lake that held numerous Spot-billed Pelicans, Whiskered Terns, and a Common Greenshank. We headed down to Uda Walawa where we did some birding in open country finding Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, White-breasted Sea Eagle, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark, Pin-tailed Snipe and Jungle Prinia before the heavens opened once again to truncate our afternoon birding.



Sri Lanka Junglefowl – photo by Dave Williamson

This morning we had a superb jeep safari around Uda Walawa National Park, which was busy with birds from the very start, perhaps enhanced by the recent rains. The Asian Elephants that most visitors come here to see were readily available near the entrance gate, and we headed deeper into the park where it was quieter finding Blyth's Pipits, Jerdon's Bushlarks, Tricoloured Munia, Yellow-eyed and Tawny-bellied Babblers, Jacobin, Grey-bellied and Indian Cuckoos, Crested Hawk and Crested Serpent Eagles, fantastic displaying Indian Peafowl, abundant Blue-faced Malkohas, a couple of Sirkeer Malkohas, Malabar Pied Hornbills, Yellow-wattled Lapwings, a Forest Wagtail, Indian Pitta, Jungle and Grey-breasted Prinias, Rosy

Starlings, and Orange-breasted Green Pigeon. In addition we saw Golden Jackal, many Land Monitors and Rapacious Flangetail (a dragonfly!) At midday we drove to Bundala National Park, which was also alive with birds. On the pools and salt pans we found Little Stints, Curlew, Marsh and Broad-billed Sandpipers, Black-tailed Godwits, Little Ringed, Common Ringed, Kentish, Grey and Lesser Sand Plovers, Red-necked Phalaropes, Great Knot, Small Pratincole, Great Thick-knee, Ruddy Turnstone, Whiskered, Gull-billed, Common, White-winged, Caspian and Lesser Crested Terns, Oriental Skylark, Indian Reed Warbler, Black Bittern, Lesser Whistling Duck, Northern Pintail, Barred Buttonquail, Booted Eagle, a Eurasian Wryneck (a lifer for Chammy!), a great family group of Asian Elephants with babies, Black-naped Hare and Tufted Grey Langurs. At dusk we found a perched male Jerdon's Nightjar, and several Indian Nightjars, one of which sat on the ground for a good view.

Before breakfast we explored the environs of Tissa with its complex of freshwater habitats. We saw Yellow and Black Bitterns, a large number of Indian Stone-Curlew, had some great views of a trio of White-naped Woodpeckers moving between fence posts and palm trees, Pheasant-tailed Jacanas, Cotton Teal, Tricoloured Munia, Streaked and Baya Weavers, Tawny-bellied Babblers, Pin-tailed Snipe, Black-tailed Godwits in their hundreds, a pair of Jungle Owlets and a pair of Brown Fish Owls. After checking out we drove up in to the mountains, visiting an old overgrown tea estate where we quickly found some Sri Lanka Wood pigeons, a pair of roosting Brown Wood Owls, a pair of Crimson-backed Flamebacks and a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher. We headed onwards towards the mountain town of Nuwara Eliya, and spent the last hours of the afternoon waiting under the shelter of a corrugated hut, where we saw our first of the superb-looking Yellow-eared Bulbul, and when it was almost dark we had a silhouette view of a Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush. The rain persisted, as we made our way to our hotel.

We headed up in the dark to Horton Plains National Park, and spent a morning trying to find birds in the cold foggy rainy conditions! We managed to find a couple of Sri Lanka Bush Warblers, a single Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Dark-fronted Babbler, Yellow-eared Babbler, had another silhouette view of Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush, and several Sambhar. It was a quiet morning but a perched Sri Lanka Woodpigeon posed well for us to round it off. The rain continued all day, so we walked around Victoria Park holding umbrellas. We eventually found three male Pied Thrushes feeding along the stream, plus a female that was rather shyer. What a belter! A Kashmir Flycatcher showed briefly, before the light faded for the day.



