

INDIA

TIGERS, TAJ AND BIRDS GALORE

JANUARY 4-19, 2011



Tiger in Kanha (Photo: Blair Bernson)

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INDIA: TIGERS, TAJ AND BIRDS GALORE
January 3–19, 2011

This was a fascinating journey through northern and central India showcasing three of this incredible country's great national parks. Our primary goal was a hoped for encounter with the tiger, and we were lucky enough to see the great cat collectively four times—from elephant on one occasion and from jeep on three. In making the tiger our primary quest, we were able to distract ourselves with several hundred of India's remarkable birds (321 total), see a bunch of lesser-known mammals, and take in some wonderful cultural sites ranging from the World Heritage Taj Mahal to Fatehpur Sikri, Aqbar's Tomb at Sikandra, and Humayun's Tomb in Delhi.

Our first major destination was the famous Kanha National Park in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. From our beautiful hotel we took a total of seven jeep drives into different sectors of the park. Kanha, like much of northern India, was under the influence of a cold air cell, and conditions were cold and wintry with frost on the ground in the mornings.

Our first tiger sighting was of a tigress moving in close to a herd of swamp deer. She was expertly spotted by forest officer Vinod, and provided several excellent views over a half-hour period before eventually disappearing in the grass. On our return drive one jeep was fortunate to have a second tiger cross the road in front of them and then halt momentarily at a distance of 10 yards from them before disappearing into the bamboo. This was after a morning when two jeeps had a real stroke of luck with a sloth bear providing excellent views as it ambled right into the open. Largely nocturnal, any sighting of a sloth bear is fortuitous.

The third tiger sighting was from elephant: a dozing tigress in mint condition sleeping during the late morning. Other good mammal sightings were enjoyed in Kanha including excellent views of three-striped palm squirrel, jungle cat, ruddy mongoose, golden jackal, troops of gray langur, wild boar, barking deer, sambar, chital, and the giant forest cattle called the gaur.

We connected with many great birds here including Painted Francolin, Red Spurfowl, Cinnamon Bittern, Red-naped Ibis, Black and Woolly-necked storks, White-rumped and Red-headed vultures, White-eyed Buzzard, a superb adult Rufous-bellied Eagle, Crested Hawk-Eagle, Plum-headed Parakeet, Sirkeer Malkoha, Oriental Scops-Owl, Indian Jungle Nightjar, Eurasian Wryneck, White-naped Woodpecker, Long-tailed Minivet, Black-naped Oriole, Grasshopper Warbler, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Blue-capped Rock-Thrush, Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Scimitar-Babbler, and Golden-fronted Leafbird to mention a few. As a group we observed 131 species of birds in Kanha and 13 species of mammals.

A lengthy travel day saw us back in Delhi at our very comfortable hotel. On the following day we traveled across the northern plains to be ensconced in The Den, in the foothills of the western Himalayas and at the gateway to the amazing Corbett National Park. We made a strategic shopping expedition in Ramnagar with several folks purchasing more warm clothes and blankets as the cold conditions gripped northern India. Some serious haggling prevailed as rupees were bartered for woolen items!

At The Den we added more than 50 birds to the trip list in the morning, and it is fair to say that people did not know in which direction to look at certain times. Among the temptations were such gems as White-crested Laughingthrush, Tawny Fish-Owl, Rufous-bellied Niltava, Red-billed Leiothrix, Spotted Forktail, Brown Dipper, Crimson Sunbird, Orange-bellied Leafbird, and Mountain Hawk-Eagle.

We made our way from The Den into Corbett National Park. A man-eating tigress was present near the main park gate, having killed and eaten four local women who were collecting firewood in the park's buffer zone in the past few weeks. She was shot by park staff during our stay. Such are the problems of India's ever increasing population in its few large protected areas. With this real-time drama unfolding during our stay, several participants took the opportunity to read several of Jim Corbett's timeless classics such as *The Temple Tiger* and *Man-eaters of Kumaon*. Indeed, our group was very fortunate to have a sighting of a large male tiger (well-spotted by Charlona) crossing the riverbed on our drive in. Tigers are very difficult to see in Corbett, so luck was on our side again.

Our three nights in the rather basic guest-house at Dhikala brought the advantage of being right in the middle of this fabulous park. The previous monsoon had been enormous and the Ramganga Reservoir was full to the brim below the Dhikala compound. We set about exploring the many game trails in this world-class park. At every place we stopped, something new popped up, or a microdrama (and some not so micro) unfolded. Perhaps the most dramatic sighting was of a pair of golden jackals seizing and killing a gray mongoose.

The birding was excellent and we enjoyed great views of many scarce species. Some of the good sightings included Black Francolin, Kalij Pheasant, Black-necked Stork, Pallas' Fish-Eagle, Lesser Fish-Eagle, Himalayan Griffon Vulture, Cinereous Vulture, Bonelli's Eagle, Collared Falconet, Barred Buttonquail, White-rumped Needletail, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Oriental Pied-Hornbill, Himalayan Flameback, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Green Magpie, Smoky Warbler, White-tailed Rubythroat, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler, Nepal Wren-Babbler, and Crested Bunting. We recorded 144 species of birds in and adjacent to Corbett National Park.

We also enjoyed several new mammal sightings including excellent views of Asian elephant (these really are the most exceptional mammals), hog deer, Terai gray langur, gray mongoose, and an especially memorable encounter with the Indian crested porcupine which came by to enjoy a chapatti near the staff restaurant one night! Not to be left out, we even found a few reptiles despite the cold conditions. Great views of the mugger crocodile, gharial, freshwater turtles, and a basking tree snake added to the diversity of this exceptional park.

