



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

The Himalayan Kingdom of

BHUTAN

&

Kaziranga & Nameri National Parks

21st March – 13th April 2010

TRIP REPORT



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Trip report compiled by Markus Lilje

Top 10 Birds of the tour as voted by participants:

1. Satyr Tragopan
2. Himalayan Monal
3. Golden-throated Barbet
4. Rufous-necked Hornbill
5. Fire-tailed Sunbird
6. Beautiful Nuthatch
7. White-winged Duck
8. Fire-capped Tit
9. Blood Pheasant
10. Sultan Tit/ Rufous-throated Wren Babbler/ Wallcreeper

Top 5 mammals of the tour as voted by participants:

1. Indian One-horned Rhinoceros
2. Asian Elephant
3. Golden Langur
4. Black Giant Squirrel
5. Hoolock Gibbon

Tour Summary:

The Himalayan Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan is unique as the only country that still supports huge areas of undisturbed and pristine forest-clad mountain slopes in this extensive mountain range of southern Asia. Spectacular blazes of flowering *Rhododendron* and *magnolias*, magnificent Dzongs and ancient forms of cultivation still dominate this inspiring landscape. In these now quickly modernising surroundings we were able to still experience the natural wealth as well as find out about some of its history and fascinating culture.

Our adventures began in Guwahati in the Assam state, in India's north-west. Here we started with a quick stop early on, looking for the extremely localized Greater Adjutant, which we found in great numbers, along with a number of other more widespread species like Striated Grassbird, the scarce Indian Spotted Eagle, White and Citrine Wagtails and Lesser Adjutant. We then headed for the vast Kaziranga National Park that harbours the largest world population of Indian One-horned Rhinoceros in its wetland, grassland and woodland habitats – before we even arrived we were amazingly fortunate to find a female Hoolock Gibbon with her youngster, swinging easily through the branches beside the road. We entered the park on 4 separate occasions and covered roads in various parts of the park to increase our chances for a number of the trickier species. From elephant back we quickly located our main avian target, the very



From elephant back we quickly located our main avian target, the very

scarce Bengal Florican, which gave great flight views around our group. Other birds we added to the list in Kaziranga were a number of bee-eaters, herons, storks, owls, barbets and parakeets. Swamp Francolin, Rosy Minivet, Chestnut-capped Babbler, Grey-headed Lapwing, Kalij Pheasant and Pallas's and Grey-headed Fish Eagles were some of the main highlights during our stay here. Besides the ancient-looking Rhinos, we also added great views of Asian Elephant and Water Buffalo, Jungle Cat and Swamp and Hog Deer to the mammal list, along with a few smaller species. All too early our time at the park was over and we moved on to our next destination, the well-forested Nameri National Park.

Our comfortable tented camp at the border of the Park proved to be the perfect base from which to explore Nameri's riverine and forest habitats and we were lucky to have a resident pair of Oriental Hobby in the area that entertained us on a number of occasions. We were also incredibly lucky here as we enjoyed great views of the very difficult main target, the rare White-winged Duck, without much effort at all as we had extended views of a pair in flight after they flushed from a small water body. Other good birds that were seen in Nameri's beautiful forests included Vernal Hanging-Parrot, Black-breasted Thrush, Maroon Oriole, Pin-tailed Green Pigeon, the gigantic Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Puff-throated Babbler, Himalayan and Asian Emerald Cuckoos, Lesser Necklaced and Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes and Great Hornbill. Along the river everyone had good views of the delightful Small Pratincole, River Lapwing, Sand Lark and River Tern, while an optional rafting tour yielded a few additional species that included the fascinating Ibisbill, Great Thick-knee and Hodgson's Redstart. Additional interesting species that were recorded around the lodge grounds included Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Crimson-backed Flowerpecker, Common Hill Myna and Asian Koel.

At last the Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan beckoned and it was time to say farewell to our friendly hosts at Assam along with all the legendary birds and mammals that make this region such a magical place. The contrast between Bhutan and India is remarkable both in appearance and geography as Bhutan rises up from the Indian plains and outlines the beginning of the mighty Himalayan mountain range. We entered the Bhutanese border in the late afternoon and settled into our hotel in Samdrup Jonkhar to reenergize for our upcoming birding adventures.



After a night of rain showers the streams around Samdrup Jonkhar were more challenging to traverse than we had hoped, making the birding in the area fairly tricky. Nonetheless we managed to find some great birds in the Himalayan foothills, still covered in patches of lowland evergreen forest in this lowland area. Both Great and Wreathed Hornbills showed well and we found a fruiting tree that attracted the stunning Asian Fairy-Bluebird, Great and Blue-throated Barbets, Ashy and Black-crested Bulbuls. After much searching the area's streams we eventually managed to find both Slaty-backed and the range-restricted Black-backed Forktails as well as Snowy-browed, Ultramarine and Rufous-gorgeted Flycatchers in the riverine thickets. Making our way to our campsite at Morong, beyond Deothang, we found a large flock of the distinctive White-throated Needletail that gave great views at it soared acrobatically overhead.

Around Morong we spent a day getting really used to the birding in the forests of Bhutan. Making the most of the chances that we were left with during some freak weather conditions that caused numerous delays, we managed to have great views of the majestic Rufous-

necked Hornbill that has its remaining strong hold in the pristine forests of Bhutan, Darjeeling Woodpecker, White-spectacled Warbler, White-browed and Black-eared Shrike-Babblers as well as some of the more common Himalayan flock species including yuhinas, tits, fulvettas, warblers and sunbirds.

We covered the stretch between Morong and Yongkola in two days windy along the narrow mountain roads with a few productive birding stops along the way. Reaching our most north-easterly point of the tour, we visited our first of several impressive Dzongs (temple fortresses) in the town of Trashigang, where monks as young as six years old live their lives of dedicated Buddhism every day. Some of the birding highlights along the route included Blue-capped and Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrushes, noisy White-crested and Rufous-necked Laughingthrushes, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler, Rufous Woodpecker, Red-billed Leiothrix, Striated Prinia, Himalayan Bulbul and Crested Bunting. Another big target species for Bhutan is the Yellow-rumped Honeyguide that hangs around steep rocky cliffs where native Rock Bees create massive combs clinging to the overhanging ledges. Within a very short time we were scoping this rare, localized and attractive honeyguide, one of only two Asian representatives of this primarily African bird family.



One of the joys of birding in Bhutan is that it offers the chance to explore remote and relatively untouched wilderness from the roadside, and in our efforts to take advantage of this opportunity we camped on numerous occasions throughout the tour. Our camp staff picked very scenic destinations for our camps overlooking a series of steep forested mountains and made an effort to make it all as comfortable as possible – even with the real challenges we faced with very uncooperative weather conditions. We found our staff and the people of Bhutan in general to be extraordinarily friendly and during camping nights our chef

regularly prepared an astounding variety of food including both traditional local cuisines as well as an assortment of more Tibetan and Indian influenced meals.

Our longest stretch of camping was along the fabled Lingmethang Road, a birding hotspot that is known for producing some of the most riveting birding in the Himalayas and beyond. Our time here produced some world class birds plus spectacular scenery and waterfalls. The first area we explored was on the lower-altitude road around Yongkola, where we managed great views of the difficult Sikkim Wedge-billed Babbler, as well as Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler, Spot-winged Grosbeak, the skulking Yellow-throated Fulvetta, Large Hawk-Cuckoo, brightly-coloured Orange-bellied Leafbird, Long-tailed and Grey-chinned Minivets, Little Forktail and an encounter with a cooperative pair of Yellow-throated Marten. Moving to higher altitudes we were held up when the road ahead was obstructed by huge boulders that had collapsed onto the road – there is at present a fair bit of construction going on throughout the country to widen the often very narrow road system. During our wait we were very fortunate to find Hoary-throated Barwing, our first White-browed Fulvetta and spectacular views of Black-eared Shrike-Babbler and Mrs. Gould's Sunbird. A big bonus in the area was the impressive Wallcreeper – often treated as a monotypic family and normally already at higher altitudes at this time of the year. Then came



one of the highlights of the trip – as soon as we had entered good habitat we had 3 sightings of male Satyr Tragopan – including one that was utterly unconcerned by us and even moved toward us on the road – this afforded it the number 1 position on the tour’s top ten! Around and above our camp at Sengor we then added a few of the more high-altitude species we had not had a chance for thus far, including amazing views of Spotted Laughingthrush and the rare and intricately patterned Bar-winged Wren-Babbler.



The lofty mountain pass of Thrumsing La produced some amazing birds in the conifer, bamboo and flowering *Rhododendron*, with highlights including several male Fire-tailed Sunbirds, Rufous-breasted, White-browed and Golden Bush Robins as well as the first parrotbill for all participants – the impressive Great Parrotbill, as well as our first of many Blood Pheasant and the high-altitude tits. As we made our way further west we traversed the high altitude road towards Bumthang adding an amazing flock of Snow Pigeon that just kept wheeling around us, Himalayan Beautiful

Rosefinch and White-winged Grosbeak as well as Eurasian Magpie that is surprisingly restricted in Bhutan. As we arrived in Bumthang, with its very imposing Dzong overlooking the town, we started looking for another major target of the Himalayas. After a little while, scanning the banks of the river that flows through the town, we managed to locate 3 fabulous Ibisbill, a bizarre wader placed in its own monotypic family. This interesting and sought after species normally feeds from and around the rocks that it resembles, which makes it a serious challenge to spot.

En route to Trongsa we stopped at the high Yotongla Pass, much of which was totally bedecked with spectacularly flowering *Rhododendron* trees. New birds we found in this area included the very special Golden-naped Finch, Brown Parrotbill and Black-faced Laughingthrush and we all thoroughly enjoyed the flowering splendour around us. The afternoon was spent in and around Trongsa itself picking up some lovely birds like Spotted Forktail and Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and enjoyed looking at the enormous Trongsa Dzong, after watching a few archers practicing what is the national sport. The next morning we turned south and off the main road toward the remoter area around Zhemgang and Tingtibi for our final two nights of camping of the tour.

This area in the central parts of southern Bhutan held a lot of species we had not yet seen as it was back into the lower-altitude forest that we had only briefly spent time in before. We managed to locate some great birds over the next few days that included the very special Beautiful Nuthatch, cooperative Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush, a very close calling Common Cuckoo, White-browed Scimitar-Babbler, Long-tailed Broadbill, the localized Rufous-faced Warbler and a pair of stunning Sultan Tit. Other noteworthy birds that we found in small mixed-species flocks in the area included Blue-throated Blue and Sapphire Flycatchers, Grey-throated Babbler, Red-tailed and Blue-winged Minlas, Silver-eared Mesia, Red-faced Liocichla and skulking Blue-winged Laughingthrush. We also



enjoyed several close encounters with Golden-throated Barbet, allowing point-blank views of this gaudy species. Of course the numerous close and interesting encounters with the very range-restricted Golden Langur added immensely to our experience!