Brown Wood Owl



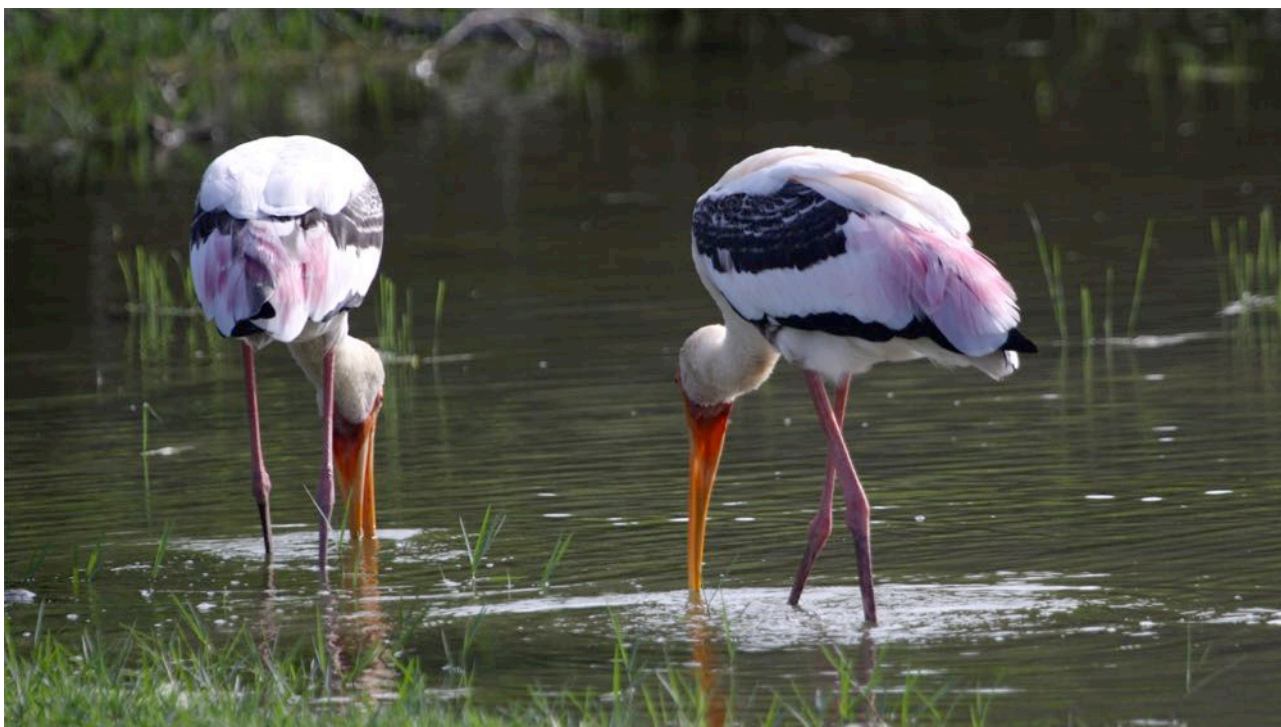
Pied Thrush

The next day we started at dawn, hoping the Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush would appear as it left the roost, but to no avail. At Victoria Park we tracked down a Kashmir Flycatcher, and had a great look at a male Pied Thrush feeding on a muddy shore of the creek. At a third site we found more Kashmir Flycatchers, before returning to pack up and move on. We made a stop at a tea factory en route to Kandy, and reaching the city we had the shock of being snarled up in city traffic. We headed to the Udawattakale forest for an afternoon of revisiting some of the previously enjoyed endemics, finding Brown-capped Babbler, Crimson-throated Barbet, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, had flight views of two Brown Fish Owls (to take the Owl total to 39 birds!)

and saw some gorgeous Indian Paradise Flycatchers. We headed home in the rain, to our hotel poised on a slope above the town.

We woke the next morning to torrential rain, happy to have done our birding here the previous afternoon. After a leisurely breakfast, we headed to the Temple of the Tooth, where the ancient relic of Buddha's wisdom tooth is kept. We timed it so that we had a guided tour around the halls and chapels once, and then went round again for the 0930 ceremony, when the tooth cupboard is opened for just 15 minutes for viewing by the public. A very peaceful experience, a good way to end our trip, and well worth the visit despite our obsessive birding tendencies! After this it was time to begin our journey towards the coast, with a final lunch en route, and a final birding stop at a small marsh near the airport where we were surprised to have brief looks at a juvenile Baillon's Crake, and then Ruddy-breasted Crake, to take our total species list to a record 406. We also saw Yellow and Black Bitterns, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Lesser Adjutant and Tricoloured Munia. We finished up at the Airport Garden Hotel for a last shower before travelling, and a brief foray into the garden produced a pair of Brown Hawk Owls, just to make it 41 Owls for the trip!

And so ended our three-part odyssey across South Asia, rich in endemic birds, in some great landscapes, all fuelled by some excellent cuisine. Its a real pleasure to travel in this part of the world, and special thanks should go to Vikram in Port Blair, Sattesh in Kerala and Chammy in Sri Lanka for making this such a great trip.



Painted Storks



White-naped Woodpecker male

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO)

Species which were not personally recorded by the leaders are indicated by the symbol (NL)

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* Not uncommon on wetlands on South Andaman and on Sri Lanka.

Cotton Pygmy Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* Seen on South Andaman and at Debera Wewa near Tissa.

Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* A handful seen on wetlands near Mysore were the only ones.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* A few seen near Mysore, also at Bundala.

Andaman Teal ◊ *Anas albogularis* Just a pair seen on South Andaman.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* A large flock seen at Bundala.

Grey Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus* Just a few, seen in Tamil Nadu.

Jungle Bush Quail ◊ *Perdicula asiatica* Great views of a small party of these at Mudumalai.

Painted Bush Quail ◊ *Perdica erythrorhyncha* A good look at a group in fields near Ooty, also seen at Munnar.
Red Spurfowl ◊ *Galloperdix spadicea* A single bird showed briefly at Periyar.
Sri Lanka Spurfowl ◊ *Galloperdix bicalcarata* Stunningly close and long looks at a pair at Sinharaja.
Grey Junglefowl ◊ *Gallus sonneratii* Seen regularly in small numbers in South India
Sri Lanka Junglefowl ◊ *Gallus lafayettii* Some endearing close encounters with these on Sri Lanka.
Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* Plenty in full glory at Uda Walawa and other sites, also some in South India.
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* A few seen on South Andaman and a couple of Sri Lanka.



Painted Bush Quail



Jungle Bush Quail

Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* Some lovely examples in on Sri Lankan wetlands.
Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans* A few seen on Sri Lanka.
Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* A couple at Periyar, a few more seen on Sri Lankan wetlands.
Lesser Adjutant ◊ *Leptoptilos javanicus* A total of five seen on Sri Lanka.
Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* A few seen near Bangalore, others on Sri Lankan wetlands.
Red-naped Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa* A good 20+ seen along our way from Bangalore to Jungle Hut.
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* A few seen on wetlands near Mysore, a good number seen at Tissa.
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* A couple seen at Bundala.
Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* Three at Tissa, another three near Colombo.
Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* A single at Tissa, four more seen on South Andaman.
Black Bittern ◊ *Dupetor flavicollis* A total of six individuals seen on Sri Lanka.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Quite a few around Sri Lankan wetlands.
Striated Heron *Butorides striata* Common on wetlands on South Andaman, race *spodiogaster*.
Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* Seen commonly throughout Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Sri Lanka.
Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* A couple seen on South Andaman.
Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Seen in good numbers throughout the tour.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* A few seen on Sri Lankan wetlands, also one at Cochin.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Quite a few seen on Sri Lanka, common at Tissa.
Great Egret *Ardea alba* Quite common in Sri Lanka and on South Andaman.
Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia* Seen throughout the tour in suitable habitats.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Like the above, rather common and widespread.
Pacific Reef Heron ◊ *Egretta sacra* Regularly seen along the coasts of South Andaman.
Spot-billed Pelican ◊ *Pelecanus philippensis* A handful seen near Mysore, more seen on the Sri Lankan wetlands.
Little Cormorant *Microcarbo niger* Seen often in Sri Lanka, and South India.
Indian Cormorant ◊ *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* A few seen near Mysore, more commonly on Sri Lanka.
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* Just a few seen along our route.
Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* A few singles in South India, more on the Sri Lankan wetlands.
Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* A single at Bundala.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* A few seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* One near Bangalore was the only sighting.
Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Singles on South Andaman and Periyar, several more in Sri Lanka.

White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis* (NL) One at Jungle Hut/Mudumalai.

Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus* One at Jungle Hut was a write-in though not unexpected.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* A couple of the race *davisoni* on South Andaman, others in S. India & SL.

Andaman Serpent Eagle ◊ *Spilornis elgini* Seen well if a little distantly, three soaring and calling at Chiriyatappu.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* A couple of singles, at Jungle Hut and Chinnar.



Crested Hawk Eagle



Changeable Hawk Eagle juvenile

Changeable Hawk Eagle *Nisaetus limnaetus* A noisy family obvious at Chiriyatappu.

