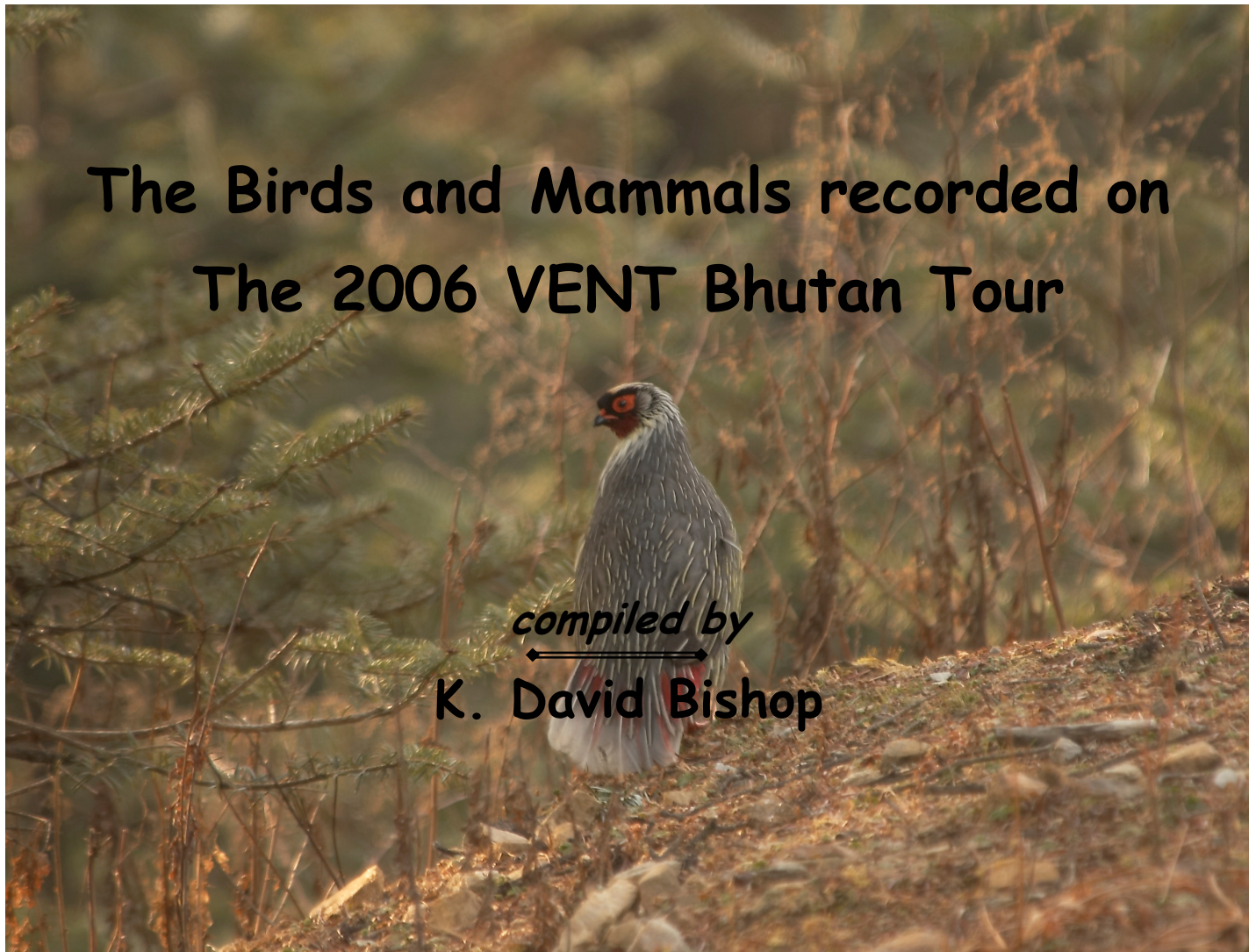


19 June 2006

The Birds and Mammals recorded on The 2006 VENT Bhutan Tour



compiled by
←→
K. David Bishop

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BHUTAN 2006

"The Paro Dzong (monastery), guarded by icy crags, sits warming under the late afternoon sun. It seems to welcome our approach to our beautifully located hotel. An Ibisbill, so subtle as to be taken for a glacial stone, dips quietly in the snowmelt. This is indeed the Kingdom of Bhutan and the land of the peaceful Dragon." As Steve Hilty remarked on first setting foot in the kingdom, "This is fairytale land."