The settlement of Punakha with its impressive riverside Dzong awaited us next, after we picked up Brown Bullfinch and the very special and erratic Fire-capped Tit around Pelela. River Lapwing, and Crested Kingfisher were again seen after we had recorded them much earlier during the trip, but the real highlight of this area was the uncommon Slender-billed Oriole that inhabits the native Chir Pines of this area. In the nearby Jigme Dorji National Park we searched, unsuccessfully, for the rare White-bellied Heron, but came up with numerous glimpses of Slaty-bellied Tesia and a few other good-



looking species like Great and Golden-throated Barbets, Maroon Oriole, Green-backed Tit, Nepal Fulvetta and Striated Yuhina. Like a number of other sites visited during our tour, Punakha allowed us the chance to view the unique cultural heritage of Bhutan since it is the only place left on earth where the Vajrayana Buddhist culture survives more-or-less intact, a lifestyle emphasizing the use of meditation as a means to achieve enlightenment. Tshering, our local guide took us around the Dzong and gave

us a fascinating tour of the site.

Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, was our next destination and was undoubtedly the busiest part of the country we encountered. On the way there we managed to pick up a number of birds we had been struggling to find, including Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon, the tiny Pygmy Wren-Babbler and the stunning Rufous-bellied Niltava. In Thimphu we took the time to visit the Golden Takin sanctuary on the outskirts of town, where we marvelled at these stocky beasts – seeing this, Bhutan's national mammal in the wild is a very difficult task indeed as they spend their summers above the treeline and winters in remote, densely vegetated forests. Some time was also set aside for the shoppers to have a look at some of the local markets as well as souvenirs on offer around the town.

Our final two nights were spent in a very comfortable resort in Paro, home to several exciting and extremely impressive buildings that display the religion and cultural heritage of Bhutan including the Paro Dzong and the world famous Tiger's Nest Monastery that is precariously perched on the face of a sheer cliff. Some of the group undertook the trek to this very impressive building which proved to be very memorable and worth-while. Scouring the river in the late afternoon near town produced amazing views of Black-tailed Crake as well as having very extensive flight-views of the reclusive Pin-tailed Snipe.



We concluded the tour with a day up the lofty pass of Chelela, which reaches the height of nearly 4000m above sea level – our highest altitude of the tour. We managed to find an amazing 4 species of pheasant as we made our way up through the different vegetation zones – starting with Kalij Pheasant and then finding two male Satyr Tragopans, several pairs of Blood Pheasant, and finally the incredibly multi-coloured Himalayan

Monal near the highest point on the pass. Like on many of the mountain passes and prominent ridges in Bhutan, we found colourful prayer flags erected on the pass, where the people believe the natural power of the wind distributes blessings of the inscribed prayers as the flags flutter and wave. During our day on the pass we found both Collared and White-winged Grosbeaks, Spotted Nutcracker, the reclusive Scaly Thrush and many of the more widespread high altitude species that we had, by now, become accustomed to in the land of the Thunder Dragon.

The fifth king of Bhutan's goal for the nation is to develop economic self-reliance while preserving the nation's rich natural resources and maximize "gross national happiness" for his people. We hope that the country will manage to continue its legacy of gradual growth and westernization while still conserving the extensive forests and rivers that make this country such a remarkable and unique place in the Himalayas.

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS (453 Species including 15 heard only)

Note: Names and taxonomical order of the bird species list follows that of IOC (International Ornithological congress), Gill, F. and M. Wright. 2006; Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press (version 2.3). If names differ in Clements, this is shown in parenthesis or explained in a note.

E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic.

Pheasants and Partridges *Phasianidae*

Swamp Francolin (NE)

Francolinus gularis

This localized, uncommon and extremely attractive bird was seen on several consecutive days at Kaziranga National Park.

Hill Partridge

Arborophila torqueola

We heard this common bird of Bhutan on a large proportion of the days we had here, we were never able to see this very shy bird.

Rufous-throated Partridge

Arborophila rufogularis

Although not as numerous as Hill Partridge, we still heard this species on several days during the tour in highland forested areas.

Blood Pheasant

Ithaginis cruentus

Our first stunning birds were seen well on the Upper Lingmethang Road, on the way up to Thrumsingla more were seen later on the way up Chelela.

Satyr Tragopan

Tragopan satyra

Certainly one of Bhutan's most sought-after specialties, a visual of any of the world's five tragopans will surely make any birder's list of top birding experiences of a lifetime. We were incredibly lucky with this species and encountered no fewer than 7 males and 3 female birds in 2 days we had around the Sengor campsite. Another 2 males were seen on the final full day on the way up Chelela.

Himalayan Monal

Lophophorus impejanus

An incredibly vivid species, of which we had 2 males and 3 female birds on the last full day – the bird that made up the final one of the quartet of pheasants we had in under 2 hours on Chelela, outside Paro.

Red Junglefowl

Gallus gallus

We had numerous intimate encounters with this pretty bird in Kaziranga NP.

Kalij Pheasant

Lophura leucomelanos

We had great views of a few birds on the first two days we had in Kaziranga NP and again on a few

days in Bhutan, including great views on Chelela.

Grey Peacock-Pheasant

Polyplectron bicalcaratum

This elusive pheasant was heard calling in the lowland forest near Samdrup Jonkhar.

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

Greylag Goose

Anser anser

A few of these common and widespread birds were seen around wetlands in Kaziranga NP.

Bar-headed Goose

Anser indicus

This species was pleasantly common at wetlands in Kaziranga.

Common Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

This large, smart duck was seen very well on the full day we had in Nameri NP.

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea

Small numbers were seen in Kaziranga NP and on the river in Nameri NP.

White-winged Duck

Asarcornis scutulata

A globally endangered species, we were very surprised indeed when we flushed a pair soon after beginning our search in Nameri NP.

Cotton Pygmy Goose

Nettapus coromandelianus

Several birds were scoped in the wetlands of Kaziranga NP at the start of the Assam extension.

Gadwall

Anas strepera

Several birds were seen in Kaziranga NP at the start of the Assam extension.

Eurasian Wigeon

Anas penelope

Small numbers were found on wetlands in Kaziranga and Nameri National Parks with another sighting of 3 birds in Bhutan.

Indian Spot-billed Duck

Anas poecilorhyncha

We encountered small numbers daily at wetlands in Kaziranga.

Northern Shoveler

Anas clypeata

Small numbers were seen in Kaziranga and Nameri National Parks.

Northern Pintail

Anas acuta

Small numbers were seen in Kaziranga and Nameri NP.

Garganey

Anas acuta

We found around 6 birds on waterbodies in eastern Kaziranga NP.

Eurasian Teal

Anas crecca

2 birds were seen and scoped in wetlands of Kaziranga NP.

Ferruginous Duck

Aythya nyroca

A good number of birds were first seen in flight and then on the water in Kaziranga NP.

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

A raft of around thirty birds were scoped and seen in flight in Kaziranga NP followed by 2 birds in a small duck flock on the outskirts of Nameri NP.

Common Merganser

Mergus merganser

We saw this bird along the river in Nameri NP and a single female was seen in the river at Punakha.

Grebes Ardeidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

This common and widespread bird was briefly seen by some participants in Kaziranga NP.

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

This wetland species proved to be fairly common in Assam.

Storks Ciconidae**Asian Openbill***Anastomas oscitans*

Fairly large numbers were seen throughout India, especially in Kaziranga National Park.

Black Stork*Ciconia nigra*

Two birds were seen well in flight over Nameri NP.

Woolly-necked Stork*Ciconia episcopus*

Several birds were seen very well in the Kaziranga NP.

Black-necked Stork*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

This tall, elegant stork was seen on several occasions within the Kaziranga NP, one of the best places to see this scarce species.

Lesser Adjutant*Leptoptilos javanicus*

This species was pleasantly common in Kaziranga.

Greater Adjutant*Leptoptilos dubius*

Just outside Guwahati we visited a dumpsite called Gursuk, where we were treated to over 200 of this rare and localized species – an incredibly large percentage of its world population. A few more individuals were seen in more natural surroundings in Kaziranga NP.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae**Black-crowned Night Heron***Butorides striata*

A single bird was seen as it flew over our vehicle in the early evening outside Kaziranga NP.

Striated Heron*Butorides striata*

A small stream near Samdrup Jonkar gave a views of 2 of these very widespread birds.

Indian Pond Heron*Ardeola greyii*

This wetland species proved to be fairly common in Assam.

Eastern Cattle Egret*Bubulcus cormandus*

Large numbers were encountered throughout India.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Western Cattle Egret B. ibis as Cattle Egret B. ibis.

Grey Heron*Ardeola cinerea*

Several were encountered at wetlands in Kaziranga National Park.

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Singletons were seen, some scoped well around the edges of wetlands in Kaziranga National Park.

Eastern Great Egret*Ardea modesta*

Several were seen at Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Western Great Egret B. alba as Great Egret B. alba.

Intermediate Egret*Mesophoyx intermedia*

Another bird that was seen in small numbers around Kaziranga's wetlands during the first 3 days.

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

Several individuals were seen during all the first 5 days of the tour in Assam.

Ibises Threskiornithidae**Black-headed Ibis***Threskiornis melanocephalus*

A rare winter visitor to this area of Assam, we enjoyed around five birds in Kaziranga NP.

Pelicans Pelicanidae**Great White Pelican***Pelecanus onocrotalus*

A single bird was seen well during our first excursion into Kaziranga National Park on the extension.

Spot-billed Pelican*Pelecanus philippensis*

A few of these birds were seen well daily inside Kaziranga NP, where they are common.

Cormorants *Phalacrocoracidae*

Little Cormorant

Phalacrocorax niger

Small numbers were encountered daily in Kaziranga National Park and Nameri.

Indian Cormorant

Phalacrocorax fuscicollis

Around ten birds were scoped around a wetland in eastern Kaziranga National Park.

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Several sightings of this widespread species were first found in Kaziranga, some were in breeding plumage and some guests were treated to a huge flock of these birds taking off in Nameri NP.