Crested Hawk-Eagle ◊ *Nisaetus cirrhatus* A few singles along the way, then 20+ at Uda Walawa!

Legge's Hawk-Eagle ◊ *Nisaetus kelaarti* Some singles seen in flight at Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis* Regular sightings of birds in both South India and Sri Lanka.

Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus* A couple of singles, near Periyar and at Bundala.

Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciata* A distant bird seen near to Jungle Hut.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* A single perched bird at Sinharaja.

Shikra *Accipiter badius* Regular sightings in Sri Lanka, odd singles in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Besra *Accipiter virgatus* One briefly on South Andaman, another seen at Chinnar.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* A single at Munnar.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* A single at Bundala, another two seen in Kerala.

Black Kite *Milvus [migrans] govinda* Quite a few seen in Tamil Nadu, also at Cochin.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Not uncommon in Sri Lanka, a few in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* Numerous on South Andaman and in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Grey-headed Fish Eagle ◊ *Haliaeetus ichthyaetus* A couple seen at Uda Walawa.

Himalayan Buzzard ◊ *Buteo burmanicus* A few examples seen in the Western Ghats.

Common Buzzard *Buteo [buteo] vulpinus* At least one identified in Kerala, probably more present.

Andaman Crake ◊ *Rallina canningi* Some great views of two birds on South Andaman, with more present.

Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* A great view of one at our Sinharaja resort, several others heard.

Slaty-breasted Rail *Gallirallus striatus* A single bird on South Andaman, watched bathing in a creek.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Seen in small numbers throughout.

Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla* A juvenile seen briefly close to Colombo airport.

Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca* One seen briefly close to Colombo airport.

Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* Singles on South Andaman and at Uda Walawa.

Grey-headed Swampphen *Porphyrio poliocephalus* Seen on all three sections of the tour.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Seen here and there...

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* Odd birds seen along the way.

Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* A couple seen at Kitulgala, another at Bundala.

Indian Stone-curlew ◊ *Burhinus indicus* Many seen standing around by a wetland near Tissa.

Great Stone-curlew ◊ *Esacus recurvirostris* Five seen at Bundala on the salt pans.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Seen on the Sri Lankan wetlands.

Yellow-wattled Lapwing ◊ *Vanellus malabaricus* Seen near Jungle Hut, quite a few at Uda Walawa.

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus* A few in South India, more in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* Not uncommon in suitable habitat on South Andaman.
Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* A couple at Bundala.
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* Two seen at Bundala.
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* Seen on South Andaman, also at Periyar and Bundala.
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* A few seen at Bundala.
Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius [mongolus] atrifrons* Quite a few seen on South Andaman and at Bundala.
Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* A small number seen on South Andaman.



Yellow-wattled Lapwing



Barred Buttonquail

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Many at Tissa, some coming into breeding dress.
Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura* Seen in number on South Andaman, on Sri Lanka at Bundala and Tissa.
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* A couple seen on South Andaman.
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Hundreds in paddyfields at Tissa, also seen at Bundala.
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* One seen at Sippighat on South Andaman.
Whimbrel *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus* A few seen around the rocky Andaman coasts.
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* A single seen at Sippighat on South Andaman.
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* Seen on the South Andaman wetlands, on Sri Lanka at Bundala.
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* Good numbers at Bundala, a few on South Andaman.



Great Knot



Marsh Sandpiper

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Small numbers on Sri Lanka, a single on South Andaman.
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* A small number seen during the tour.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* A few seen on South Andaman and at Bundala.
Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* A single seen at Port Blair.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Often seen on South Andaman, also on the Sri Lankan wetlands.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* Eight on the salt pans at Bundala.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* One or more seen at Bundala, a write-in.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* A few seen on South Andaman were identified.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* A couple of hundred at Bundala were notable.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* Two seen on South Andaman.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* Several dozen were seen on the South Andaman estuaries.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* Numerous at Bundala, a few on South Andaman.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* Nice to see 20 of these at Bundala.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* A total of 16 at Bundala were a pleasing sight.

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* A single bird on tidal mud on South Andaman.

Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea* Two seen on the salt pans at Bundala.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* A couple at Uda Walawa, dozens at Bundala.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* A good number seen on the Bundala salt pans.

Lesser Crested Tern *Thalasseus bengalensis* Four seen in the Tern flock at Bundala.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* A few on South Andaman, more at Bundala.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A few seen in the Tern flock at Bundala.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Hundreds at Bundala, and on the tanks around Embilipitiya and Uda Walawa.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* Scores of these mixed in with the above at Bundala.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* If you must.

Nilgiri Wood Pigeon ◊ *Columba elphinstonii* A nice surprise to see 10 in a tree at Mudumalai. Also 6 seen at Ooty.



Nilgiri Wood Pigeon



Andaman Green Pigeon

Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon ◊ *Columba torringtoniae* Five were at Welimada, then another six at Horton Plains.

Andaman Wood Pigeon ◊ *Columba palumboides* It took a while, but we found two at Chiriyatappu. Smiley face.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* A handful seen en route from Bangalore.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* Numerous on South Andaman.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* Frequently seen everywhere except the Andamans, abundant in places.

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* A single at the roadside in Chinnar.

Andaman Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Macropygia rufipennis* 28 in a tree at Chiriyatappu!

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* Seen throughout, quite common in wet zone Sri Lanka.

Nicobar Pigeon *Caloenas nicobarica* (NL) One flew past us as we waited for Nightjars on South Andaman.

Orange-breasted Green Pigeon ◊ *Treron bicinctus* A few seen at Uda Walawa.

Sri Lanka Green Pigeon ◊ *Treron pompadora* Frequently encountered on our route around Sri Lanka.

Grey-fronted Green Pigeon ◊ *Treron affinis* Just four seen, at Mudumalai and Periyar.

Andaman Green Pigeon ◊ *Treron chloropterus* 44 counted on a very 'pigeony' afternoon on South Andaman.

Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea* Rather common in both South Andaman and Sri Lanka.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia* A couple seen at Periyar.