It was time to head to Agra and the Taj Mahal. En route we spent a very comfortable night at Fort Unchagaon. Plenty of interesting birds were seen from the Fort including spectacular Indian River Terns and a good cross section of shorebirds including Temminck's Stint; Wood, Marsh, and Green sandpipers; and Common Redshank with Common Greenshank. En route to Agra we visited some interesting wetlands near Java and attracted quite a crowd of inquisitive locals as we made stops for Eurasian Hoopoe, White-tailed Lapwing, and Painted Storks. A late stop at the Yamuna River turned up a superb Pallas' Gull, a Steppe Gull, and dozens of Black-headed Gulls.

The next morning we were off to the Taj Mahal. As ever, this extraordinary building built in the name of love left this leader with goose bumps. No visit to the Taj is disappointing, as the marble catches the mood of the light, with a variety of atmospheric phenomena to add to the complexity. After our early morning visit, the sun pushed through the mist and we enjoyed the most of this superb Indian building. We visited Aqbar's Tomb at Sikandra, with its spacious gardens and herds of blackbuck, and the abandoned Mughal capital of Fatehpur Sikri.

Finally, we visited the wonderful wetland sanctuary of Bharatpur for a three-night stay at a lovely hotel, complete with both Brown Hawk-Owl and Indian Scops-Owl roosting in the gardens. Indeed, we observed nine species of owls on this tour—eight of them in the daytime!

Bharatpur was in good season due to a healthy monsoonal rainfall event, with many of the ephemeral wetlands holding extensive water and a healthy biomass and diversity of birds. The birding was wonderful. On our first full morning we commenced with a great scope view of a Dusky Eagle-Owl, a small flock of wintering Tickell's Thrushes, followed by a skulking Black Bittern, a beautiful male Pallid Harrier and, as a finale, a superbly tame pair of Sarus Cranes. In the afternoon we scoped up a flock of delightful Indian Coursers while we watched a Steppe Eagle see off a trio of jackals at a carcass it shared with a Red-headed Vulture.

The following day we visited the reservoir of Bund Barrater. The bus stopped regularly for new birds ranging from the dapper Yellow-crowned Woodpecker to flocks of Black-breasted Weaver. A Brown Crake put on a good show at a small wetland with yet another Black Bittern. At the reservoir, Red-crested Pochard, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, flighty Jungle Bush-Quail, a Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, and a cooperative Sulphur-bellied Warbler with male Red Avadavats kept us on our toes. A small Indian mongoose and a camp of Indian flying-foxes kept our mammal list ticking over, and we finished the day watching several endangered Cliff Vultures at the nest.

On our last morning at Bharatpur we enjoyed our final hours of excellent birding, this time starting off with two Large-tailed Nightjars seen in the day

roosting at the base of trees. An adult gray morph Steppe Buzzard was a good sighting, along with the delightful Bay-backed Shrike. At the largest wetland we turned up a small flock of Ferruginous Ducks and a perched adult Eastern Imperial Eagle, and enjoyed fine views of a great collection of wetland birds including Black-necked Stork and Bar-headed Geese in superb light.

Our journey through India came to a close, and we returned to Delhi, although we managed to squeeze in some Little Stints and a male Ruff acquiring its spectacular white breeding plumage head dress. I hope I can share the enthusiasm I hold for this country with you on our next “India: Tigers and Taj” departure in January 2013. I would also like to thank all the participants for making this adventure so delightful.

Dion Hobcroft

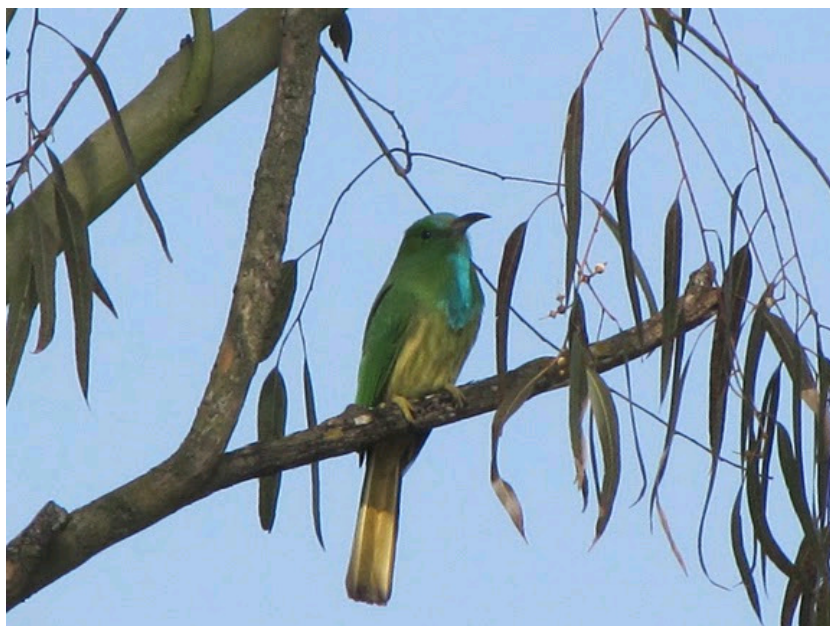
Asian Elephants in Corbett (Photo: Blair Bernson)