K. David Bishop

This was a very special tour, one of the very best I have ever had the pleasure of leading to Bhutan. In large part this success was due to a wonderful group of participants and I would like to thank you all for making the entire tour such a great experience.

I consider myself very privileged to have travelled so often and so extensively throughout the kingdom of Bhutan (1994 to the present). To have the opportunity to regularly explore such an incredible and special destination and in company with wonderful friends such as Geonpo, Wangdi, Pema and many others is something I treasure and look forward to every year. It is memorable indeed. The vastness and beauty of Bhutan's forests is to experience a window onto what Asia and the Himalayas once were which combined with the opportunity to make very real discoveries never fails to rejuvenate my soul and make me want to return there time after time.

The following is a summary of our daily activities, including some of the trip's highlights together with a list of what we heard and saw. Nevertheless it only conveys part of the story and can never really express the wonderful sights and sounds of Bhutan, its land, its forests, wildlife and its people.

Thank you

David Bishop

Diary

- 31 March** As always an excellent morning's birding on the east bank of the Yamuna River, near Okhla, Delhi. Our afternoon was spent among some of Delhi's fine antiques including a poignant visit to Raj Ghat. **HIGHLIGHTS:** A flock of 60+ Flamingoes, two rather early Asian Paradise-Flycatchers and good looks at the increasingly local White-tailed Stonechat.
- 1 April** We departed early on our Druk Air flight via Kathmandu to Paro, Bhutan. *En route* we were treated to fine views of the Himalayas - the world's highest mountain range, before an equally spectacular descent into the Kingdom of the peaceful Dragon. After settling into our hotel and lunch we explored the Paro valley north to the idyllic ruin of Drygyel Dzong. **NIGHT:** Detchen Hotel, Paro. **HIGHLIGHTS:** Exceptional numbers of Citrine Wagtails!
- 2 April** Early departure for Chelila and a spectacular birding drive up to the pass at *circa* 13,000 feet that included seemingly endless numbers of pheasants. Our ground-crew awaited us with the first of many wonderful breakfasts before we birded our way down into the recently opened Ha Valley. The remainder of the day was spent birding our way through a never-ending panoply of vast untouched forests and enchanting farms and dwellings before arriving into Thimpu early in the evening. **NIGHT:** Riverside Hotel, Thimpu. **HIGHLIGHT:** The beautiful fir forests; the sublime, tranquillity of the Ha Valley; fabulous, lingering studies of both male and female Himalayan Monal glowing in the morning sun; several Blood and Kalij pheasants; and several dapper Collared Grosbeaks.
- 3 April** A moderately early start for our drive up the attractive Cheri Valley and breakfast below the vertiginous Cheri Monastery. We returned in time for lunch but not before stopping to imbibe the imposing Taschidodzong - Bhutan's equivalent of Parliament or the Senate. The afternoon was spent wandering the streets of the capital and some really fun shopping. **NIGHT:** Riverside Hotel, Thimpu. **HIGHLIGHTS:** A pair of Yellow-rumped Honeyguides; David's first ever male White-throated Redstart and a flock of lovely Snow Pigeons.
- 4 April** And so our journey began in earnest with our first venture along the lateral road, at last we were to get to grips with Bhutan's famous mixed broad-leaved and evergreen forests. As we breasted Dochu La the sense of amazement was quite audible at the beauty of the flowering rhododendrons and magnolias not to mention those magnificent forests that stretch away, seemingly for ever. We birded down the east slope to breakfast before continuing further down slope to warm mixed broad-leaved forest. We then drove via the Tsang Chu to a late lunch in the Po

Chu valley and an unproductive search for the White-bellied Heron. And of course we drank in our first views of the impressive Punakha Dzong. NIGHT: Zangtho Pelri Hotel. HIGHLIGHTS: Crested Kingfisher; Pallas's Fish-Eagle and the magnificent Rhododendron/Magnolia lit broadleaved forests of Dochula.

5 April Departed early for the Mo Chu valley and the lovely Tashitang Trail (actually a very easily walked vehicle track). B'fast at one of my favourite sites of the whole trip, resplendent with spring colours, a waterfall erupting hundreds of feet above - an amphitheatre for so many classic Himalayan birds. A morning of genteel birding, wandering through fields of "Mary-Jane" and gamboling butterflies. After lunch we returned to the winter capital where Goenpo, my esteemed Bhutanese co-leader, escorted us on a fascinating and mind-opening exploration of the inner sanctum of Punakha Dzong. Quite, quite spellbiding. NIGHT: Zangtho Pelri Hotel. HIGHLIGHTS: A brilliant (literally) Small Niltava; a Himalayan river that is everything one might dream of; and an exceptionally confiding Bay Woodpecker.