Green-billed Coucal ◊ *Centropus chlororhynchos* Some great views of this fellow at Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* Odd singles noted in South India and in Sri Lanka.
Andaman Coucal ◊ *Centropus andamanensis* First endemic seen on South Andaman, seen often thereafter.
Sirkeer Malkoha ◊ *Taccocua leschenaultii* Two seen in the scrub at Uda Walawa.
Red-faced Malkoha ◊ *Phaenicophaeus pyrrocephalus* Four on our first visit to Sinharaja, another seen later.
Blue-faced Malkoha ◊ *Phaenicophaeus viridirostris* Unusually common at Uda Walawa, 15+ seen there.
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* Seen at Sinharaja, two seen in the dense forest.
Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* Two seen in Kerala, a good number at Uda Walawa.
Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopaceus* A few singles along the way.
Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* A male seen quite well at Chiriyatappu.
Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii* (H) One at Kitulgala.
Grey-bellied Cuckoo ◊ *Cacomantis passerinus* One at Chinnar, three at Uda Walawa.
Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx varius* Just a couple seen on our tour.
Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* A bright hepatic one and a juvenile seen on South Andaman.
Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* In Sri Lanka we saw two juveniles and an adult.



Serendib Scops Owl



Oriental Scops Owl



Jungle Nightjar



Sri Lanka Frogmouth

Serendib Scops Owl ◊ *Otus thilohoffmanni* A very cool bird, invisible if weren't for our 'Owl Whisperer'. See note.
Andaman Scops Owl ◊ *Otus balli* One seen at Chiriyatappu, others heard there and at Mt Harriet.
Indian Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* One at Jungle Hut was well hidden, two at Embilipitiya were easier to see.
Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* A single at roost at Periyar, others heard there.
Walden's Scops Owl ◊ *Otus [sunia] modestus* Common by voice on South Andaman, one seen very well.
Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl ◊ *Bubo nipalensis* A bonus of the revised itinerary, a roosting bird observed at Chinnar.
Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* Six individuals seen in South India and Sri Lanka, including a pair at Tissa.
Brown Wood Owl ◊ *Strix leptogrammica* One at Jungle Hut at roost, a pair in Sri Lanka at roost at Welimada.
Jungle Owlet ◊ *Glaucidium radiatum* Five birds seen; three *malabaricum* in Kerala, two in Sri Lanka.

Chestnut-backed Owlet ◇ *Glaucidium castanotum* Great views of two at Kitulgala, a handsome endemic Owl.
Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* Four seen in the Jungle Hut area.
Brown Hawk-Owl *Ninox scutulata* Two at Periyar, two at the hotel near Colombo airport.
Hume's Hawk-Owl ◇ *Ninox obscura* Four seen on our night on South Andaman.
Andaman Hawk-Owl ◇ *Ninox affinis* Three seen at Chiriyatappu, one on our first night showed very well.
Sri Lanka Frogmouth ◇ *Batrachostomus moniliger* We saw a pair at roost at Sinharaja, another two at night there.
Jungle Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus indicus* Great looks at two birds by night at Jungle Hut.
Jerdon's Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus atripennis* A flyover at Jungle Hut, a perched male at Bundala.
Andaman Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus andamanicus* great scope view of one perched at Chiriyatappu.
Indian Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus asiaticus* At least four at Bundala, one sat on the ground for views.
Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata* Some around Jungle Hut, also at Bundala.
Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta* Common on South Andaman. See note.
Indian Swiftlet ◇ *Aerodramus unicolor* Quite common in South India, a few in Sri Lanka.
Edible-nest Swiftlet ◇ *Aerodramus fuciphagus* Seen most days on South Andaman.
Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus* Many seen on the Andamans, also in Kerala and at Uda Walawa.
Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis* One in Tamil Nadu, a few more in Sri Lanka.
Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* A dozen at Munnar, a flock of 20+ at Uda Walawa.
Little Swift *Apus affinis* Many at Munnar, regularly seen in Sri Lanka.
Malabar Trogon ◇ *Harpactes fasciatus* Four at Periyar, three at Kitulgala, one at Sinharaja.
Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis* Not uncommon at roadsides in Tamil Nadu, a couple at Uda Walawa.
Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* Three seen on South Andaman.
Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis* A few on the Andamans, one at Chinnar, a few more in Sri Lanka.
Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda* Nice close looks at one in mangroves on South Andaman.
White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* Seen almost daily, commonest on South Andaman.
Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris* Several seen on South Andaman.
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Regular sightings on all three sections of the tour.
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* A few seen in Sri Lanka.
Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis* Many in dry zone Sri Lanka, a few more in Tamil Nadu.
Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* Many in Sri Lanka, a few more on South Andaman.
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti* A scattering of sightings along our route.
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* A few seen in Tamil Nadu.
Malabar Pied Hornbill ◇ *Anthracoceros coronatus* Great looks at some of these at Uda Walawa.



Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill



Malabar Grey Hornbill

Malabar Grey Hornbill ◇ *Ocyceros griseus* One at Jungle Hut, then many seen at Periyar.
Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill ◇ *Ocyceros gingalensis* A couple at Kitulgala, then many more at Sinharaja.
Brown-headed Barbet ◇ *Psilopogon zeylanicus* Just a small number seen in Sri Lanka.
White-cheeked Barbet ◇ *Psilopogon viridis* Often seen in South India, commonest at Periyar.
Yellow-fronted Barbet ◇ *Psilopogon flavifrons* Good looks at Kitulgala, odd ones seen elsewhere on Sri Lanka.

Crimson-fronted Barbet ◊ *Psilopogon rubricapillus* Two seen on our first afternoon at Kitulgala, another at Kandy.

Malabar Barbet ◊ *Psilopogon malabaricus* Only seen at Periyar where we had good views of several.

Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephalus* Plenty at Jungle Hut, also at Uda Walawa.

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* A single at Bundala was a lifer for Chammy and third national record!

Heart-spotted Woodpecker ◊ *Hemicircus canente* Two at Periyar showed nicely.

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker ◊ *Yungipicus nanus* A few singles seen in South India, also at Kitulgala.

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker ◊ *Leiopicus mahrattensis* One at Jungle Hut, another at Munnar.

Freckle-breasted Woodpecker ◊ *Dendrocopos analis* Seen regularly on South Andaman in mixed flocks.

Andaman Woodpecker ◊ *Dryocopus hodgei* Some good views of these handsome beasts eventually.

Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus* A few seen in the Western Ghats and on Sri Lanka.

Black-rumped Flameback *Dinopium benghalense* A few seen in Kerala, also at Jungle Hut.

Red-backed Flameback *Dinopium psarodes* At least six of this newly-split beauty were seen in Sri Lanka.

Malabar Flameback ◊ *Chrysocolaptes [guttacristatus] socialis* Nice views of a pair at Munnar.

Crimson-backed Flameback ◊ *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi* A total of 7 birds seen on Sri Lanka.

White-naped Woodpecker ◊ *Chrysocolaptes festivus* A male and two females seen very well at Tissa.

Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus* Seen well at Periyar.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Scattered sightings in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* Two seen in Sri Lanka, at Kitulgala and Uda Walawa.

Plum-headed Parakeet *Psittacula cyanocephala* Nice examples around Jungle Hut, also at Kitulgala.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* Some small flocks seen on South Andaman.



Black-rumped Flameback



White-naped Woodpecker

Long-tailed Parakeet ◊ *Psittacula longicauda* Quite a few seen on South Andaman.

Blue-winged Parakeet ◊ *Psittacula columboides* Good numbers seen at Periyar, also at Mudumalai.

Layard's Parakeet ◊ *Psittacula calthrapae* Not uncommon around Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* Good numbers of these big fellows on South Andaman.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* A fair few in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Vernal Hanging Parrot *Loriculus vernalis* Fairly common on South Andaman, a few more at Periyar.

Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot ◊ *Loriculus beryllinus* Seen very well around Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Indian Pitta ◊ *Pitta brachyura* A total of ten individuals seen, many more heard. Not uncommon!

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus* Regular sightings in both countries.

Malabar Woodshrike *Tephrodornis sylvicola* Three seen well at Periyar.

Common Woodshrike *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* A handful seen, at Jungle Hut and Chinnar.

Sri Lanka Woodshrike ◊ *Tephrodornis affinis* Two seen at Uda Walawa.

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus* A few seen in Kerala and Sri Lanka.

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia* Odd birds seen at regular intervals along our route.

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei* Three seen on South Andaman, and a couple more at Kitulgala.

Andaman Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina dobsoni* Nice looks at a pair at Mt Harriet, also seen at Shoal Bay.

Black-headed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina melanoptera* Not uncommon, around Jungle Hut and at Kitulgala.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* Frequent on South Andaman, more in South India, a few at Kitulgala.

White-bellied Minivet ◊ *Pericrocotus erythropygus* A nice male tracked down in scrub at Mudumalai.

Orange Minivet ◊ *Pericrocotus flammeus* Seen regularly in the forests of South India and Sri Lanka.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus* Frequently seen on South Andaman, race *andamanensis*.

Mangrove Whistler *Pachycephala cinerea* A single seen on South Andaman.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* Notably numerous on South Andaman, also good numbers on Sri Lanka.

Bay-backed Shrike ◊ *Lanius vittatus* In fairly good number at Jungle Hut.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* A few examples seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Indian Golden Oriole ◊ *Oriolus kundoo* A handful of individuals seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* Not uncommon on South Andaman, race *andamanensis*.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus* A few noted in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, more common on Sri Lanka.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* A good number en route from Bangalore to Jungle Hut.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* Regularly seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

White-bellied Drongo ◊ *Dicrurus caerulescens* A few in dry jungle in Tamil Nadu, more common in Sri Lanka.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus* A few examples seen around Jungle Hut and in Periyar.

Andaman Drongo ◊ *Dicrurus andamanensis* Rather common on South Andaman.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus* Regular sightings on South Andaman, also at Periyar.

Sri Lanka Drongo ◊ *Dicrurus lophorinus* Seen only in the wet zone forests of Sri Lanka.



Black-headed Cuckooshrike



Andaman Cuckooshrike

White-spotted Fantail *Rhipidura albogularis* Just a single seen, at our Ooty hotel.

White-browed Fantail *Rhipidura aureola* A few seen at Jungle Hut, also in Sri Lanka.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* Regularly seen on South Andaman, also a few seen on Sri Lanka.

Indian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* Seen regularly in South India, also in Sri Lanka. See note.

Sri Lanka Blue Magpie ◊ *Urocissa ornata* Just a handful seen, at Sinharaja.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* Regularly seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

White-bellied Treepie ◊ *Dendrocitta leucogastra* Not uncommon at Periyar, a real beauty!

Andaman Treepie ◊ *Dendrocitta bayleii* Rather common this year, with a couple of small flocks noted.

House Crow *Corvus splendens* Available in many areas dominated by human habitation.

Eastern Jungle Crow *Corvus leuallantii* Just a few seen on South Andaman, typically in pairs.

Indian Jungle Crow *Corvus culminatus* Common in South India, also in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* Quite a few in the Western Ghats and in Sri Lanka.

Cinereous Tit *Parus cinereus* Not uncommon in South India, a couple more in Sri Lanka.

Indian Black-lored Tit ◊ *Machlolophus aplanotus* Four seen in a mixed flock at Ooty.

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix griseus* A good few seen around Uda Walawa and Bundala.

Jerdon's Bush Lark ◊ *Mirafrja affinis* Two at Jungle Hut, many at Uda Walawa and a few at Bundala.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* Two on the saltpans at Bundala.

Malabar Lark ◊ *Galerida malabarica* One showed well at Jungle Hut.

Grey-headed Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus priocephalus* After much searching, a brief look near Periyar.

Andaman Bulbul *Pycnonotus fuscoflavescens* Not uncommon in the forests of South Andaman.

Black-capped Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus melanicterus* A few of these handsome birds seen in wet zone Sri Lanka.

Flame-throated Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus gularis* Five seen on just one day at Periyar.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* Seen daily except in Sri Lanka, abundant in places.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* Seen daily except on the Andamans, abundant in many places.

Yellow-throated Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus xantholaemus* A good look at these rare birds in rocky hills near Bangalore.

Yellow-eared Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus penicillatus* A more gorgeous Bulbul, several seen well in highland Sri Lanka.

White-browed Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus luteolus* Not uncommon in dry country in Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu.

Yellow-browed Bulbul ◊ *Acritillas indica* Some nice examples at Periyar, many more seen in Sri Lanka.

Square-tailed Bulbul ◊ *Hypsipetes ganeesa* A couple of flocks around Munnar, more common in Sri Lanka.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Large numbers around the Sri Lankan wetlands, a few seen elsewhere.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Small numbers seen on South Andaman.

Hill Swallow ◊ *Hirundo domicola* A small number seen around Munnar, also around Nuwara Eliya.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* One at Mudumalai was the only one of the tour.

Dusky Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne concolor* A few seen near Bangalore and in Kerala.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* A few seen in Tamil Nadu.

Sri Lanka Swallow ◊ *Cecropis hyperythra* Not uncommon in wet zone Sri Lanka, nice looks at Kitulgala.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* A few seen on South Andaman.

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis* A few noted at Ooty.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* A single seen at a roadside stop near Periyar.

Green Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus nitidus* Common in Sri Lanka, in small numbers in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Quite common in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, numerous at Munnar.