ITINERARY

- 4 JAN 11:** Afternoon tour to Humayun's Tomb and Qutab Minar. Evening fly to Raipur.
- 5 JAN 11:** Drive to The Baagh, Kanha
- 6 JAN 11:** Kanha National Park (K)
- 7 JAN 11:** Kanha National Park
- 8 JAN 11:** Kanha National Park
- 9 JAN 11:** Birding Baagh Hotel gardens then drive to Nagpur and fly to Delhi.
- 10 JAN 11:** Drive Delhi to Ramnagar and The Den.
- 11 JAN 11:** AM The Den PM Drive to Dhikala, Corbett National Park (C)
- 12 JAN 11:** Corbett National Park
- 13 JAN 11:** Corbett National Park
- 14 JAN 11:** AM Corbett National Park PM Drive to Fort Unchagaon
- 15 JAN 11:** Drive Fort Unchagaon to Agra via Aligarh.
- 16 JAN 11:** AM Taj Mahal, Sikandra PM Fatehpur Sikri
- 17 JAN 11:** Bharatpur (B)
- 18 JAN 11:** AM Bund Barater (BB) PM Bharatpur
- 19 JAN 11:** AM Bharatpur PM Drive to Delhi. Tour concludes.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater in Corbett (Photo: Blair Bernson)





Oriental Scops-Owl at Kanha
Photo: Blair Bernson

BIRDS

Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*: (30-50) on 4 days at Kanha with (1-20) at B and BB on 17-18 Jan.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*: (3-6) on 2 days at Kanha with (20) at B on 17 and 19 Jan.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*: (100) at B on 17-19 Jan.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides*: (2) on 10 Jan at Ganges River with (6) on Yamuna River behind Taj Mahal on 16 Jan and (2-10) on three days at B and BB.

Comb Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*: (10) on 15 Jan at Java with (50) at B on 17 Jan.

Cotton Pygmy-Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus*: (1) at K on 5 Jan and (1) BB on 18 Jan.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*: (5) BB on 18 Jan.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*: (1-20) on 4 days at K with (4-40) on 3 days at both B and BB on 17-19 Jan.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*: (1-30) on 2 days at K, (10) at Fort Unchagaon on 15 Jan with (10-100) on 3 days at B and BB.

Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*: (10-30) seen at Java, B and BB on 4 days.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*: (10-50) on 4 days at K with (300) plus at B and (10) BB on 17-19 Jan.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*: (50) at Java on 15 Feb with (10-100) at B and BB on 17-19 Jan.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*: (30) at BB on 17 Jan and (1) fine drake at B on 19 Jan.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*: (10) at BB on 17 Jan.

Ferruginous Pochard *Aythya nyroca*: (6) at B on 19 Jan.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*: (10) at BB on 17 Jan.

Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus*: (1) male gave a great view at C on 12 Jan.

Painted Francolin *Francolinus pictus*: (1) giving a brief view in flight at K on 8 Jan showing the diagnostic dark tail feathers.

Gray Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus*: (4-10) seen or heard on 5 days with high count at B.

Jungle Bush-Quail *Perdica asiatica*: (3) seen quickly at BB on 17 Jan.

Red Spurfowl *Galloperdix spadicea*: (1) seen on 8 Jan at K; typically very secretive.

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus*: Seen or heard daily in K and C.

Kalij Pheasant *Lophura leucomelanos*: (5) seen well on 11 Jan in C.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*: (1-20) seen on 11 days including some fine displaying males although most were still growing in their elaborate uppertail coverts.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: (1-40) recorded on 7 days including some adults in fine breeding plumage.

Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*: (10) at B on 17 Jan gave good comparison views with the next two species. Also (2) seen distantly on the drive to Nagpur on 9 Jan.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*: (1-100) seen on 9 days with high count at C on 13 Jan.

Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*: (2-50) seen on 11 days with highest counts at B.

Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*: (2-5) seen on 17-19 Jan in B area.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*: (1) bird showed very well at a small pond in K on 8 Jan.

Black Bittern *Ixobrychus flavicollis*: (1) B on 17 Jan and (1) BB on 18 Jan both gave great views.

Gray Heron *Ardea cinerea*: (2-10) seen on 3 days at B.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: (1-10) seen on 4 days with high count at B.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*: (2-50) seen on 11 days with high count at B.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*: (1-2) seen on 4 days with high count at B.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: (1-20) seen on 10 days with high count on 15 Jan.

Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii*: (2-20) seen on 14 days; all in non-breeding plumage with highest count at B.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: A recent split. (10-100) seen on 15 days; one of the few birds recorded everyday.

Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*: (4-20) seen on 3 days at B and Java.

Red-naped Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa*: (1-2) seen on 4 days at K and on the drive from Delhi to the The Den on 10 Jan.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: (9) at B on 17 Jan.

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*: (2-20) seen on 4 days with high count at B on 2 days.

Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*: (50-100) seen on 3 days with high count at the active nesting colony at B.

Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*: (4) near Raipur on 5 Jan and (1) near Ganges River on 10 Jan.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*: (2-3) seen on 3 days at K with (6) counted at C on 13 Jan.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*: (1) at K on 6 Jan, (1) at C on 12, (2) on 15 Feb at Java, (1) on 17 Feb at B and (5) at Kosi on return drive to Delhi on 19 Feb.

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*: (2) on both 12-13 Jan at C, with excellent views of (2) at B on both 17 and 19 Jan.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: (1) at C on 12 Jan and (1) BB on 18 Jan.

Oriental Honey-buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*: (1) on 5 Jan near Raipur, (1) at the Taj Mahal on 16 Jan and (2) soaring together at B on 19 Jan.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*: (1-5) seen on 10 days.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: (1-500) seen on 7 days with an incredible flock over a rubbish heap on the outskirts of Moradabad on 14 Jan. Many birds of the sometimes split Black-eared Kite *Milvus lineatus* were seen.

Pallas' Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*: (1-4) seen on 11-14 Jan at C and The Den included several great views of this Threatened Species.

Lesser Fish-Eagle *Ichthyophaga humilis*: (1-2) seen on 13-14 Jan at C.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*: (1-10) seen on 5 days with high count on 16 Jan near Agra.

White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis*: (1) adult on 6 Jan in K was our only sighting of this critically endangered species.