6 April Passing under the ramparts of imposing Wangdi Dzong we gradually made our way through the dry scrub of a narrow gorge before slowly climbing and birding our way through increasingly lovely mixed broad-leaved forests on the west slope of Pelela. Patches of cultivation and prayer-flag bedecked farmhouses completed a seemingly unending panoply of memories. Added to which an astonishing array of birds including flock after flock of Himalayan specialties.

As the advertising says "another glorious day in a fairytale land." NIGHT: Camp Pelela. HIGHLIGHTS: Flock after mixed flock of Himalayan birds; Himalayan Griffons at eye-level; a pair of infrequently seen Pygmy Flycatchers and four Maroon-backed Accentors by our camp.

7 April An enchanting, morning walk before breakfast all to the sounds of the Himalayas in Spring. After breakfast we broke camp and gradually made our way to Trongsa via the King's chorten at Chendibji. As always seems be the case in Bhutan, birds were everywhere not to mention myriads of photographic opportunities so actually getting to our destination in reasonable time was always going to be a lottery. And just to add spice to our journey Trongsa Dzong, located at the head of three valleys and key to the security of the kingdom, shone in the afternoon sun - it was just 200 metres away and we had only another hour of our journey to go! NIGHT: Trongsa. HIGHLIGHTS: Great looks at a pair of Great Parrotbills.

8 April Yet another wonder-filled day replete with magical landscapes, great birds, mammals and plants. From Trongsa we journeyed southwards to the village of Shemgang - dodging the rain and catching birds as and when we could. Then our final descent all the way to 900m and the Trongsa Chu all the while constantly beguiled by a fascinating mosaic of bird-rich forests, terraced fields and erotically daubed

Bhutanese farmhouses. With so much to see we were hard pressed to make our camp near Tingtibi (650m) by dark. What a truly delightful site. NIGHT: Camping near Tingtibi. HIGHLIGHTS: Golden Langurs; stunning views of two pairs of the spectacular Rufous-necked Hornbill.

9 - 10 April With an altitudinal range of c. 500 - 2000m the Shemgang Road nicely compliments its more illustrious cousin, the Limithang Road. Furthermore, the Shemgang Road sees very little traffic, leaving one in peace and serenity to enjoy the beauty of its quite remarkable forests. Typically we worked the somewhat degraded Subtropical Forest below our camp during the early morning and then worked upwards from camp after a late breakfast. As the day warmed up we drove to cooler elevations. NIGHTS: Camping near Tingtibi. HIGHLIGHTS: And all this in a wondrous landscape filled with mixed species flocks; more Rufous-necked Hornills, a flock of migrating Steppe Eagles at eye-level; Pin-tailed Green Pigeons, and a fabulous experience with a male Red-headed Trogon.

11 April Our return trip to Trongsa produced more birds and mammals, more wonderful landscapes. NIGHT: Trongsa

12 April Yet another wonderful day in 'Fairytaleland'. We drove up to the pass - Yutong La before turning around and walking back downhill to breakfast. We then worked our way back up through magnificent Hemlock and Silver Fir forests before descending into the Bumthang valleys. Needless to say along the way we helped ourselves to a bevy of new birds and flowering plants. Hmmm.

The second half of the day brought quite a change of pace with a delightful ramble through the Bumthang valleys; a stop at the weaving centre for a rare opportunity to shop and on to the Jakar Valley and some time to catch up on notes and revel in the intricacies of Aum Leki's extraordinary weavings. NIGHT: Aum Leki's Guest House, Jakar Valley. HIGHLIGHTS: Aum Leki's weavings; a pair of Slender-billed Scimitar-Babblers.

13 April The journey to our camp at Sengor is surely one of the engineering marvels of the world. And this year despite that at times the weather was less than perfect we were still treated to vistas that constantly left us stopping to stare in awe. And, as we surmised, Bhutan's forests really do extend as far as the eye can see. This was indeed one of the great days of the entire tour. NIGHT: Camp Sengor. HIGHLIGHTS: Blood Pheasants and Plain-backed Thrush.

14 April From Sengor we drove down the famous Limithang Road stopping here and there until we reached our attractive and comfortably warm Yongkola camp at 6,200 feet. The pass at Thrumsingla (12,400 feet) is the start of the now famous Limithang Road. Birding down the east slope of Thrumsingla we made the spectacular but rather

vertiginous descent, as ever amidst seemingly unending and untouched primeval forests and the panoply of flowering rhododendrons on this descent is surely one of the world's great floral displays. The forests were as beautiful as it is possible to imagine and graced with some marvellous birds. NIGHT: Yongkola Camp. HIGHLIGHTS: That drive and several Bar-winged Wren-Babblers.