Anhingas *Anhingidae*

Oriental Darter

Anhinga melanogaster

Several of these striking birds were seen daily in Kaziranga NPs, while one bird was seen near Trongsa in Bhutan.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Eastern Osprey *P. cristatus* and just names it Osprey.

Ospreys *Pandionidae*

Western Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Around 7 birds were seen during our time around Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Eastern Osprey *P. cristatus* and just names it Osprey.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites *Accipitridae*

Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

One individual was seen during our stay at Kaziranga.

Black Kite

Milvus migrans

Hundreds were seen on our first day en route to Kaziranga from Guwahati, with more birds seen in Assam during the extension.

Pallas's Fish-Eagle

Haliaeetus leucoryphus

This great raptor was seen on several occasions with incredible views being obtained of birds in Kaziranga NP. This is another rare and highly sought-after species and Kaziranga is arguably the best place in the world to see it.

Grey-headed Fish-Eagle

Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus

We had good views of several adults in Kaziranga NP.

Himalayan Vulture

Gyps himalayensis

We found numerous birds throughout our travels in Bhutan, with the first birds recorded circling over town of Uru and 4 were seen perched in a tree on the way to Dochula.

Red-headed Vulture

Sarcogyps calvus

Two birds were seen very well in wooded areas of Kaziranga NP.

Crested Serpent-Eagle

Spilornis cheela

Superb flight and perched views were had of several birds first in Assam and then only recorded on 3 days of our time in Bhutan.

Western Marsh Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

Two males were seen well around a large waterbody in eastern Kaziranga NP.

Pallid Harrier

Circus pallidus

Two females were recorded as they were seen quartering in Kaziranga National Park.

Crested Goshawk

Accipiter trivirgatus

We had several flight views of this widespread Asian raptor throughout our tour in Bhutan and Assam state in India.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*

A single juvenile female was seen well by some in the Kaziranga NP with others seen in flight near Nameri and near the town of Uru.

Besra *Accipiter virgatus*

Best views were had of 2 separate birds as they were calling in flight over the forest.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

We found several birds throughout our tour in Bhutan especially near high passes.

Himalayan (Eurasian) Buzzard *Buteo refectus*

We had these birds on 5 days of the tour in Bhutan, with first records near our Morong campsite above Deothang and further sightings around Sengor and Trongsa.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Eurasian Buzzard B. buteo and Eastern Buzzard B. japonicus as Eurasian Buzzard B. buteo.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*

Frequently encountered in flight throughout Bhutan, the first bird near our camp at Morong.

Indian (Lesser) Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*

One bird was seen where it perched in a large tree near a large waterbody in Kaziranga NP.

Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*

One bird was seen where it perched in a large tree near a large waterbody in Kaziranga NP.

Steppe Eagle *Hieraaetus nipalensis*

A very distinctive young bird was seen in flight in Kaziranga NP, before an adult later flew low over our heads near Thrumsingla.

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus kienerii*

Two of these widespread but uncommon birds were seen very well in Kaziranga NP.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Hieraaetus kienerii*

This uncommon species was seen very well in flight above the Trongsa Dzong, where a juvenile made several passes overhead.

Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

Singletons were seen on two days in Kaziranga NP.

Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis*

This well-marked bird was perhaps the most frequently encountered raptor of the trip, one memorable sighting was of a perched bird near the town of Zhemgang.

Falcons & Kestrels *Falconidae*

Common (Eurasian) Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Birds were seen throughout various of the more open areas of Bhutan and Assam.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A pair of these migrants showed well as they circled above us for a while near the head of Dochula.

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus*

We enjoyed great scope views of a pair of birds perched around the tented camp in Nameri.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Single birds were seen over Kaziranga and Nameri NPs and again near the capital of Bhutan, Thimphu.

Bustards *Otididae*

Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis*

This extremely rare bird was surprisingly easily found on this tour when a male flew up during our Elephant-back walk in Kaziranga NP, where it only took a few minutes before we had a bird flying up

at very close quarters and showing off its very distinctive white wings and black body.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots *Rallidae*

White-breasted Waterhen

Amaurornis phoenicurus

Good views were obtained at the edges of wetlands in Kaziranga NP.

Black-tailed Crake

Amaurornis bicolor

We were rewarded with exceptional views of this often reclusive *rallid* in the Paro Valley, where they fed in the open after we needed some time and patience to find them.

Ruddy-breasted Crake

Amaurornis bicolor

A single bird was seen briefly by some participants at a wetland in Nameri NP.

Purple Swamphen

Amaurornis bicolor

A single distant bird was seen in one of the many wetlands in Kaziranga NP.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

This widespread species was seen on several occasions in the Assam lowlands.

Eurasian Coot

Gallinula chloropus

Around 25 birds were seen together in Kaziranga NP – a common and widespread bird in Asia.

Buttonquail *Turnicidae*

Barred Buttonquail

Turnix suscitator

We flushed a bird once from the elephants back in Kaziranga National Park.

Stone-curlews *Burhinidae*

Great Stone-curlew

Esacus recurvirostris

This attractive species was seen very well by those that opted for the short rafting trip during our Nameri stay.

Ibisbill *Ibidorhynchidae*

Ibisbill

Ibidorhyncha struthersii

Some participants first saw this bird while rafting along the river near Nameri followed by amazing scope views near Bumthang and again later between Thimphu and Paro. This is one of the particularly sought-after birds of the area, and always one of the favourites, found among round river rocks in rivers of the Himalayas.

Stilts *Recurvirostridae*

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

A few single birds were found in a wetland in Kaziranga NP.

Plovers & Lapwings *Charadriidae*

Northern Lapwing

Vanellus Vanellus

One few of these smart migrants were seen quite well around moist grasslands of Kaziranga NP.

River Lapwing

Vanellus duvaucelii

Another common bird within its habitat, it was seen during the last part of the time we in Bhutan after we enjoyed our first sightings in Nameri NP during our Assam extension.

Grey-headed Lapwing

Vanellus cinereus

We were pleased to have nice views of several of these scarce migrants near a wetland in Kaziranga.

Red-wattled Lapwing

Vanellus indicus

Small numbers were seen on every day we had in Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius*

A few migrant birds were observed both in Kaziranga NP and Nameri.

Jacanas Jacanadae**Pheasant-tailed Jacana***Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

A few of these birds were seen around a large wetland in Kaziranga NP.

Bronze-winged Jacana*Metopidius indicus*

Small numbers of this attractive “lilly trotter” were seen in Kaziranga NP and adjacent areas.

Sandpipers Scolopacidae**Pintailed Snipe***Gallinago stenura*

A few birds were flushed and seen in flight for extended periods around the riverside in Paro.

Common Snipe*Gallinago gallinago*

Around half a dozen birds were scoped and seen quite well in Kaziranga NP.

Eurasian Curlew*Numenius arquata*

A single bird was seen for a while along the edge of a wetland in eastern Kaziranga NP.

Spotted Redshank*Tringa erythropus*

A few bird was seen well on floating vegetation at a small body of water in Kaziranga NP.

Common Redshank*Tringa totanus*

A single bird was seen on day 1 in Kaziranga National Park.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

A few birds were seen on 3 consecutive days during our time in NE India.

Green Sandpiper*Tringa ochropus*

We first encountered this species in India on 2 days followed by two further sightings in Bhutan.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

Small numbers were seen on two days we had around the various waterbodies in Kaziranga NP.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

Small numbers were encountered in Kaziranga with further sighting at Samdrup Jongkar and near Thimpu in Bhutan.

Temminck's Stint*Calidris temminckii*

Small numbers were seen at wetlands in Kaziranga NP.

Pratincoles Glareolidae**Small Pratincole***Glareola lacteal*

Great views were had of a good number of these very popular birds over the river along Nameri NP.

Terns Sternidae**Brown-headed Gull***Croicocephalus brunnicephalus*

Surprise finds when we had single passage birds near the sewage plant of Thimpu and again near Paro.

Pallas's Gull*Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus*

A flock of around 25 birds were seen flying overhead in Nameri NP.

River Tern*Sterna aurantia*

Several birds were seen in full breeding plumage at close range around various wetlands within Kaziranga and Nameri NP. A beautiful and elegant species indeed!

Pigeons & Doves Columbidae**Common Pigeon***Columba livia*

Numerous in towns and villages throughout India and Bhutan.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*

This stunning pigeon was seen exceptionally well seen when we had a flock of 74 birds repeatedly circling near Thrumsingla.

Speckled Wood-Pigeon *Columba hodgsonii*

Some participants enjoyed great extended views of this species near the town of Paro.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Fairly numerous both during the extension and particularly in Bhutan.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

Small numbers were seen in and around Kaziranga NP in Assam.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

Large numbers were seen daily in India as well as at lower altitudes in Bhutan.

Barred Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia unchall*

Views of largest numbers of birds were enjoyed in Nameri NP, followed by scattered sightings in Bhutan, particularly around our campsite below Zhemgang.

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

We had good views of this stunning forest dove in Kaziranga NP and again near Samdrup Jongkar and near our Tingtibi campsite.

Thick-billed Green Pigeon *Treron curvirostra*

A flock totaling around 10 birds was encountered in Nameri NP where they shared fruiting trees with many other species.

Yellow-footed Green Pigeon *Treron phoenicoptera*

This attractive pigeon was relatively common in Kaziranga NP and Nameri.

Pin-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron apicauda*

We had brilliant scope views of birds first in Nameri NP in a fruiting tree and another 3 birds very close to our campsite at Tingtibi, including some outstanding close scope views of cooperative birds.

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenura*

After much searching this species was seen and scoped very well on the way to Thimphu.

Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea*

We had several great views of this impressive bird in the lowlands, first views in Kaziranga NP.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia*

Few encounters were had at mid altitude forest sites in Bhutan, unfortunately only in flight.

Parrots and Allies *Psittacidae*

Vernal Hanging Parrot *Loriculus vernalis*

We found a handful of these tiny parrots in Nameri National Park.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*

Fairly good numbers were encountered in the Kaziranga NP.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Commonly encountered in and around Kaziranga NP and Nameri.

Blossom-headed Parakeet *Psittacula roseate*

Several birds were seen very nicely while birding in the Kaziranga National Park.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*

One of the most commonly encountered birds on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension, this beautiful bird occurs in noisy flocks.

Cuckoos & Coucals *Cuculidae*

Greater Coucal*Centropus sinensis*

We encountered this widespread Asian species on several occasions on the extension.

Lesser Coucal*Centropus bengalensis*

A much shyer bird than the above species, we had sightings on all 3 days in Kaziranga NP grasslands.