Indian (Cliff) Vulture *Gyps indicus*: (1) on 6 Jan at K and (6) near BB on 18 Jan were our only sighting of this threatened species.

Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*: (1) on both 12-13 Jan in C was a juvenile. (1) juvenile, thought to be this species was seen in K on 6 Jan.

Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*: (1) on both 12-13 Jan at C.

Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus*: (2) on 6 Jan at K with (2-4) on 12-13 Jan at C and (1) at B on 17 Jan. We were fortunate to see all our vultures often perched in the early morning in mixed flocks making for excellent comparison views of this often confusing group.

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*: (1) on 9 Jan gave a great flight view at a petrol station about 50 km from Nagpur-a lucky break for us.

Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela*: (2) seen on 8 Jan at K and (2) seen on 12 Jan at C; also heard at B on 17 Jan.

Eurasian Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*: (2) near Raipur on 5 Jan with (2-3) at B on 17 and 19 Jan.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*: (1) superb male at B on 17 Jan.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*: (1-2) seen on well on 9 days, often remarkably tame.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*: (1) male seen well in flight at C on 14 Jan and (1) seen on drive from Fort Unchagaon to Agra on 15 Jan.

White-eyed Buzzard *Butastur teesa*: (1-3) seen K on 2 days with best views on the plateau here on 8 Jan.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus*: (1) adult grey morph was seen perched at B on 19 Jan.

Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*: (2) seen on both visits to B on 17 and 19 Jan included some heavily spotted juveniles.

Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*: (1) juvenile feeding on a carcass with a Red-headed Vulture and some Golden Jackals at B on afternoon of 17 Jan.

Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*: (1) adult gave a good perched scope view at B on 19 Jan though it was at quite a distance.

Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciatus*: (1) juvenile bird at C on 13 Jan provided a good perched view but took a while to figure out exactly what it was in this rarely encountered plumage.

Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus*: (1) at Taj Mahal, Agra on 16 Jan was being heckled by House Crows but provided our group with quite a good view.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Lophtriorchis kienerii*: (1) adult gave an excellent flight view at K on 7 Jan. Quite an exceptional record being well away from its established distribution in the Himalayas and Western Ghats. It had been seen previously during the week by Rakesh and Blair managed to get quite a good record shot.

Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus limnaetus*: (1-2) seen very well perched in C on 12-13 Jan.

Crested Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus cirrhatus*: Recently split from the previous species, singles seen very well and perched in K on 5, 7 and 8 Jan.

Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*: (1) soaring over forest and perched in the scope near The Den on 11 Jan.

Collared Falconet *Microhierax caerulescens*: (1-3) seen well in C on 12-13 Jan.

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*: Singles recorded on 5 days.

Brown Crake *Amaurornis akool*: (1) on 18 Jan at BB gave a good view.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: (1-30) seen on 7 days.

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio poliocephalus*: This grey-headed subspecies has been split. (10-20) seen on 4 days with high count in B area.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: (10-100) seen on 5 days with high count at B.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: (10-100) seen on 4 days with high count at B and BB.

Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*: (2) next to the national highway east of Ganges River crossing en route to Moradabad on 10 Jan; (2) near Moradabad on 14 Jan; (5) on drive between Fort Unchagaon and Agra on 15 Jan; (2) at B on 17 Jan and (9) mostly near Kosi en route to Delhi on 19 Jan.

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus indicus*: This population has been split from west Palaearctic population as the Indian Stone-curlew in Rasmussen and Anderton (2005). Heard only at K on both 6-7 Jan.

River Lapwing *Vanellus duvauceli*: (2-5) seen on 5 days with high count in C.

Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus*: (4) in K on 6 Jan with (2) in a field with the Indian Courser at B on 17 Jan.

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*: (2-50) recorded on 12 days; a common bird.

White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*: (4) on 15 Jan at Java 102 km N Agra on road from Fort Unchagaon.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: (2) seen at C on 13 Jan.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*: (20-100) seen on 7 days.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*: (2) winter plumaged birds seen on a wetland near Raipur on 5 Jan was our only sighting.

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus*: (2) seen on a wetland near Raipur on 5 Jan with (2-4) on a further 3 days at B and BB giving excellent views.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*: (1) seen on 15 Jan at Java gave an excellent flight view.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*: (4) at B on 17 Jan gave good scope views.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*: (1-20) seen well on 6 days.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*: Singles seen well on 4 days.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*: (1-10) seen well on 4 days.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*: (1-10) seen well on 7 days.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: (3) seen on 3 days.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: (1-3) seen well on 5 days.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*: (6) in winter plumage seen on a roadside wetland near Kosi en route to Delhi on 19 Jan.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*: (1-5) seen well on 4 days.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*: (1-30) seen well on 5 days; some males just beginning to acquire breeding plumage.

Barred Button-quail *Turnix suscitator*: (1) male gave a great view at C on 12 Jan.

Indian Courser *Cursorius coromandelicus*: (8) in a field at B on 17 Jan gave some decent scope views.

Pallas' Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*: (1) on Yamuna River barrage near Agra on 15 Jan gave a good flight view.

Heuglin's (Steppe) Gull *Larus heuglini barabensis*: (1) at Yamuna River barrage near Agra on 15 Jan and (1) at Taj Mahal on 16 Jan also on the Yamuna River.

Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*: (5) at Yamuna Barrage near Delhi on 10 Jan and (1) at Taj Mahal on 16 Jan.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*: (50) at Yamuna River barrage near Agra on 15 Jan.

River Tern *Sterna aurantia*: (1-30) seen well on 5 days with best views at Fort Unchagaon on 15 Jan.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*: (3) at BB on 18 Jan.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles exustus*: As we tried to angle around to relocate some Jungle Bush-quail we flushed a single Sandgrouse at BB on 18 Jan.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: (10-200) seen on 9 days.

Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*: (1-6) seen on 6 days in K and C.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decocto*: (1-50) seen on 7 days with high count at BB.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*: (1-6) on 6 days.

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*: (1-10) seen on 6 days; absent in C.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*: (2-5) seen on 3 days in C including some fine perched views.

Yellow-footed Pigeon *Treron phoenicoptera*: (2-20) seen on 6 days; plenty of good views of this colourful species.

Pin-tailed Pigeon *Treron apicauda*: (5) seen in flight by Dion only at C on 11 Jan.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*: (1) at our hotel in Delhi on 5 Jan was a pleasant surprise with (1-4) seen well on 2 further days in K.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*: This common and ubiquitous species was seen on 10 days with high counts in excess of (100).

Slaty-headed Parakeet *Psittacula himalayana*: (10) seen on 2 days in C and The Den with some great perched views.

Plum-headed Parakeet *Psittacula cyanocephala*: This beautiful bird was seen on 7 days with a high count on 12-13 Jan at C where a flock of (20) were feeding on seeding grasses.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*: (10-20) seen or heard on 3 days in C.

Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx varius*: (1) seen in K on 7 Jan.

Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea*: (1) male was seen in flight from the bus whilst we remained trapped interminably in the city of Aligarh due to road closures on 15 Jan.

Sirkeer Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii*: (1) in K on both 5-6 Jan allowed everyone good views of this scarce and inconspicuous species. Always a good bird to get!

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*: (4-5) seen on 4 days from Fort Unchagaon to Bharatpur.

Southern Coucal *Centropus sinensis parroti*: A split in Rasmussen and Anderton (2005) this species was seen or heard on 3 days in K.

Indian Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena*: (3) roosting birds faithful to their tree hollow were seen in K on 6 Jan with (1-2) seen on a further 2 days at their roost in the hotel gardens at B.

Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*: (1) a reddish morph gave the most amazing view at our hotel gardens in K being approached to within a couple of metres on 6 Jan.

Dusky Eagle-Owl *Bubo coromandus*: (1) on 17 Jan at B provided a good scope view being expertly located by the local guide Kaptan.

Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*: (1-2) seen on 12-13 Jan at C gave great views.

Tawny Fish Owl *Ketupa flavipes*: We found two widely separated pairs roosting in the day at both The Den and in C on 11 Jan; one of our best birds of the tour.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*: (1) in C on 13 Jan gave a great view in the Dhikala compound.

Jungle Owlet *Glaucidium radiatum*: (1-10) seen on 6 days in K and C with an all time record of (10) in K on 7 Jan, perhaps linked to the cold weather.

Spotted Owlet *Athene brama*: (1-5) seen or heard on 7 days.

Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*: (1) seen roosting in the hotel gardens at B on 16-18 Jan was well appreciated.

Indian Jungle Nightjar *Caprimulgus jotaka*: This is a split from Grey Nightjar by Rasmussen and Anderton (2005). We observed this species twice, both singles and both perched in trees in the day. The first was at K on 6 Jan and the second was near BB on 18 Jan.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*: (2) roosting on the ground found during the day at B on morning of 19 Jan.

White-rumped Needletail *Zoonavena sylvatica*: (2) hawking at the Viewpoint at C on 11 Jan gave superb views of this scarce species and preceded our final Tiger sighting.

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*: (4-10) seen on 2 days at C.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*: (4) at K on the plateau on 8 Jan and (1) over the grasslands at C on 13 Jan.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*: (5) near Raipur on 5 Jan with (20) at Taj Mahal on 16 Jan.

Crested Tree Swift *Hemiprocne coronata*: (1-20) in K on 5-8 Jan with (2-10) C on 12-14 Jan.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: (1-2) seen on 8 days.

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*: (2-10) seen on 14 days.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle rudis*: (1-3) seen on 3 days in C and at The Den; always an impressive bird like just about every member of this spectacular family.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*: (1-2) seen 4 days at C, BB and on drive from Raipur to K.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis athertoni*: (1-3) seen on 2 days in the compound at Dhikala in C on 12-13 Jan gave sensational repeat views.

Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*: (2-10) seen on 5 days; another crowd favourite.

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*: (2-10) seen on 11 days including some electrifying flight views and very memorable close-ups.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*: (1-4) seen on 7 days with several close crest up encounters.

Indian Gray Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris*: (2-4) seen well on 5 days with many great views.

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris*: (1-3) seen well on 2 days in C on 13-14 Jan.

Brown-headed Barbet *Megalaima zeylanica*: Seen on 4 days and heard on a further 3; most frequently seen at K.

Lineated Barbet *Megalaima lineata*: (1-10) seen on 4 days at C.

Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica*: (3) on 13 Jan at C gave great views.

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*: (2) seen in K on both 5 and 8 Jan and heard on a further 3 days.

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*: (1) K on 8 Jan was the only sighting.

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos nanus*: (1-2) on 6 and 8 Jan in K.

Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*: (2-6) seen on 4 days in C.

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos macei*: (1-10) seen on 3 days in C.

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Dendrocopos mahrattensis*: (1) BB on 18 Jan and (1) B on 19 Jan gave great views.

Rufous Woodpecker *Celeus brachyurus*: (1) K on 5 Jan seen by one jeep and (1) C on 14 Jan where heard on two other days.

Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus*: (1) at K on 7 Jan with (1-2) seen well on a further 4 days in C.

Greater Yellownape *Picus flavinucha*: (4) seen at The Den and C on 11 Jan gave great views.

Streak-throated Woodpecker *Picus xanthopygaeus*: (1-2) in C on 11-13 Jan and heard on 14 Jan.