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus* A few seen in the forests of South Andaman.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris* Often heard, several seen, mainly in highland forests.

Western Crowned Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus occipitalis* One at Jungle Hut, another at Ooty.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* One showed well on South Andaman.

Clamorous Reed Warbler ◊ *Acrocephalus [stentoreus] brunnescens* Two seen in wet margins at Bundala.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* Common in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, less so in Sri Lanka.

Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* One or more, seen feeding on the ground at Mudumalai.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* (H) One heard at Bundala.

Sri Lanka Bush Warbler ◊ *Elaphornis palliseri* The weather didn't help, but two seen at Horton Plains.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* A few in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsonii* Seen at Jungle Hut and Uda Walawa.

Jungle Prinia ◊ *Prinia sylvatica* In good number at Uda Walawa.

Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis* A few scattered sightings.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* Not uncommon in grass around Munnar and at Uda Walawa.



Black-chinned Laughingthrush



Tawny-bellied Babbler

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* Regular sightings along our route in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Sri Lanka.

Indian Scimitar Babbler ◊ *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii* Good looks at Jungle Hut, also at Munnar and Periyar.

Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler ◊ *Pomatorhinus melanurus* Several birds at scattered locations in Sri Lanka.

Tawny-bellied Babbler *Dumetia hyperythra* A couple of small parties seen, at Uda Walawa and at Tissa.

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella* Seen and heard often on South Andaman, also some in the South Indian forests.

Dark-fronted Babbler ◇ *Rhopocichla atriceps* Not uncommon at Periyar, and also in wet zone Sri Lanka.

Brown-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe poioicephala* A few seen at Jungle Hut and near Periyar.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps* Three birds seen at Jungle Hut.

Brown-capped Babbler ◇ *Pellorneum fuscocapillus* A pair at Kitulgala, also seen at Sinharaja and Kandy.

Large Grey Babbler *Turdoides malcolmi* A family party seen en route to Chinnar.

Rufous Babbler ◇ *Turdoides subrufa* Just a single encounter with a showy bird in a tea plantation near Munnar.

Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striata* Seen just at Periyar.

Orange-billed Babbler ◇ *Turdoides rufescens* Rather common in the wet zone forests of Sri Lanka.

Yellow-billed Babbler ◇ *Turdoides affinis* Common in Tamil Nadu and much of Sri Lanka.

Ashy-headed Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax cinereifrons* A few seen in a mixed feeding flock at Sinharaja were nice.

Black-chinned Laughingthrush ◇ *Trochalopteron cachinnans* Some great looks at confiding birds at Ooty.

Kerala Laughingthrush ◇ *Trochalopteron fairbanki* Quite common around Munnar, good views acquired.

Hume's Whitethroat *Sylvia althaea* A few seen in the dry scrub around Jungle Hut/Mudumalai.

Yellow-eyed Babbler *Chrysomma sinense* A couple seen in Tamil Nadu, better views of several at Uda Walawa.

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus* Seen on all sections of our tour.

Sri Lanka White-eye ◇ *Zosterops ceylonensis* A few in the wet zone forests, more obvious around Nuwara Eliya.

Indian Nuthatch ◇ *Sitta castanea* A small number encountered in the Jungle Hut area.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* Plenty in the Periyar area, also seen in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Hill Myna ◇ *Gracula ptilogenys* Several seen at Sinharaja, even visible from our hotel.

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* Quite a few seen in the South Andaman forests.

Southern Hill Myna ◇ *Gracula indica* Noisy and obvious at Periyar, also noted at Kitulgala and Kandy.

Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus* Often encountered in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* Mostly common throughout, though absent from forested areas

White-headed Starling ◇ *Sturnia erythropygia* Seen on most days on South Andaman.

Malabar Starling ◇ *Sturnia blythii* Quite a few seen around Periyar.

Brahminy Starling *Sturnia pagodarum* Numerous in the dry country of the Mudumalai/Jungle Hut area.

White-faced Starling ◇ *Sturnornis albofrontatus* Just two seen, hiding high in the trees at Sinharaja.

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* Small flocks seen at Jungle Hut and in dry zone Sri Lanka.

Pied Thrush ◇ *Geokichla wardii* Stonking views of up to four at Nuwara Eliya, a rare show by a shy bird.

Orange-headed Thrush *Geokichla citrina* Three seen on the Andamans, another five at Periyar and Jungle Hut.



Spot-winged Thrush



Malabar Whistling Thrush

Spot-winged Thrush ◇ *Geokichla spiloptera* Several seen at Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Sri Lanka Thrush ◇ *Zoothera imbricata* A great encounter with this stealthy fellow at Sinharaja.

Indian Blackbird ◇ *Turdus simillimus* Obvious and confiding at Ooty, eight or more seen.

Indian Robin *Copsychus fulicatus* Not uncommon in dry country in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis* Seen throughout the tour.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* A few individuals seen along our route.

Andaman Shama ◊ *Copsychus albiventris* Many heard but just three actually seen on South Andaman.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* Small numbers seen on all three sections of our tour.

Brown-breasted Flycatcher ◊ *Muscicapa muttui* Frequently seen, in South India and Sri Lanka.

Rusty-tailed Flycatcher ◊ *Muscicapa ruficauda* At least four seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

White-bellied Blue Flycatcher ◊ *Cyornis pallipes* Nice views at Periyar, feeding on emerging termites.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae* Seen at Jungle Hut, Periyar and Kitulgala.

Dull-blue Flycatcher ◊ *Eumyias sordidus* Just one seen at Horton Plains, the weather didn't help!

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus* A single example seen at Jungle Hut.

Nilgiri Flycatcher ◊ *Eumyias albicaudatus* A few seen around Munnar.

Indian Blue Robin *Larvivora brunnea* Fairly common, at least by voice, in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Sri Lanka.

Nilgiri Blue Robin ◊ *Myiomela major* One in the hotel garden at Ooty was a bit surprising, and the only one seen.

White-bellied Blue Robin ◊ *Myiomela albiventris* Three in all around Munnar, one showed very well at Eravikulam.

Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush ◊ *Myophonus blighi* Poor views was all we had, two birds seen around Nuwara Eliya.

Malabar Whistling Thrush ◊ *Myophonus horsfieldii* A single at Jungle Hut, more common in Kerala.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* A single on South Andaman, a couple more at Jungle Hut.

Kashmir Flycatcher ◊ *Ficedula subrubra* At least four seen in and around Nuwara Eliya.