Green-billed Malkoha*Phaenicophaeus tristis*

Everyone enjoyed good views of this outrageous forest bird in Kaziranga NP on 2 consecutive days, with a further sighting later in Nameri NP.

Asian Koel*Eudynamys scolopacea*

This widespread Asian species was, as is commonly the case, more often heard than seen, one bird was scoped in Nameri NP.

Asian Emerald Cuckoo*Eudynamys scolopacea*

A stunning, tiny species that was recorded on two occasions during the tour – once in Nameri NP and again in mature woodland outside Samdrup Jongkar, some recorded a third one near Zhemgang.

Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo*Surniculus lugubris*

This species was unfortunately only heard on one day from our campsite at Tingtibi.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Fork-tailed S. dicruroides and Moluccan Drongo-Cuckoo S. musschenbroeki as Asian Drongo-Cuckoo S. lugubris.

Large Hawk-Cuckoo*Cuculus sparverioides*

One of the dominant sounds of Bhutan, this species was heard virtually daily and seen well on a few occasions including great scope views.

Himalayan (Oriental) Cuckoo*Cuculus saturatus*

Heard on many days of the tour, it was seen very well in Nameri NP and again near Pelela in Bhutan.

Common Cuckoo*Cuculus canorus*

A great view was enjoyed on our return to Trongsa, where the bird we were watching then obligingly began calling too.

Owls Strigidae**Mountain Scops Owl***Otus spilocephalus*

Individuals were heard calling throughout the night on 2 occasions in mid-altitude forest at out Lower Lingmethang and Tingtibi campsites.

Dusky Eagle-Owl*Bubo coromandus*

We enjoyed good views of one juvenile bird perched on a day roost in Kaziranga National Park.

Brown Fish Owl*Ketupa zeylonensis*

We enjoyed views of one bird very well hidden bird, where it perched in a very dense small tree in Kaziranga National Park.

Collared Owlet*Glaucidium brodiei*

Although frequently heard, this diminutive owl is seldom seen, and we heard birds on numerous occasions calling from inaccessibly steep slopes.

Asian Barred Owlet*Glaucidium cuculoides*

We had fantastic views of this beautiful little owl on several occasions during our stay at Kaziranga and Nameri followed by further views near our Tingtibi Camp and other sites in Bhutan.

Spotted Owlet*Athene brama*

We enjoyed good views of this widespread Indian species on two occasions in Kaziranga NP.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae**Large-tailed Nightjar***Caprimulgus macrurus*

A single bird was heard at our accommodation on the Assam extension.

Swifts Apodidae**Himalayan Swiftlet***Aerodramus brevirostris*

This rapid flyer was seen in small flocks on a few days in Bhutan.

White-throated Needletail*Hirundapus caudacutus*

This handsome and unpredictable species was observed for an extended period as they swooped around us near Deothang on the first full day we had in Bhutan.

Asian Palm Swift*Cypsiurus balasiensis*

Good numbers were seen on a number of the days we had in Assam, with a few seen in Bhutan.

Fork-tailed Swift*Apus pacificus*

By far the most common *apus* in Bhutan with birds observed on more than half the days we spent there.

Little Swift*Apus affinis*

We found a rather large flock of this widespread species around the Trashigang Dzong.

Trogon Trogonidae**Ward's Trogon***Harpactes wardi*

We spent a lot of time and much effort trying to find this bird at many sites in Bhutan, but only managed single call responses on two occasions.

Rollers Coraciidae**Indian Roller***Coracias benghalensis*

This superbly coloured bird was seen in good numbers throughout the Assam extension.

Oriental Dollarbird*Eurystomus orientalis*

A few birds were found during the Assam extension in Nameri NP, another seen near Samdrup Jonkar.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae**Stork-billed Kingfisher***Halcyon capensis*

A single one of these very impressive kingfishers was seen in Kaziranga NP.

White-throated Kingfisher*Halcyon smyrnensis*

The commonest kingfisher, small numbers were seen daily in and around Kaziranga and Nameri. Small numbers of this gorgeous and demonstrative bird were also found at lower elevations in Bhutan.

Common Kingfisher*Alcedo atthis*

Encountered in small numbers at Kaziranga and Nameri with a few further encounters in the lowlands of Bhutan.

Crested Kingfisher*Megaceryle lugubris*

This denizen of Himalayan rivers was first seen near the town of Samdrup Jongkar in throughout Bhutan.

Pied Kingfisher*Ceryle rudis*

This cosmopolitan species was seen a few times in Kaziranga NP and Nameri.

Bee-eaters Meropidae**Blue-bearded Bee-eater***Nyctyornis athertoni*

This stunning bird was enjoyed on a few occasions, with the longest looks being scope views being of a single bird in Nameri NP.

Green Bee-eater*Merops orientalis*

A few birds were seen from the bus around Kaziranga, while we had others very well in Nameri NP.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater*Merops philippinus*

We found this passage migrant on two occasions during the first 2 days we had on the extension.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater*Merops leschenaulti*

Small numbers of this attractive bee-eater was enjoyed in India, where a few were recorded in Kaziranga NP.

Hoopoes *Upupidae***Eurasian Hoopoe***Upupa epops*

Great views were had by all during the tour, with the most extended views being of birds in Nameri NP and the south-western corner of Bhutan.

Hornbills *Bucerotidae***Oriental Pied Hornbill***Anthracoceros albirostris*

A pair of this species was seen perched up in a dead tree in Kaziranga NP in India.

Great Hornbill*Buceros bicornis*

We were surprised by views of our first of these outrageously spectacular birds in Kaziranga NP, while they were pleasantly common in Nameri NP and we also enjoyed good views in the Bhutanese lowlands around Samdrup Jonkar.

Rufous-necked Hornbill*Aceros nipalensis*

Another charismatic and oversized hornbill and undoubtedly one of the biggest targets on any Bhutan tour, this restricted species was seen well on the first 3 days we had in Bhutan, with the most impressive sighting being of a pair near the town of Morong.

Wreathed Hornbill*Aceros undulatus*

Yet another spectacular hornbill that most saw well in Nameri NP or near Samdrup Jonkar in Bhutan.

Barbets *Capitonidae***Great Barbet***Megalaima virens*

One of the dominant sounds of middle-altitude Himalayan forests, we enjoyed sightings of this charismatic bird on many days of the tour.

Lineated Barbet*Megalaima lineata*

This species was commonly heard and seen on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension.

Golden-throated Barbet*Megalaima franklinii*

This exquisite barbet was scoped and seen well during the time we spent in the mid-altitude forest that blankets Bhutan.

Blue-throated Barbet*Megalaima asiatica*

This gaudy bird was enjoyed by everyone on numerous occasions throughout India and the lowlands of Bhutan including around 4 birds enjoying berries on a very attractive tree near Samdrup Jonkar.

Blue-eared Barbet*Megalaima australis*

Brief views of a single bird were had by some participants in the Nameri NP forests.

Coppersmith Barbet*Megalaima haemacephala*

Several of these stunning barbets were seen well in and around Kaziranga NP, where they were also vocally very active.

Honeyguides *Indicatoridae***Yellow-rumped Honeyguide***Indicator xanthonotus*

Another scarce species best located in Bhutan, we enjoyed scope views of these very predictable birds at 2 separate cliffside Rock Bee hives.

Woodpeckers *Picidae*

Eurasian Wryneck*Picumnus innominatus*

A single bird was seen briefly on a walk in Nameri NP, before the call for White-winged Duck pulled all the attention elsewhere.

Speckled Piculet*Picumnus innominatus*

Only some of us saw this species briefly as it moved frustratingly fast through the canopy near Tingtibi.

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker*Dendrocopos hyperythrus*

This gorgeous bird was first seen and scoped near Trongsa before we had another pair near Dochula.

Grey-capped Pygmy-Woodpecker*Dendrocopos canicapillus*

This tiny woodpecker was seen on several occasions in Kaziranga NP and Nameri.

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos macei*

A rather uncommon bird in the low and mid-altitude forest, we had single birds in Kaziranga Np and again near Tingtibi.

Crimson-breasted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos cathpharius*

Another uncommon Woodpecker that was seen on 2 occasions: near Zhemgang and on the Lower Lingmethang road.

Darjeeling Woodpecker*Dendrocopos darjellensis*

Incredible, close views of a bird were enjoyed by all near the town of Mongar, while it was recorded on 3 other days.

Rufous Woodpecker*Celeus brachyurus*

Single birds were seen in Nameri NP, India and again above the town of Lingmethang, where it was seen well.

Lesser Yellownape*Picus chlorolophus*

We had nice views of one bird in Nameri followed by 3 further sightings on consecutive days in the Zhemgang/Tingtibi area in Bhutan.

Greater Yellownape*Picus flavinuca*

Great if brief views of this impressive bird were had on 2 days in Nameri NP and another was seen near the town of Zhemgang in central Bhutan.

Streak-throated Woodpecker*Picus xanthopygaeus*

Everyone managed great views of this low-elevation woodpecker on one of the two days it was recorded in Kaziranga NP.

Grey-headed (-faced) Woodpecker*Picus canus*

One bird was first seen in Kaziranga NP followed by a brief views near the town of Zhemgang.

Lesser Goldenback (Black-rumped Flameback)*Dinopium benghalense*

A few individuals were seen very well in Kaziranga NP.

Greater Goldenback (Flameback)*Chrysocolaptes lucidus*

A single bird was seen quite briefly in Kaziranga NP and was heard again later on the tour.

Bay Woodpecker*Blythipicus pyrrhotis*

This rather skulking and difficult bird was heard on 4 days after we had numerous brief views of a pair along Lower Lingmethang Road.

Broadbills *Eurylaimidae***Long-tailed Broadbill***Psarisomus dalhousiae*

A pair was seen briefly as they moved off from the road into the canopy near Zhemgang.

Pittas *Pittidae***Blue-naped Pitta***Pitta nipalensis*

We were very surprised to hear a bird at very close quarters below Zhemgang, unfortunately we were

unable to get any views of the bird as it remained hidden in the undergrowth.

Woodshrikes & allies *Tephrodornithidae*

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*

Small numbers of this bird were found along the roadside, biggest day with a maximum of 6 or so near our Tingtibi campsite.

Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis gularis*

A single bird was seen near our campsite at Tingtibi, another small group below Zhemgang.

Woodswallows *Artamidae*

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus*

We had great flight and perched views of this attractive species in Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

Ioras *Aegithinidae*

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*

Several birds were encountered near our accommodations on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension.