Gray-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*: (2-3) seen on 3 days in C and at The Den.

Himalayan Flameback *Dinopium shorii*: (1) female on mornings of both 12-13 Jan gave good views at C.

Black-rumped Flameback *Dinopium benghalense*: (1-6) seen on 6 days at all three major sites; the commonest woodpecker.

White-naped Woodpecker *Chrysocolaptes festivus*: (1-2) in K on 8-9 Jan.

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*: (2) in C on 13 Jan gave good views and heard on a further two days.

Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*: (1) perched up on a dead tree sunning itself on the morning of 13 Jan with a second group of (4) here on 14 Jan.

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*: (4) in C on 14 Jan gave good views.

Large Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei*: (2-3) seen on 4 days in K.

Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos*: (1) on 30 Jan in K.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*: (2) K on 28 Jan and (2) B on 8 Feb.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*: (2-10) in C on 3-4 Feb.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*: Singles on 6 and 8 Jan in K.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*: (1) K on 8 Jan with (2-10) on 3 days in C.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: Singles seen on 3 days in K with (1) at B on 17 Jan.

Bay-backed Shrike *Lanius vittatus*: (2) near Raipur on 5 Jan and (3) B on 19 Jan.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: (1-5) seen on 10 days.

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis*: Singles seen on 3 days at Java, B and BB.

Indian Golden Oriole *Oriolus kundoo*: Singles seen in K on 2 days.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*: Singles seen in K on 2 days.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*: (2-5) seen on 4 days in K with (1-2) on 2 days in C.

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*: (1-3) seen on 2 days in C and heard on 2 others.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*: (1-30) seen on 12 days being absent only from C.

White-bellied Drongo *Dicrurus caerulescens*: (1-3) seen on 3 days in K.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer*: (1-2) seen on 2 days in C.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus*: (1) at K on 6 Jan.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*: (3-10) seen on 4 days in K.

Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha*: (1) at The Den on 11 Jan.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*: (4) at The Den on 11 Jan and (2) C on 14 Jan; also heard on 2 days in C.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*: Singles seen on 2 days in K and heard on another 2.

Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*: (6) at The Den on 11 Jan.

Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis*: (1) C on 11 Jan and great views of (2) here on 14 Jan.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*: (1-10) seen on 13 days.

House Crow *Corvus splendens*: (10-100) recorded on 9 days typically commensal with human populations.

Indian Jungle Crow *Corvus culminatus*: A split out of the Large-billed Crow complex. (1-20) recorded on 12 days mostly in well wooded habitats away from population centres.

Indian Bushlark *Mirafra erythroptera*: (1) gave good scope views in a fallow field near Raipur on 5 Jan.

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix grisea*: (2) gave a decent scope view in a barren field between Raipur and Kanha on 5 Jan.

Rufous-tailed Lark *Ammomanes phoenicurus*: (1) scoped up well perched on a wire near Raipur on 5 Jan with (2) at BB on 18 Jan.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*: (1) scoped well perched on a powerline en route to BB on 18 Jan.

Grey-throated Sand-martin *Riparia chinensis*: (2-100) seen on 9 days typically around major rivers with earth banks. Seen entering nest burrows at BB on 18 Jan.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: (2-100) seen on 13 days; large numbers winter in India from North Asia.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*: (1-5) seen well on 3 days in K and Raipur area.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*: (2-20) seen well on 7 days in K and C.

Streak-throated Swallow *Petrochelidon fluvicola*: (10) flying around a small wetland culvert near Raipur on 5 Jan.

Northern House-martin *Delichon urbicum*: (1) seen on 2 days flying with other swallow species at our hotel in K on 7-8 Jan.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: (1-5) seen well on 7 days in K, C and BB.

Great Tit *Parus major*: (1-30) seen well on 8 days at both K and C. This population is now generally split as the Indian Grey Tit *Parus cinereus*.

Grey-sided Bush-Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons*: (1) seen in C on 11 Jan.

Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*: (3) seen in a mixed flock at The Den on 11 Jan.

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta cinnamoventris*: (2-4) seen on 4 days in C.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*: (2) in a mixed flock in K on 8 Jan was the only sighting.

Bar-tailed Treecreeper *Certhia himalayana*: Singles seen on 11 Jan at The Den and 12 Jan in C.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*: (2) birds showed well at The Den on 11 Jan and appeared to be nesting.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*: (2) in C on 14 Jan.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*: (1) at our hotel in Delhi seen by Blair; (4) at the plateau in K on 8 Jan with (4-6) at C on 12-13 Jan.

White-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucotis*: (2) at B on 17 Jan.

Himalayan Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*: (30) at The Den on 11 Jan and (10) on 3 days at C.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*: (2-10) seen on 13 days.

Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flava*: (2-10) seen on 3 days in C and heard on 1 other.

Himalayan Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*: (2) in C on 12 Jan.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*: (1-10) seen on 5 days; the dominant brown leaf-warbler on the plains of India in winter.

Smoky Warbler *Phylloscopus fulgiventor*: A couple of people were lucky to get on to this skulker mixed in with a flock of Yellow-eyed Babblers at C on 13 Jan.

Tickell's Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis*: Singles seen on 7-8 Jan in mixed flocks in K.

Sulphur-bellied Warbler *Phylloscopus griseolus*: (1) showed well at BB working the red sandstone rock faces like a nuthatch on 18 Jan.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus*: (2) at The Den on 11 Jan gave good views in a slow moving mixed flock.

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*: (1-2) seen on 5 days and heard on a couple of others. This is the dominant tiny leaf warbler with tertial spots on the plains of India in winter.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*: (1-5) seen on 9 days. This is the dominant green leaf-warbler on the plains of India in winter.