Black-and-orange Flycatcher ◊ *Ficedula nigrorufa* Seen well at Ooty, a single at Munnar. Gorgeous.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* A couple seen at Munnar.

Blue-capped Rock Thrush *Monticola cinclorhynchus* Seen at Jungle Hut, a couple elsewhere.

Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata* Not uncommon in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, a few more in Sri Lanka.

Jerdon's Leafbird ◊ *Chloropsis jerdoni* Seen at Jungle Hut, Periyar and Sinharaja.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons* A couple at Periyar, also Kitulgala.



White-bellied Blue Flycatcher



White-bellied Blue Robin

Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile* A single glimpsed at Tissa.

Legge's Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum vincens* Regularly seen in wet zone Sri Lanka.

Pale-billed Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos* Frequent in Sri Lanka, a few in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Nilgiri Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum concolor* Scattered sightings in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, most were at Periyar.

Andaman Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum virescens* A few seen on South Andaman.

Purple-rumped Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma zeylonica* Common in Sri Lanka, a few seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Crimson-backed Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma minima* A single female seen in the garden of our Munnar hotel.

Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus* A few seen in dry country in Tamil Nadu.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis* A few seen on South Andaman.

Loten's Sunbird ◊ *Cinnyris lotenius* One at Jungle Hut, a showy one or two at Periyar.

Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra* A single at Periyar.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Noted throughout in suitable habitat.

Yellow-throated Sparrow *Gymnoris xanthocollis* Quite a few seen at Mudumalai/Jungle Hut.

Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar* A single bird seen at Tissa.

Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* Also a single bird seen at Tissa.

Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava* Three seen near Bangalore.

Indian Silverbill *Euodice malabarica* Six at Jungle Hut were the only ones of the tour.
White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* Some flocks on South Andaman, regularly seen on Sri Lanka.
Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* A few seen along our route.
Black-throated Munia ◊ *Lonchura kelaarti* Seen well in Kerala and at Sinharaja. See note.
Tricolored Munia ◊ *Lonchura malacca* A few seen well at Uda Walawa and Tissa.
Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* Seen on South Andaman, at Periyar and on Sri Lanka.
Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* Wagtails not accurately assigned to race seen in multiple locations.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* Some on South Andaman appeared to be this taxon in photos.
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* A companion throughout our tour.
White Wagtail *Motacilla [alba] alba* A single at Bundala.
White-browed Wagtail ◊ *Motacilla maderaspatensis* A small number seen in Southern India.
Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus* A few encounters along the way.
Blyth's Pipit ◊ *Anthus godlewskii* Quite a few seen at Uda Walawa.
Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* A single flying bird at Munnar.
Nilgiri Pipit ◊ *Anthus nilghiriensis* Some distant views only, two seen at Munnar.



Chestnut-backed Owlet

MAMMALS

Indian Hare (Black-naped H) *Lepus nigricollis* Nice views of several at Bundala.

Indian Giant Squirrel *Ratufa indica* Several sightings in South India, with regional colour differences noted.

Sri Lankan Giant Squirrel (Grizzled Indian S) *Ratufa macroura* A few singles seen in Sri Lanka.

Layard's Palm Squirrel *Funambulus layardi* A single seen at Sinharaja.

Indian Palm Squirrel *Funambulus palmarum* Seen frequently in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Sri Lanka.

Dusky Palm Squirrel *Funambulus sublineatus* A small number seen at Periyar.

Jungle Palm Squirrel *Funambulus tristriatus* A single seen at Periyar.

[**Indian Crested Porcupine** *Hystrix indica* Discarded quills and scat found at Munnar]

[**Leopard** *Panthera pardus* Tracks found at Chinnar, Munnar and Sinharaja.]

[**Tiger** *Panthera tigris* Tracks found at Periyar.]

Indian Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* Singles at Uda Walawa and our Colombo airport hotel.

Indian Grey Mongoose (Common M) *Herpestes edwardsii* Seen around Jungle Hut and at Tissa.

Stripe-necked Mongoose *Herpestes vitticollis* One in tea at Munnar, three seen at Periyar. A handsome beast.

Ruddy Mongoose *Herpestes smithii* A few seen in Sri Lanka, a very very tame one at Sinharaja!

Golden Jackal *Canis aureus* A single seen at Uda Walawa was the only one of the trip.

Nilgiri Marten *Martes gwatkinsii* A quick but close eyeful of two that crossed the path at Periyar. Gripping!

Indian Flying Fox *Pteropus giganteus* Many in big roosts at Periyar and Tissa.

Black-eared Flying Fox *Pteropus melanopogon* A small number seen on South Andaman.



Southern Plains Grey Langur



Gaur

Southern Plains Grey Langur *Semnopithecus dussumieri* Numerous in drier parts of Tamil Nadu.

Tufted Grey Langur *Semnopithecus priam* Plenty seen in the south of Sri Lanka.

Purple-faced Leaf Monkey *Trachypithecus vetulus* A few seen in the wet zone forests of Sri Lanka.

Nilgiri Langur *Trachypithecus johnii* Many good encounters in the Western Ghats.

Toque Macaque *Macaca sinica* Fairly widespread in Sri Lanka, with kleptomaniac gangs a feature of our Kandy hotel!

Bonnet Macaque *Macaca radiata* Common in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Eurasian Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* Seen in Bandipur/Mudumalai, Chinnar and at Kandy

Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer) *Muntiacus muntjak* Seen at Munnar, Horton Plains and Kandy.

Sambar *Cervus unicolor* Several at Periyar and also at Horton Plains.

Chital (Spotted Deer) *Axis axis* Common around Jungle Hut and Mudumalai, also at Uda Walawa and Bundala.

Nilgiri Tahr *Hemitragus hylocrius* Ten or so seen at Eravikulam.

Gaur (Indian Bison) *Bos gaurus* A good show this year, seen at Mudumalai, Ooty and Periyar.

Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus* Wild ones seen at Mudumalai, Chinnar, Periyar, Uda Walawa and Bundala.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

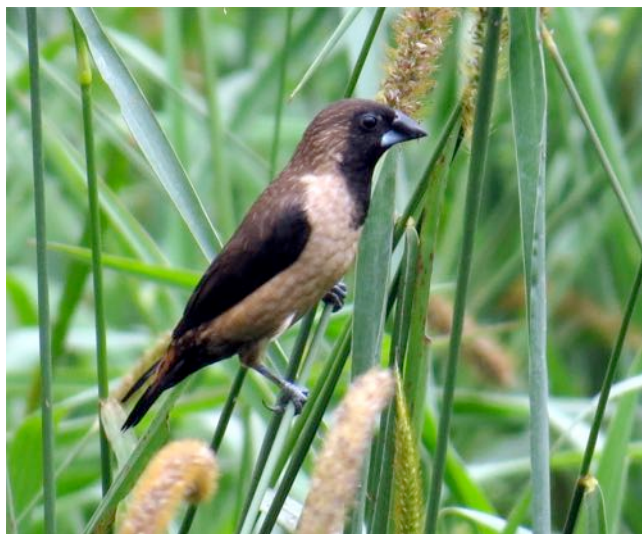
The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D (Eds). 2012. IOC World Bird Names (v2.11). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Serendib Scops Owl ♦ *Otus thilohoffmanni* A very cool bird, invisible if hadn't have been for Chammy and his Owl-finding skills, our very own 'Owl Whisperer'. With just one pair at Kitulgala, it is never an easy bird to find, especially if they roost in inaccessible places!

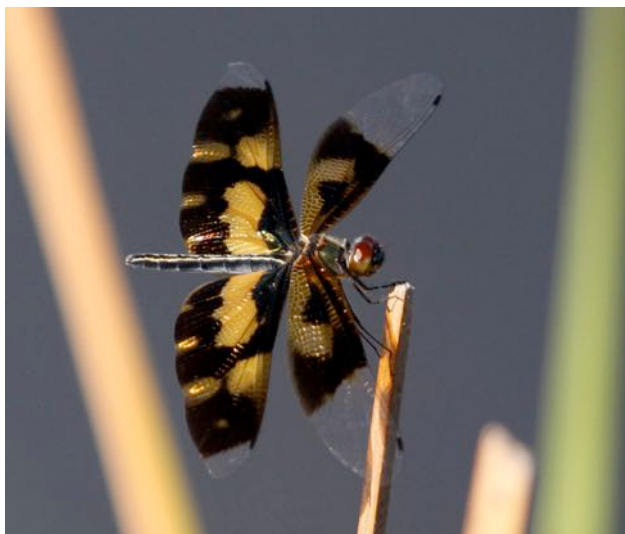
Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta* Common on South Andaman. The spectacle of birds leaving their roosts at Chatham jetty is quite remarkable with 600 per minute counted on one occasion.

Indian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* In Sri Lanka the local *ceylonensis* race is rufous and has a very long crest, several white males seen there would be nominate wintering birds from the peninsula.

Black-throated Munia ♦ *Lonchura kelaarti* In Kerala we saw birds of the *jerdoni* race, at Sinharaja they were nominate *kelaarti*.



Black-throated Munia



Foggy-winged Twister

The following lists provided by Dave Williamson

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Black-spined Toad *Bufo melanostictus*

Corrugated Water Frog *Lankanectes corrugatus*

Common Paddyfield Frog *Fejervarya limnocharis*

Mountain Paddyfield Frog *Fejervarya kirtisinghei*

Bubble-nest Frog *Pseudophilautus cuspis*

Skipper Frog *Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis*

Asian House Gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus*

Green Forest Lizard *Calotes calotes*

Indian Garden Lizard *alotes versicolor*

Sri Lankan Kangaroo Lizard *Otocryptis wiegmanni*

Rhinoceros-horned Lizard *Ceratophora stoddartii*

Land Monitor *Varanus bengalensis*

Water Monitor *Varanus salvator*

Indian (Sri Lankan or Parker's) Black Turtle *Melanochelys trijuga parkeri*

Star Tortoise *Geochelone elegans*

Marsh Mugger *Crocodylus palustris*

Rock Python *Python molurus*

Ornate Flying Snake *Chrysopelea ornata*

DRAGONFLIES

Oriental Greenwing *Neurobasis chinensis*
Black-tipped Flashwing *Vestalis apicalis*
Adam's Gem *Libellago adami*
Painted Waxtail *Ceriagrion cerinorubellum*
Yellow Waxtail *Ceriagrion coromandelianum*
Blue Sprite *Pseudagrion microcephalum*
Sri Lanka Orange-faced Sprite *Pseudagrion rubriceps*
Rapacious Flangetail *Ictinogomphus rapax*
Elephant Emperor *Anax indicus*
Spine-tufted Skimmer *Orthetrum chrysis*
Asian Pintail *Acioma panorpoides*
Orange-winged (Asian) Groundling *Brachythemis contaminata*
Oriental Scarlet *Crocothemis servilia*
Indigo Dropwing *Trithemis festiva*
Common (Violet) Dropwing *Trithemis annulata*
Variegated Flutterer *Rhyothemis variegata*
Foggy-winged Twister *Tholymis tillarga*

BUTTERFLIES

Common (Andaman) Birdwing *Troides helena heliconoides*
Sri Lankan Birdwing *Troides darsius*
Red Helen *Papilio helenus*
Blue Mormon *Papilio polymnestor*
Common Mormon *Papilio polytes*
Common Bluebottle *Graphium sarpedon*
Lesser Gull *Cepora nadina*
Yellow Orange-tip *Ixias pyrene*
Spotless Grass Yellow *Eurema laeta*
Three-spot Grass Yellow *Eurema blanda*
Myanmar (Andaman) Tree-Nymph *Idaea agamarschana cadelli*
Sri Lankan Tree-Nymph *Idaea iasonia*
Glassy Tiger *Parantica aglea*
Nilgiri Tiger *Parantica nilgiriensis*
Common Tiger *Danaus genutia*
Common Crow *Euploea core*
(Andaman) Small Leopard *Phalanta alcippe (andamana)*
Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*
Grey Pansy *Junonia atlites*
Peacock Pansy *Junonia almana*
Common Lascar *Pantoporia hordonia*
Common Sailor *Neptis hylas*
Clipper *Parthenos sylvia*
Anomalous Nawab *Charaxes agrarius*
Sri Lankan Treebrown *Lethe daretis*
Medus Brown *Orsotriaena medus*
Gladeye Bushbrown *Mycalesis patnia*
White Four-ring *Ypthima ceylonica*
Common Four-ring *Ypthima huebneri*
Common Five-ring *Ypthima baldus*
Pea (Long-tailed) Blue *Lampides boeticus*
Red Pierrot *Talicauda nyseus*
Fulvous Pied Flat *Pseudocoladenia dan*
(Andaman) White-banded Awl *Hasora taminatus andama*



Small Leopard



Brown-eared Barbet



Green Vine Snake



Green Imperial Pigeon



Indian Hare



Brown-breasted Flycatcher (D. Williamson)