Cuckooshrikes *Campephagidae*

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei*

Numerous birds were encountered in low-lying woodland habitats around Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Coracina melaschistos*

Small numbers were encountered on several scattered days of the tour with our first memorable views on day 1 near Kaziranga NP, other good views in western Bhutan.

Rosy Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*

A really surprising find in Kaziranga, where we had a mixed flock of minivets that included at least 4 of this species – very erratic and uncommon in India and elsewhere.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*

Regularly recorded in all low and mid-altitude forest throughout Bhutan.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*

A really stunning bird that was seen first in Nameri and again on 2 days in Bhutan.

Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*

Fairly numerous in middle altitude forest with records on 4 days in Bhutan.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*

The dominant minivet of lower altitudes, numerous birds during the Assam extension and lower areas of Bhutan.

Shrikes *Laniidae*

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

A single bird was seen near the entrance to the western range of Kaziranga NP.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

This was a conspicuous but attractive roadside bird seen almost daily in open habitats.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*

Similar to the above species, this was extremely numerous throughout India and Bhutan.

Vireos, Greenlets *Virionidae*

White-browed Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis*

An attractive and noisy species, we enjoyed a few several scattered sightings of both sexes during the

Bhutan section of the tour.

Green Shrike-Babbler

Pteruthius xanthochlorus

This high altitude shrike-babbler showed well and was recorded on 2 consecutive days in the Middle Lingmethang area.

Black-eared Shrike-Babbler

Pteruthius melanotis

One of the most spectacularly colourful birds of the trip, we enjoyed numerous looks at this gaudy little gem, mostly in mixed-species flocks.

Figbirds, Orioles *Oriolidae*

Slender-billed Oriole

Oriolus tenuirostris

We had great views of a number of birds that were feeding in bottlebrushes in Punakha gardens.

Black-hooded Oriole

Oriolus xanthornus

Several good views were had of this beautiful species on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension.

Maroon Oriole

Oriolus traillii

Another very attractive species that was seen fairly regularly in mid-altitude broadleaved forest first in Nameri and later through Bhutan including excellent scope views of a calling male near Jongkala.

Drongos *Dicruridae*

Black Drongo

Dicrurus macrocercus

An especially numerous and conspicuous species throughout India and a few days in Bhutan.

Ashy Drongo

Dicrurus leucophaeus

Several birds were seen in more forested areas of Nameri, whilst it was later abundant throughout most of Bhutan.

Bronzed Drongo

Dicrurus aeneus

A bird that was encountered quite often in the low- and mid-altitude forests of Bhutan.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus remifer

A few of these birds were seen above Deothang, with 2 more sightings near the Tingtibi area later.

Hair-crested (Spangled) Drongo

Dicrurus hottentottus

This species was fairly common in well-wooded areas of Kaziranga and Nameri and was later seen on several occasions in the lowlands of Bhutan.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus paradiseus

We had great views of several magnificent birds during the Assam extension, mainly near Nameri NP.

Fantails *Rhipiduridae*

White-throated Fantail

Rhipidura albicollis

This species was quite numerous at lower altitudes, but can be quite tough to see well as it moves quickly through the undergrowth.

Monarchs *Monarchidae*

Black-naped Monarch

Hypothymis azurea

This widespread Asian species was first encountered in Kaziranga NP forests as well as in Nameri and a single sighting very near our campsite at Tingtibi.

Asian Paradise Flycatcher

Tersiphone paradisi

We were very fortunate to encounter this species in Nameri NP at the end of March, where a few participants had great views of a white morph male.

Crows, Jays *Corvidae*

Eurasian Jay*Garrulus glandarius*

Two individuals were seen well during a travel day between Punakha and Thimphu, they were recorded on 2 earlier days of the tour too.

Yellow-billed Blue (Gold-billed) Magpie*Urocissa flavirostris*

Another memorably attractive bird that was seen on several occasions on the high passes – the highlight being a flock of around 20 birds on Dochula.

Common Green Magpie*Cissa chinensis*

A dramatically coloured yet elusive bird that we managed to see briefly above Linmethang town.

Rufous Treepie*Dendrocitta vagabunda*

We enjoyed several good views of this attractive species on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension.

Grey Treepie*Dendrocitta formosae*

This bird turned out to be quite common throughout much of our time in Bhutan.

Eurasian Magpie*Pica pica*

Several loose flocks and singles were encountered around the Bhumthang district over two days.

Spotted (Eurasian) Nutcracker*Nucifraga caryocatactes*

Great views were had of this charismatic species at high altitudes with a maximum of around 20 birds during the day we had around Thrumbsingla.

Red-billed Chough*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

These corvids were commonly seen in a good number of higher-lying areas on the tour.

House Crow*Corvus splendens*

The commonest bird of urban India, where hundreds occur around the towns and cities small numbers were later recorded in Bhutan.

Large-billed Crow*Corvus macrorhynchos*

This was the very common crow of the higher altitudes in Bhutan.

Eastern Jungle Crow*Corvus leuillanti*

The numerous crows of more open areas, we had several dozen birds daily throughout India. This species also proved to be abundant throughout Bhutan.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Indian Jungle Crow C. culminatus and Large-billed Crow C. macrorhynchos as Large-billed Crow C. macrorhynchos.

Fairy Flycatchers *Stenostiridae***Yellow-bellied Fantail***Rhipidura hypoxantha*

This animated species was commonly encountered in mid elevation broadleaf forest where it was a regular member of mixed flocks.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher*Culicicapa ceylonensis*

This sprightly species was a conspicuous member of mixed foraging flocks throughout the tour.

Tits & Chickadees *Paridae***Rufous-vented Tit***Periparus rubidiventris*

Much scarcer than some other tit species in Bhutan, we only found this species on Thrumbsingla and again at Chelela on the final day of birding.

Coal Tit*Periparus ater*

Fairly numerous in coniferous forest in the same areas as the above species.

Grey Crested Tit*Lophophanes dichrous*

A subtly attractive species that was again seen in the higher-lying coniferous forests of Bhutan.

Cinereous Tit*Parus cinereus*

Several individuals were encountered during our stay at Kaziranga and Nameri NP.

Green-backed Tit*Parus monticolus*

By far the most common and widespread tit in Bhutan, recorded on most days.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*

This brightly coloured species was pleasantly widespread and common throughout Bhutan in mid-altitude forest.

Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*

This species was fairly common in mid altitude broad-leaved forest throughout Bhutan.

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea*

This incredibly beautiful, large, uncommon tit that forages in the canopy was finally seen incredibly well near Zhemgang after much searching in good habitat.

Penduline Tits *Remizidae*

Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps*

A single male in great plumage was seen at close quarters on Pelela – this is a very unpredictable species that we were fortunate to intercept during its migration.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Sand Lark *Calandrella raytal*

We had good views of around half a dozen birds on the gravel sand bank in Nameri NP.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*

A few birds were seen in the distance around the Sengor area.

Bulbuls *Pycnonotidae*

Striated Bulbul *Pycnonotus striatus*

This very attractive bulbul was seen very well on several occasions during our time in the lower-lying areas of Bhutan.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*

We first recorded this species in Nameri NP and had a few other sightings on 3 of the days in Bhutan.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Commonly encountered in open areas throughout India with several more being found above Samdrup Jonkhar.

Himalayan Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*

This very impressive bird was seen on a single day, when we recorded around 10 below Trashigang.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*

Abundant in secondary habitat throughout the extension and main tour.

White-throated Bulbul *Alophoixus flaveolus*

A few birds were seen in Nameri Forest, Samdrup Jongkar with several more being found at Tingtibi.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mccllellandii*

Small numbers were encountered in the lowlands around Doethang and Zhemgang areas.

Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flavala*

Small numbers were first encountered below Doethang and again near Yongkala and Tingtibi.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

Small numbers were seen in Nameri NP with large numbers being encountered almost daily especially in western Bhutan.

Swallows & Martins *Hirundinidae*

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin *Riparia paludicola*

Good numbers were seen feeding over the grasslands of Kaziranga and Nameri NPs.

Sand Martin (Bank Swallow)*Riparia riparia*

A few birds were spotted amongst the above species, hawking insects in Kaziranga NP.

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica*

Large numbers were found throughout India and also around Trashigang in Bhutan.

Eurasian Crag Martin*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

First a single bird was seen around the Indian passport checkpoint, a few more birds were seen distantly below Trashigang, unfortunately all were distant.

Nepal House Martin (Nepal Martin)*Delichon nipalensis*

The commonest *Hirundine* of the trip, we encountered numerous flocks along the roadside and had the pleasure of watching a colony around their nests on one occasion.

Red-rumped Swallow*Cecropis daurica*

This very widespread species was only seen on a single day around Trashigang.

Cettia bush warblers and allies Cettidae**Slaty-bellied Tesia***Tesia olivea*

This shy species was seen well on a few occasions by some guests in Jigme Dorji NP.

Grey-bellied Tesia*Tesia cyaniventer*

Another tricky bird that was seen by only a few participants, in Nameri and on the Lingmethang Road.

Chestnut-headed Tesia*Tesia castaneocoronata*

This colourful skulker was only seen by some briefly on two days in Bhutan.

Brown(ish)-flanked Bush Warbler*Cettia fortipes*

This common *cettia* was heard on numerous days of the trip and was seen well on a few occasions.

Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler*Cettia acanthizoides*

We had good views single birds on two days of the tour in central Bhutan bamboo stands.

Grey-sided Bush Warbler*Cettia brunnifrons*

We heard this bird on a single day on our descent down Yotungla.

Broad-billed Warbler*Tickellia hodgsoni*

A single bird was heard at close quarters, but was unfortunately not interested in coming any closer

Rufous-faced Warbler*Abroscopus albogularis*

A very localized bird in Bhutan, we had very good views of birds in southern Bhutan around Tingtibi and Zhemgang.

Black-faced Warbler*Abroscopus schisticeps*

This beautiful warbler was seen on numerous occasions throughout the country, mainly in the east.

Mountain Tailorbird*Orthotomus cuculatus*

This widespread Asian species was only heard calling near the campsite at Tingtibi.

Bushtits Aegithalidae**Black-throated Bushtit***Aegithalos concinnus*

Occurring at generally lower altitudes than the following species, this tiny bird was seen generally in small numbers on numerous days of the tour.

Rufous-fronted Bushtit (Black-browed Tit)*Aegithalos iouschistos*

A rather uncommon and attractive species of high altitude conifer forest which was seen on a few occasions with excellent sightings especially in the central and western side of Bhutan.