Grey-hooded Warbler *Phylloscopus xanthoschistos*: (4) at The Den on 11 Jan and (4) in eastern C on 14 Jan.

Whistler's Warbler *Seicercus whistleri*: (1) on 13 Jan in a mixed flock at C gave a good view with patience.

Blyth's Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*: (1) on 8-9 Jan in hotel gardens at K with (2-4) showing well repeatedly on 3 days at B and BB.

Indian Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus brunnescens*: A split from Clamorous Reed-Warbler *A. stentoreus* was heard at B on 17 Jan and sighted very briefly by Dion.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*: (1) showed well in the gardens in the hotel at K on 9 Jan preening itself in a small bush even allowing us to assess the streaks on its flanks and undertail coverts-a rare result for this secretive and over-looked species.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*: (2-4) seen on 4 days in the grasslands at K.

Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsoni*: (4-10) recorded on 7 days in K and C.

Jungle Prinia *Prinia sylvatica*: (1-2) seen in K on 7-8 Jan.

Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis*: (1-5) seen on 6 days in K, C and BB.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*: (1-10) seen on 9 days at K, C, B and BB.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*: (1-2) seen well on 6 days and heard on a further three.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*: (1-10) seen on 5 days with high count at B.

Yellow-eyed Babbler *Chrysomma sinense*: (2-5) seen well on 5 days at K, C and BB.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*: (1) seen in K by Rakesh and his jeep on 7 Jan.

Rusty-tailed Flycatcher *Muscicapa ruficauda*: (1) seen in C on 11 Jan.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophitata*: (1) seen in C on 11 Jan.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*: Most birds in this complex remained unidentified as in drab winter plumage. One at Ganges River on 11 Jan looked convincing for this species.

Red-throated (Taiga) Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*: (1-3) seen on 10 days with a fine coloured male at B on 17 Jan the only individual seen with a diagnostic red throat.

Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*: (1) male gave a great view in the hotel gardens at K on 9 Jan.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*: (1) female at C on 13 Jan.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina*: (1) K on 8 Jan and (1) The Den on 11 Jan.

Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae*: (1) beautiful male near The Den on 11 Jan.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*: (2) superb males gave great views at The Den on 11 Jan.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*: Singles seen on three dates at K and BB.

White-tailed Rubythroat *Luscinia pectoralis*: (1) in C on 11 Jan was in very fresh plumage.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*: (1-4) seen on 3 days at B and BB.

Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*: (1-5) seen on 8 days.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*: Singles seen on 2 days in K.

Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulicata*: (1-10) seen on 5 days with high count at BB.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*: (1-3) seen on 7 days; plenty of good views of this attractive species.

White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*: (1-5) seen on 3 days at C and The Den; always a popular species with its dapper plumage.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*: (2-5) seen on 4 days at C and The Den.

Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculatus*: (1) gave a lengthy scope view at The Den on 11 Jan.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*: (1-10) seen on 9 days in grassland area at K, C, B and BB. We observed the subspecies *maurus/indicus* and *przewalskii* (which has the deep rufous underparts).

Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*: (1-10) seen on 5 days with high count at BB.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*: (1-4) seen on 3 days at C.

Brown Rock-Chat *Cercomela fusca*: (1-4) seen on 4 days including an unusual sighting of a bird frequenting the lodge buildings at Dhikala, C.

Blue-capped Rock-Thrush *Monticola cinclorhynchus*: (1) male seen by Rene, Rita and Blair in K on 8 Jan.

Blue Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*: (2-5) seen on 4 days at The Den and C.

Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina*: Singles seen on 4 days at K and B.

Tickell's Thrush *Turdus unicolor*: (3) at B on 17 Jan.

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus atrogularis*: Singles seen on 2 days at C.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis*: (20) seen on the drive into C on 11 Jan and at least (4) on the drive out on 14 Jan.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*: This eternal favourite provided good views of (10) at The Den on 11 Jan and was heard in C.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps*: Heard daily in K with a very brief view of (2) here on 8 Jan.

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*: (1) seen well by all at C on 12 Jan and heard the next day.

Indian Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*: (1) in a mixed flock showed well on the drive up the escarpment at K on 8 Jan; also heard here on 2 other days.

Nepal Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga immaculata*: A few folks obtained a view of this secretive species responding to playback on the drive into C on 11 Jan. The bird seen was a fulvous morph.

Black-chinned Babbler *Stachyris pyrrhops*: (1) in a mixed flock at C on 13 Jan.

Tawny-bellied Babbler *Dumetia hyperythra*: (2-5) seen in mixed flocks in K on 5-6 Jan preferring the bamboo gullies in the Sal forest.

Common Babbler *Turdoides caudatus*: (5) on both 17-18 Jan at B and BB gave good views.

Large Grey Babbler *Turdoides malcolmi*: (2-50) seen on 4 days from Fort Unchagaon to B.

Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striatus*: (2-50) seen on 13 days; very common.

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*: (2) at The Den gave a great view on 11 Jan.

Brown-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe poioicephala*: (2-5) seen on 4 days in K; one of the staple species in the mixed flocks here.

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*: (2-50) seen on 8 days.

Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus*: (20-100) seen on 7 days mostly in busy roads and bustling population habitats.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Lived up to its name by being recorded daily often with more than (100) estimated during the day.

Asian Pied Starling *Gracupica contra*: (2-50) recorded on 6 days.

Brahminy Starling *Temenuchus pagodarum*: (1-5) seen on 5 days with high count at B.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*: (1-3) seen on 3 days at K with best views in the hotel gardens.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*: Excellent views of (2) in a flowering *Callistemon* at The Den on 11 Jan.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*: (1-10) seen on 6 days were represented by the subspecies *dukhunensis*, *personata* and *alboides*.