Leaf warblers and allies Phylloscopidae**Dusky Warbler***Phylloscopus fuscatus*

A single was seen well on the first day and another in Nameri NP on day 4.

Tickell's Leaf-Warbler*Phylloscopus affinis*

Several individuals were encountered in Kaziranga and Nameri National Parks with further sightings on a number of days in Bhutan.

Buff-barred Warbler*Phylloscopus pulcher*

Surprisingly this bird was only seen on two days during our time in Bhutan.

Ashy-throated Warbler*Phylloscopus maculipennis*

This distinctive species was fairly common throughout most of Bhutan.

Lemon(Pale)-rumped Warbler*Phylloscopus chloronotus*

This warbler was commonly recorded on most days in Bhutan with larger numbers being seen in the highlands.

Yellow-browed Warbler*Phylloscopus inornatus*

This passage migrant was encountered in surprisingly large numbers on many days of the tour.

Hume's Leaf Warbler*Phylloscopus humei*

We had a single sighting of this uncommon species near Deothang.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler*Phylloscopus magnirostris*

This distinctive *phylloscopus* was only seen on two occasions, the only of its genus to completely vacate Bhutan in winter.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler*Phylloscopus reguloides*

This tiny but distinctive *phylloscopus* was seen on most days of the trip.

Yellow-vented Warbler*Phylloscopus cantator*

This attractive species was first seen on around 5 days of the tour in Bhutan, mainly around Tingtibi.

Grey-hooded Warbler*Seicercus xanthoschistos*

This species was pleasantly common and vocal throughout Bhutan.

White-spectacled Warbler*Seicercus affinis*

We enjoyed nice sightings of this attractive warbler on 4 occasions, including sightings on the Lower Lingmethang Road.

Green-crowned (Golden-spectacled) Warbler*Seicercus burkii*

We found this species around lower-lying areas in central and western Bhutan around Zhemgang and Punakha, where a few birds showed well.

Whistler's Warbler*Seicercus whistleri*

Unbelievably long and close views were had of a bird as we waited for the road to be cleared below Sengor campsite.

Grey-cheeked Warbler*Seicercus poliogenys*

We encountered this attractive species on a few occasions during the first week we spent in Bhutan.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler*Seicercus castaniceps*

Another very attractive small warbler that was seen on numerous occasions throughout the tour especially with mixed flocks.

Reed Warblers & allies *Acrocephalidae***Blyth's Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus dumetorum*

A single bird was seen well in an area of burned grassland in Kaziranga NP on day 1.

Grassbirds & allies *Megaluridae***Striated Grassbird***Chaetornis striatus*

Scope and flight views were obtained of around 3 birds near the Gursuk dump on the first morning.

Cisticolas & Allies *Cisticolidae*

Zitting Cisticola*Cisticola juncidis*

A single bird was seen briefly in Kaziranga NP after we heard it there the previous day too.

Striated Prinia*Prinia criniger*

We found 3 birds in dry hillside scrub on one morning below Trashigang as we drove to Yongkala.

Black-throated (Hill) Prinia*Prinia atrogularis*

We were fortunate to have numerous good sightings of this often shy species in 3 different areas.

Rufescent Prinia*Prinia rufescens*

Small groups were seen on 2 days of the tour – in long grass near Samdrup Jongkar and on the Lower Lingmethang road.

Plain Prinia*Prinia inornata*

We heard this species in the grasslands of Kaziranga NP on the first two days, none were seen.

Common Tailorbird*Orthotomus sutorius*

Several were seen on the extension with further views on a number of days around Bhutan.

Babblers & Parrotbills Timaliidae**Puff-throated Babbler***Pellorneum ruficeps*

This distinctive species was seen on two consecutive days by some participants – first at our accommodation near Kaziranga NP and then a group of 3 in Nameri NP.

Abbott's Babbler*Malacocincla abbotti*

We all had great views of this skulky songster in and around Kaziranga NP.

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler*Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*

This large, loud and striking babbler was seen very well on one occasion near Trashigang, with a few other sightings during the tour.

White-browed Scimitar Babbler*Pomatorhinus schisticeps*

One bird was seen well by most participants as it frustratingly flew from one thick bush to another and only briefly gave a series of good views near our Tingtibi campsite.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler*Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

Probably the same two birds were seen very well near our first campsite at Morong.

Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler*Xiphirhynchus superciliaris*

A single bird gave views as it moved quickly through the undergrowth in response to call playback on Yongphula, another was briefly seen in a *Rhododendron* on Dochula.

Pygmy Wren-Babbler*Pnoepyga pusilla*

The high pitched whistled song of this tiny skulker was frequently heard in mid altitude forests throughout the trip, we finally had great views of one bird near Dochula.

Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler*Spelaeornis caudatus*

We had an incredible close and extended sighting of this stunning bird, responding to our playback along the Lingmethang Road.

Bar-winged Wren-Babbler*Spelaeornis troglodytoides*

This unusual Wren-babbler is highly sought-after and was seen very well below our Sengor campsite.

Spotted Wren-Babbler*Spelaeornis formosus*

This shy, skulking babbler was seen well but briefly by most participants in the Lingmethang area.

Sikkim Wedge-billed (Wren-)Babbler*Spelaeornis humei*

With some patience, this highly sought-after species was seen very well on the Lingmethang Road after coming in to call playback from down in the valley.

Rufous-capped Babbler*Stachyris ruficeps*

We first found this species near Samdrup Jongkar, later it was a common member of mixed-species flocks throughout the tour.

Golden Babbler*Stachyris chrysaea*

This beautiful species of the undergrowth was seen well on several occasions with memorable sightings along the middle Limnethang Road and near Tingtibi, seen on half the days we had in Bhutan.

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*

A fairly secretive and strange species that was first heard near Samdrup Jongkar and later seen well near our Tingtibi campsite in small mixed flocks.

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler *Macronous gularis*

We only heard this species calling from thickets near Samdrup Jongkar.

Chestnut-capped Babbler *Timalia pileata*

A single bird was seen quite well as it moved among dense tufts of tall grass in Kaziranga NP.

Striated Babbler *Turdoides earlei*

A small flock was seen and scoped in grassland from a watchtower in Kaziranga NP.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis*

Our most commonly recorded laughingthrush on account of its conspicuous nature and large flock size throughout Bhutan, extremely common around the Lower Lingmethang road.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*

This handsome bird was seen on a few occasions, while its great cackling call was more common.

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax monileger*

After initial views of some birds in Nameri NP, we enjoyed great views of this tricky species near our campsite at Tingtibi.

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*

A small flock of these endearing birds were seen quite briefly in the forest of Nameri NP.

Striated Laughingthrush *Garrulax striatus*

This very common laughingthrush gave good views on most days we had in Bhutan.

Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush *Garrulax rufogularis*

Seen on two occasions, where some were fortunate to get decent views in thick undergrowth.

Spotted Laughingthrush *Garrulax ocellatus*

After struggling to get glimpses of calling birds on one day, we had an incredibly relaxed individual, sitting in the open in a *Rhododendron* for a very long period near our campsite at Sengor.

Grey-sided Laughingthrush *Garrulax caerulatus*

A flock was briefly seen crossing the road on the Lower Lingmethang road.

Rufous-necked Laughingthrush *Garrulax caerulatus*

Flocks were seen well on two consecutive days, with both sightings between the town of Lingmethang and our Yonkala campsite.

Bhutan (Streaked) Laughingthrush *Garrulax imbricatus*

This species was fairly common especially in the east of Bhutan numerous sightings even in our campsites.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Streaked Laughingthrush G. lineatus as Streaked Laughingthrush.

Blue-winged Laughingthrush *Garrulax squamatus*

This very shy species was heard on a few occasions before we had quite brief views of 2 birds near Zhemgang.

Black-faced Laughingthrush *Garrulax affinis*

This species was fairly common at higher elevations and we had good views on a few days.

Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Garrulax erythrocephalus*

A surprisingly uncommon bird on this tour – the best views were of a pair at Punakha near the river, with numerous other glimpses.

Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*

This arch skulker showed incredibly well this year, when we had a pair together with some other species near the town of Zhemgang.

Silver-eared Leiothrix (Mesia)*Leiothrix argenteauris*

This spectacular undergrowth species was seen very well on three consecutive days around the Zhemgang area.

Red-billed Leiothrix*Leiothrix lutea*

This secretive ground-dwelling forest babbler was seen in a group of around 6 near Korila.

Himalayan Cutia*Cutia nipalensis*

This bird was heard only during our efforts to locate a group in good habitat.

Rusty-fronted Barwing*Actinodura egerton*

This large and striking flocking species of the lower strata was recorded on 5 days in Bhutan.

Hoary-throated Barwing*Actinodura nipalensis*

This, the much less common of the 2 barwing species showed well on 3 days of the tour, first views below our Sengor camp, while we waited for the road to get cleared.

Blue-winged Minla*Minla cyanouroptera*

This species was encountered in good numbers in Bhutan, where they were often members of mixed-species flocks.

Bar-throated (Chestnut-tailed) Minla*Minla strigula*

This gorgeous bird was seen on several occasions in middle altitude forest, again often as a member of mixed flocks.

Red-tailed Minla*Minla ignotincta*

Less common than the above two species, behaving nuthatch-like, it was seen in small numbers, mainly in central Bhutan, with best views around the Zhemgang area.

Yellow-throated Fulvetta*Alcippe cinerea*

Two small flocks were encountered moving low down in bamboo thickets on the Lower4 Lingmethang road, where they mixed with Golden Babbler on both occasions.

Rufous-winged Fulvetta*Alcippe castaneiceps*

Numerous at higher altitudes, where there were often a few birds in the mixed flocks along the passes.

White-browed Fulvetta*Alcippe vinipectus*

Fairly common especially in the central and western portions of the country, with our highest numbers at higher altitudes.

Nepal Fulvetta*Alcippe nipalensis*

Glimpses were had on many days of the trip, while everyone eventually had good views in the Punakha and Dochula areas.

Rufous Sibia*Heterophasia capistrata*

One of the most common species of Bhutanese forests and recorded most days with up to twenty daily in some areas.

Long-tailed Sibia*Heterophasia picaoides*

This lowland species was only seen very well on one day of the tour above Deothang, where we all had great views of 3 cooperative individuals.

Striated Yuhina*Yuhina castaniceps*

The first birds were seen at a stop above the town of Lingmethang, more were seen including especially nice views along the Zhemgang Road and Tingtibi.

White-naped Yuhina*Yuhina bakeri*

This attractive and uncommon was seen along the lower Lingmethang and Zhemgang Roads.

Whiskered Yuhina*Yuhina flavicollis*

The most commonly encountered yuhina in Bhutan and a conspicuous member of mixed flocks.

Stripe-throated Yuhina*Yuhina gularis*

This large yuhina with its large crest was commonly encountered at higher altitudes.

Rufous-vented Yuhina*Yuhina occipitalis*

This species was fairly common during our tour with small numbers seen most days at higher altitudes.

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*

This localized bird was pleasantly common this year with highest numbers being recorded on the first day we had it, which was on the Lingmethang road, below the Yongkala campsite.

Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium*

We heard and then had good views of this massive bamboo-dwelling parrotbill on Thrumsingla.

Brown Parrotbill *Paradoxornis unicolor*

A few birds showed for brief periods of time in very dense bamboo in Bumthang and on Yutongla.

Family uncertain *Incertae sedis*

Fire-tailed Myzornis *Myzornis pyrrhoura*

This avian gem provided one of the headaches of the trip as we were unable to locate any birds in the stunning *Rhododendron* forests we often encountered. Finally we found about 3 birds in a flock on Dochula, that were quite co-operative and allowed scope views as they stayed in the same trees for an extended period!

White-eyes *Zosteropidae*

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*

This species was commonly seen on the extension as well as on several days in Bhutan usually in large flocks.

Fairy-bluebirds *Irenidae*

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella*

This electric bird was seen with other birds in a fruiting tree above Samdrup Jonkhar, where we had magical scope views of both male and female birds.

Goldcrests, Kinglets *Regulidae*

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Disappointingly we only had a single brief view of one bird with a flock of tits on Thrumsingla.

Wrens *Troglodytidae*

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

This incredibly widespread tiny bird was seen very briefly by some participants on two or three days of the tour, including on Thrumsingla and Shurtungla.

Nuthatches *Sittidae*

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta castanea*

This lowland nuthatch was seen first in Nameri NP and on several days around the lowlands of Bhutan.

White-tailed Nuthatch *Sitta himalayensis*

The more high altitude nuthatch in Bhutan with several nice sightings, including on a number of days on the Lingmethang road.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*

Single birds were seen on two days in Kaziranga by most participants.

Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa*

This boldly patterned nuthatch is one of the most sought-after species in Bhutan as it is rare, localized and indeed beautiful. We worked hard for it and eventually had sightings near Zhemgang on two consecutive days and everyone had views of this memorable species.

Wallcreeper *Tichodromidae***Wallcreeper***Certhia discolor*

We were surprised to find this wonderful species on two occasions – both on the Middle Lingmethang road where we had very long views of a bird working a cliff face and flicking its scarlet wings. At this time of the year the birds are often already at higher altitudes and were very fortunate to locate them.

Treecreepers *Certhiidae***Eurasian Treecreeper***Certhia familiaris*

This widespread species was seen on two occasions in high altitude coniferous forest during the tour.

Rusty-flanked Treecreeper*Certhia nipalensis*

A single bird showed well near our first campsite at Morong, another was seen later on Thrumsingla.

Brown-throated Treecreeper*Certhia discolor*

We finally found this scarce species at our final opportunity on a walk near the base of Dochula, where a pair of these birds gave good views.

Starlings *Sturnidae***Spot-winged Starling***Sturnia spiloptera*

A single sighting of a bird was enjoyed by all where it perched in the Nameri NP, most birds have left by this time of the year and we were fortunate to record one.

Common Hill Myna*Gracula religiosa*

Good numbers of these very vocal birds were seen in both reserves during the Assam extension.

Great (White-vented) Myna*Acridotheres javanicus*

A few birds were seen, first near Guwahati and then again in Kaziranga NP.

Jungle Myna*Acridotheres fuscus*

This species is common in north-east India and was seen in good number on the 5 days we spent there.

Common Myna*Acridotheres tristis*

This ubiquitous species was present in large numbers throughout India and in all more built-up areas of central and western Bhutan.

Pied Myna (Asian Pied Starling)*Gracupica contra*

An atypical myna that was fairly numerous on the Kaziranga and Nameri extension.

Chestnut-tailed Starling*Sturnia malabarica*

This attractive species was fairly numerous in and around Kaziranga and Nameri NPs, where we had records every day.

Thrushes *Turdidae***Blue Whistling Thrush***Myophonus caeruleus*

Perhaps Bhutan's most conspicuous roadside bird, we recorded this bird in large numbers daily.

Scaly Thrush*Zoothera dauma*

A pair showed well for a short period on our way up through the conifer forests of Chelela.

Black-breasted Thrush*Turdus dissimilis*

Two female birds were seen well around a path in Nameri NP.

White-collared Blackbird*Turdus albocinctus*

We recorded a number of these birds on 8 days during the time in Bhutan, mainly at higher altitudes.

Grey-winged Blackbird*Turdus boulboul*

We had good views of these birds, first in Nameri NP and again later on the way towards Dochula.

Black-throated Thrush*Turdus atrogularis*

A single bird showed well for a brief period at our campsite in Morong, where a few guests obtained good views.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

Indian Blue Robin

Luscinia brunnea

Two birds were seen on Thrumsingla, where most participants had brief views of these skulking birds.

White-browed Bush Robin

Tarsiger indicus

Another very tough bird that was not very cooperative where we saw it on the way down Thrumsingla and again on the final day, at Chelela.

Rufous-breasted Bush Robin

Tarsiger hyperythus

Absolutely amazing views were had of this secretive robin on the eastern slopes of Thrumsingla.

Himalayan (Red-flanked) Bluetail

Tarsiger rufilatus

Seen on 4 days in Bhutan, with best views for most on the final day of birding in conifers on Chelela.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species under Red-flanked Bluetail T. cyanurus.

Golden Bush Robin

Tarsiger chrysaeus

A few birds were seen briefly on the Middle and Upper Lingmethang roads, where one stunning male and a few females showed on a few occasions.

Oriental Magpie-Robin

Copsychus saularis

Fairly common throughout the tour, with highest numbers recorded at lower and mid-altitudes.

White-rumped Shama

Copsychus malabaricus

A single male was seen exceptionally well by some in Kaziranga, before we had a pair showing quite well near Samdrup Jongkar in Bhutan.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Small numbers of this passage migrant were encountered on the Assam extension.

Hodgson's Redstart

Phoenicurus hodgsoni

Scope views and other good looks of this winter visitor were had, first on the river at Nameri NP and then on 4 further days in Bhutan, most sightings around the Bumthang/ Trongsa areas.

White-throated Redstart

Phoenicurus schisticeps

A winter visitor that has normally departed by this time, we were fortunate to find a single female near Yotungla, where everyone enjoyed scope views.

Blue-fronted Redstart

Phoenicurus frontalis

This attractive bird was seen on nearly every day throughout Bhutan.

Plumbeous Redstart

Rhyacornis fuliginosus

Another very common redstart, that was first seen in Nameri NP, with many sightings later along streams and rivers in Bhutan.

White-capped Redstart

Chaimarrornis leucocephalus

A wonderful feature of Bhutanese rivers, this attractive species was encountered on streams and rivers throughout the tour, mainly in Bhutan.

White-tailed Robin

Cinclidium leucurum

This turned uncommon and skulking species showed well very briefly in the forest below Zhemgang.

Little Forktail

Enicurus scouleri

This most diminutive of forktails was seen well on three occasions, below a waterfall on the middle Lingmethang Road and very near the Tiger's Nest Monastery.

Black-backed Forktail

Enicurus immaculatus

After much time spent searching for this huge target, we finally located two single birds along a stream above Samdrup Jongkar, on the first full day we spent in Bhutan.

Slaty-backed Forktail

Enicurus schistaceus

This handsome forktail was seen very well on the same river as the above species, where we enjoyed

scope views.

Spotted Forktail

Enicurus maculatus

We all enjoyed brilliant views of this extremely attractive species on several occasions with best views in the town of Trongsa.

Siberian (Eurasian) Stonechat

Saxicola maurus

This widespread species was common in grassland habitat in Kaziranga and Nameri NPs and we had a few further sightings at scattered sites in Bhutan in appropriate habitat.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with European Stonechat S. rubicola and African Stonechat S. torquatus as Stonechat S. torquatus.

Grey Bush Chat

Saxicola ferrea

A conspicuous feature at the roadside of Bhutan with abundant individuals, mostly at higher altitudes, even singing conspicuously at the edge of our campsites.

Blue Rock Thrush

Monticola solitarius

This bird was seen at scattered locations during the tour, with first good views above Samdrup Jongkar.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush

Monticola rufiventris

This species was also fairly common and we had sightings on around half the days we spent in Bhutan, best views were of a male on the road to Pemagatshel.

Blue-capped Rock Thrush

Monticola cinclorhynchus

This attractive species was seen in amazing numbers around Zhemgang, where we recorded nearly 20 males on a single day. Also recorded in other areas in Bhutan.

Dark-sided (Siberian) Flycatcher

Muscicapa sibirica

A single bird was seen by some in forest below our campsite at Morong.

Asian Brown Flycatcher

Muscicapa dauurica

Only a single bird was seen very near our campsite at Tingtibi.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher

Ficedula strophiate

Easily the most common *Ficedula* in Bhutan, where we had some great views of this lovely species.

Taiga Flycatcher

Ficedula albicilla

This species was first seen on a few days at the beginning of the tour, in Kaziranga and Nameri NP, as well as around Samdrup Jongkar in Bhutan.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher

Ficedula hyperythra

This uncommon flycatcher was seen on two occasions – first we had a single male near Samdrup Jongkar, later on Pelela we recorded a pair below the road.

Little Pied Flycatcher

Ficedula westermanni

This striking little species was seen on several days of the trip, below Yongkala and near Zhemgang were the best sightings.

Ultramarine Flycatcher

Ficedula superciliaris

We enjoyed several cracking views of this delicately patterned species with great views of several males throughout the tour.

Sapphire Flycatcher

Ficedula sapphira

After an earlier missed bird at the start of the tour, we were very fortunate to have a good view of one of this very low-density bird at a roadside stop on the way to Zhemgang from Trongsa.

Verditer Flycatcher

Eumyias thalassina

This beautiful and radiant bird was one of the most common species of the tour, mainly in Bhutan.

Pale Blue Flycatcher

Cyornis unicolor

We were lucky to obtain great views of this species on two days in the Zhemgang area.