White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla madaraspatensis*: (1-2) seen on 5 days in locations ranging from Nagpur Airport to Fort Unchagaon.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*: (1-10) seen on 6 days some advancing into breeding plumage and starting to look quite smart.

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*: (2) on 15 Jan at Java and (1) at BB were of the subspecies *thunbergi*.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: (1-2) seen on 6 days at K and C.

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*: (1) near Raipur on 5 Jan and (5) at B on 17 Jan.

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*: (1) in a barren field near Raipur on 5 Jan.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*: (10) in K on both 7-8 Jan.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*: (1-5) seen on 3 days at B mostly in the hotel gardens were remarkably shy and flighty.

Crested Bunting *Melophus lathami*: (1) smart male at C on 13 Jan.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*: (2) females at BB on 17 Jan.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: (2-100) seen on 5 days; here it is a native species.

Chestnut-shouldered Petronia *Petronia xanthocollis*: (1-10) seen on 4 days with best views on drive to BB on 17 Jan.

Black-breasted Weaver *Ploceus benghalensis*: (100) plus seen in two flocks at two locations near BB on 17 Jan.

Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava*: (1-10) seen on 4 days with best views of some nearly full coloured males at BB on 17 Jan.

Indian Silverbill *Euodice malabarica*: (2) near Raipur on 5 Jan and (10) at BB on 17 Jan.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*: (1-4) seen on 4 days with high count at C.

MAMMALS

Three-striped Palm Squirrel *Funambulus palmarum*: (1-2) seen on 4 days at K.

Five-striped Palm Squirrel *Funambulus pennanti*: (1-20) seen on 7 days especially common in Delhi, Agra and B.

Indian Crested Porcupine *Hystrix indica*: (1) came to the staff kitchen at C on 12 Jan and was fed a chapatti! Another seen crossing the road at night near Fort Unchagaon on 14 Jan.

Jungle Cat *Felis chaus*: Singles seen on 5 days in K and C giving some excellent views.

Tiger *Panthera tigris*: As a group we had four sightings with everyone getting 2-3 sightings. Our first sighting was of a stalking tigress in K on 6 Jan. One lucky jeep had a second tigress cross in front of their jeep and stop briefly at close range on the same afternoon. One group who elected to try for a sighting from an elephant were lucky in K on 8 Jan to find a tigress relaxing and giving a good view. Our last sighting of a male crossing the Ramganga River in C on 11 Jan was well spotted by Charlona and everyone connected with this one. The Tiger population is estimated at 1400 in India, unfortunately the precipitous decline continues.

Small Asian Mongoose *Herpestes javanicus*: (1) squeaked up at BB gave a good view on 18 Jan.

Indian Grey Mongoose *Herpestes edwardsii*: (1-2) seen on 4 days at C and B included the dramatic kill of one animal by a Golden Jackal at C on 12 Jan.

Ruddy Mongoose *Herpestes smithii*: Singles seen well on 3 days in K.

Golden Jackal *Canis aureus*: (2-8) seen on 5 days at K, C and B. We enjoyed several excellent views at all of these locations with a dramatic kill witnessed in C.

Sloth Bear *Ursus ursinus*: (1) gave a great view for two jeeps in K on morning of 6 Jan crossing the road whilst the vehicles were stationary.

Indian Flying-fox *Pteropus giganteus*: (100) camping in a large garden near BB on 18 Jan gave excellent views in good light.

Northern Plains Grey Langur *Semnopithecus entellus*: (2-50) seen on 7 days in K, Agra and BB.

Terai Grey Langur *Semnopithecus hector*: (2-20) seen on 3 days in C.
Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta*: (2-100) seen on 11 days being absent only from K. One of our forest department guides received a nasty bite from one at the temple behind our accommodations at C.

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*: (1-10) seen well on 9 days in K, C and B.

Red Barking Deer *Muntiacus muntjak*: (1-5) seen on 7 days being frequently observed in C and two sightings in K.

Sambar *Cervus unicolor*: (1-5) seen on 8 days at K, C and B. The largest deer in Asia we saw several large males.

Swamp Deer *Cervus duvaucelii*: (10-50) seen in K on 4 days. A conservation success story this “hard ground” subspecies survives only in this national park recovering from when only a tiny population remained under strict protection. This species is also called the Barasingha.

Chital *Axis axis*: The beautiful Spotted Deer we so frequently encountered including stags in velvet, new born fawns and tame herds. The Chital was seen on 11 days, often more than (100).

Hog Deer *Axis porcinus*: (4-5) seen on two days in C where only small numbers present as most of the accessible grassland was underwater following the monsoon flooding.

Blackbuck *Antelope cervicapra*: (100) live in the confines of Sikandra at Aqbar’s Tomb have been present in the gardens for several centuries.

Nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus*: (10-100) seen at B on 17 and 19 Jan.

Gaur *Bos gaurus*: (1-6) seen on 3 days in K included some gigantic bulls.

Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus*: (3-10) seen on 3 days in C included some close encounters with this often elusive charismatic megaherbivore.

REPTILES

Gharial *Gavialis gangeticus*: (6-10) seen on 2 days in C.

Mugger Crocodile *Crocodylus palustris*: (2-4) seen on 2 days in C.

Common Calotes *Calotes versicolor*: (1) on 5 Jan near Raipur and (1) on 8 Jan in hotel gardens at K.

Ganges Softshell *Trionyx gangeticus*: (3) giant softshells basking at B on 17 Jan.

Kachuga Turtle *Kachuga kachuga*: Singles seen on 12-13 Jan at

Common Bronzeback *Dendrelaphis tristis*: (1) seen basking in Lantana at C in Dhikala compound on 13 Jan is a harmless tree snake.

Sloth Bear at Kanha (Photo: Blair Bernson)