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher

Cyornis rubeculoides

A few birds were seen – well after some effort – near our campsite at Tingtibi.

Rufous-bellied Niltava

Niltava sundara

Surprisingly, this gorgeous species was not seen until we had two birds near Dochula on 10 April.

Large Niltava *Niltava grandis*

A single female showed well for a brief period, before we only heard calling birds later in Bhutan.

Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae*

More numerous than the above species, we enjoyed good sightings of this endearing species on a number of occasions, mainly in central and western Bhutan.

Dippers *Cinclidae*

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*

Fairly common along large rivers in Bhutan with nice views on the way to Lingmethang and near Trongsa and Punakha.

Leafbirds *Chloropseidae*

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*

This bird was seen mainly on the extension in Assam, with another sighting in eastern Bhutan.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*

Good numbers of this colourful species were encountered throughout the tour, with great views below Morong and in the Zhemgang area.

Flowerpeckers *Dicaeidae*

Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum concolor*

One bird showed very well on a walk near our Tingtibi campsite.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*

Numerous birds were seen throughout Bhutan, with particularly good views of males near Morong and Zhemgang.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*

Around Nameri we had 3 birds on a morning walk, before we headed toward the Bhutanese border.

Sunbirds *Nectariniidae*

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*

This resplendent bird was seen very well below our campsite at Sengor, where we had several males.

Green-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga nipalensis*

The most commonly encountered sunbird during the time we spent at mid- to high altitude in Bhutan.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*

Another fairly numerous and stunning sunbird with birds on most days at lower altitudes.

(Eastern) Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*

We found this stunning sunbird in the lowland forest around Samdrup Jongkar, another was seen later.

Fire-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga ignicauda*

We were lucky to have numerous males on Thrumssingla, where they were feeding on spectacular flowering *Rhododendrons*. This gem of a bird was voted one of the top birds of the tour.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*

We enjoyed several sightings of this attractive species in the lowlands of Bhutan, after a first record in Nameri NP in India.

Old World Sparrows *Passeridae*

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

This widespread species was only commonly encountered throughout India.

Russet Sparrow*Passer rutilans*

Numerous birds were seen in rural areas around settlements, biggest numbers in eastern Bhutan.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow*Passer montanus*

Another widespread Asian species that was seen in small numbers throughout the Assam extension and many days in Bhutan.

Weavers, Widowbirds *Ploceidae***Baya Weaver***Ploceus philippinus*

A few non-breeding birds were seen around the grasslands of Kaziranga National Park.

Waxbills, Munias & Allies *Estrildidae***White-rumped Munia***Lonchura stiata*

Surprisingly common, with birds seen very well in Nameri NP, near Samdrup Jongkar and at Tingtibi.

Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Mannikin)*Lonchura punctulata*

Unfortunately a pair was only seen briefly as they flew out of a fallow piece of land near Punakha.

Accentors *Prunellidae***Rufous-breasted Accentor***Prunella strophiatea*

We regularly recorded this species in small numbers around Morong, with a few further sightings later.

Wagtails & Pipits *Motacillidae***Western Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava*

A few birds were seen in moist grasslands of Kaziranga NP.

Citrine Wagtail*Motacilla citreola*

A fairly common wagtail in north-east India, we enjoyed some males in full breeding plumage.

Grey Wagtail*Motacilla cinerea*

Singles were encountered at scattered sites in Bhutan, with most sightings near Samdrup Jonkar.

White Wagtail*Motacilla alba*

Good numbers were located in and around Kaziranga and Nameri followed by numerous views along rivers in Bhutan of the white-browed race, sometimes split as Himalayan Wagtail *Motacilla leucopsis*.

Paddyfield (Oriental) Pipit*Anthus rufulus*

Several were seen in dry grassland on the extension in Kaziranga NP and again near Timphu in Bhutan.

Olive-backed Pipit*Anthus hodgsoni*

Encountered almost daily throughout our main tour, seen in good numbers on forest edge with up to twenty birds in a single day.

Rosy Pipit*Anthus roseatus*

Good numbers were seen well in Kaziranga NP, with a few more records near Sengor and Timphu.

Finches *Fringillidae***Tibetan Serin***Serinus thibetanus*

One flock of twenty birds was seen in the canopy and in flight on the way up Dochula.

Yellow-breasted Greenfinch*Carduelis spinoides*

Seen on 4 days in Bhutan, with best views being single above Zhemgang and at Punakha.

Plain Mountain Finch*Leucosticte nemoricola*

We saw large flocks in flight over Yotungla and near the town of Paro.

Common Rosefinch*Carpodacus erythrinus*

A few birds were seen near Nameri NP, at our campsite at Morong and again on the way up Dochula.

Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch*Carpodacus pulcherrimus*

A few beautiful males and females were seen well as we made our way to the Bumthang area.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Chinese Beautiful Rosefinch *C. davidianus* as Beautiful Rosefinch *C. pulcherrimus*

Dark-rumped Rosefinch*Carpodacus edwardsii*

A single female was seen on a *Rhododendron* near our campsite at Sengor.

Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch*Carpodacus thura*

Two birds were seen, one of them well, near the top of Chelela on the final day of birding.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Chinese White-browed Rosefinch *C. dubius* as White-browed Rosefinch *C. thura*

Crimson-browed Finch*Pinicola subhimachalus*

This scarce bird was seen on one occasion, when we had a single female in the canopy near Zhemgang.

Scarlet Finch*Haematospiza sipahi*

This vividly coloured bird was seen on 3 days, great views near the towns of Morong and Zhemgang.

Brown Bullfinch*Pyrrhula nipalensis*

This scarce bird was recorded once, when we had a pair near the base of Dochula.

Collared Grosbeak*Mycerobas affinis*

Good views of this bright bird were had, with scope views on Pelela and again on Chelela.

Spot-winged Grosbeak*Mycerobas melanozanthos*

Flocks of this uncommon bird were seen well on two days on the Lower Lingmethang road.

White-winged Grosbeak*Mycerobas carnipes*

Seen twice in Bhutan, we first had views in conifers and on the ground near Urula, with great views of cooperative birds on Chelela.

Golden-naped Finch*Pyrrhoptes epauletta*

A rare and unpredictable species, we obtained great scope views of a single male feeding in *Rhododendron* on the way down Yotungla.

Buntings & Allies *Emberizidae***Crested Bunting***Melophus lathami*

We found this attractive bunting in scrubby countryside at low elevations in two areas: below Trashigang and between Trongsa and Zhemgang.

Little Bunting*Emberiza pusilla*

We had a few sightings of this migrant bunting around Morong and Trashigang areas.

ANNOTATED LIST OF MAMMALS (26 Species)**Indian Flying Fox***Pteropus giganteus*

Around 30 of these huge frugivores were seen on the way to Kaziranga NP.

Royle's Pika*Ochotona roylei*

We had great views of a single individual in a concrete wall below Sengor camp.

Large-eared Pika*Ochotona macrotis*

A few of these small pikas were seen well on Chelela, where they allowed close approaches.

Black Giant Squirrel*Ratufa bicolor*

Great, extended views of this impressive squirrel were enjoyed below Zhemgang, after we had initial problems as it was very uncooperative for a while, hiding behind a trunk.

Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel*Dremomys lokriah*

We found this species throughout the tour in good numbers and mainly at slightly higher altitudes.

Hoary-bellied Squirrel*Callosciurus pygerythus*

First numerous on the extension through Assam, we continue to find smaller numbers in lowland sites during the Bhutan tour.

Himalayan Striped Squirrel*Tamiops mcclllandii*

Especially in high elevation areas we found this tiny animal to be quite common in Bhutan.

Northern Palm Squirrel*Tamiops pennantii*

A single individual was seen briefly by some guests in Kaziranga.

Sikkim Vole*Microtus sikimensis*

Some of the group was fortunate to get fleeting views of a single animal rushing through the undergrowth near the head of Thrumsingla.

Yellow-throated Martin*Martes flavigula*

These shy and very impressive mustellids were seen on two occasions – first when we had 2 running along the Lower Lingmethang road, while another was seen later near Trongsa.

Indian Smooth-coated Otter*Lutra perspicillata*

A few of these animals were seen briefly in the distance, where they swam in Kaziranga NP.

Small Indian Mongoose*Herpestes auropunctatus*

One of these little animals was seen briefly by some guests on the first afternoon in Kaziranga NP.

Hoolock Gibbon*Hylobates hoolock*

We had great and very unexpected views of this special primate from the roadside very close to our lodge at Kaziranga NP. We watched a female brachiating and then had views of a youngster nearby.

Golden Langur*Trachypithecus geei*

Locally abundant around Zhemgang and Tingtibi where we had some great views of this charismatic primate sometimes at a distance of no more than five meters!

Capped Langur*Trachypithecus pileatus*

Small troops of these playful monkeys were seen well in Nameri NP and again in eastern Bhutan.

Assamese Macaque*Macaca assamensis*

Small numbers were seen in Kaziranga NP, with more recorded later in central areas of Bhutan.

Rhesus Macaque*Macaca mulatta*

A few troops and singles were seen in Kaziranga and Nameri NPs as well as in eastern Bhutan.

Greater One-horned Rhinoceros*Rhinoceros unicornis*

Good numbers of this magnificent creature were seen daily in Kaziranga National Park, which harbours the majority of the world's remaining population.

Indian Elephant*Elephas maximus*

Small herds of these monstrous mammals were enjoyed on two days in Kaziranga National Park.

Wild Boar*Sus scrofa*

Small numbers of these widespread pigs were seen on the first two days in Kaziranga National Park.

Water Buffalo*Bubalus bubalus*

This huge beast proved to be quite numerous in Kaziranga NP, where these animals are some of the few that have not interbred with local domesticated individuals.

Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)*Muntiacus muntjak*

This attractive and secretive deer was heard on several occasions, and then finally seen near Tingtibi and on Chelela.

Hog Deer*Axis porcinus*

Fairly large numbers were seen daily in Kaziranga NP.

Swamp Deer*Cervus duvauceli*

This extremely localized deer was seen in good numbers in Kaziranga NP, particularly common on the elephant ride.

Common Goral*Nemorhaedus goral*

A single individual was seen by some from the Trashigang Dzong, before everyone could later enjoy extended views of an animal beside the road on the way to Punakha.

Photo credits: Satyr Tragopan, Indian One-horned Rhinoceros, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Black-eared Shrike-Babbler, Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler, Golden-throated Barbet, Punakha Dzong, flowering Rhododendrons and Blood Pheasant. All photographs taken on the tour by Markus Lilje.

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