- 15 - 16 April** Oh just another bird-filled day along, arguably, one of the best birding roads in the whole of Asia. Despite the cloud and occasional rain we all revelled in the serene beauty of these ancient forests and the beautiful light effects on ridge after pastel ridge rendering it all quite unreal. Time to draw breath and enjoy the beauty of this oh so wonderfully remote part of the world. Surely the Limithang Road truly is one of the great birding roads of the world. These two days along the Limithang Road lived up to its deserved reputation and produced some cracking birds. From our delightfully located camp in the forest above Yongkola we wound our way through forest as beautiful as it is possible to imagine. Our time here was never to be enough. Stretching away, seemingly endlessly, towards the horizon, this road sports some magnificent forests with many tall trees of impressive girths on huge buttresses, jutting out over our path. Orchids abound, and the understory of the forest is often relatively clear, although the higher strata are often strung with enormous woody vines and lianas. And then there are the patches of bamboo so full of secrets and realised promise. NIGHTS: Yongkola Camp, Limithang Road. HIGHLIGHTS: A troop of dapper Capped Langurs; two very responsive Wedge-billed Wren-Babblers and incredibly close views of a Long-billed Wren-Babbler.
- 17 April** Before continuing on to Mongar we made just one more try for Ward's Trogon - and thanks to Wangdi we succeeded beyond our wildest dreams! Hard to follow that act and so we moved on to Mongar and our newly constructed hotel. NIGHT: HIGHLIGHT: Ward's Trogon male!
- 18 April** Despite a day that began with a spectacular overnight storm that continued well into the morning we still managed some good birding on Kori La before wending our way via Trashigang to our new and very attractive campsite at Rotong. NIGHT: Rotong Campsite. HIGHLIGHTS: Rufous-bellied Woodpecker - finally!
- 19 April** A fascinating day of spectacular storms and equally spectacular landscapes as we commenced our final descent of the Himalayas. Who will ever forget our precipitous view of our Narphung campsite or looking back on snow covered mountains as we emerged from the Kanglung Weaving centre. Great stuff! NIGHT: Narphung Campsite. HIGHLIGHTS: Great looks at several Common Cuckoos.
- 20 April** A great day of birding through some fine woodlands as we worked our way from Morong down to Deothang and on to Somdrup Jonkhar. NIGHT: Somdrup Jonkhar. HIGHLIGHTS: Dark-rumped Swift.

- 21 April** Fully intending to return to Morong to search again for the Beautiful Nuthatch our plans were indelibly scotched by a giant landslide. Turning around to bird our way back towards Deothang we ended up with one of the best morning's birding of the trip. Lunch back in SD and a final afternoon in nearby sub-tropical forests rounded off our Bhutan birding. NIGHT: Somdrup Jonkhar. HIGHLIGHTS: Lesser and Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbills, a flock of very confiding Coral-billed Scimitar-Babblers, stunning Scarlet Finches and four Wreathed Hornbills.
- 22 April** Crossing the border back into India we spent a very profitable hour our so birding the riverine woodlands and scrub whilst we waited for the immigration formalities to be concluded. We then drove to Gauhati stopping along the way for some for some hasty but but very good birding. The final leg of our epic journey saw us flying with the very fine Jet Airways back to Delhi for a final, farewell dinner. HIGHLIGHTS: Great Hornbill, White-backed and Slender-billed vultures, Lesser Adjutant.

T = Globally threatened or Near Threatened

BIRDS

NON-PASSERINES

1. Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* **I:** Yamuna R.
2. Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* **B:** A handsome adult together with other Palearctic migrants along the Tsang Chu. This is one of only a handful of records for Bhutan.
3. Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* **B:** Scattered ones and twos plus a group of ca. 30 along the Tsang Chu. **I:** Yamuna R.
4. Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger* **I:** Yamuna R; Assam.
5. Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* **I:** One or two along the Yumuna R. Currently classified as Near Threatened.

NOTE: The Old World populations of Darter represent one of a handful of species whose taxonomic status has flipped back-and-forth at the vagary of taxonomic opinion. Some authorities treat the three Old World forms of the Darter which inhabit Africa, Asia and Australia as a single species, *Anhinga melanogaster*. Other authorities treat the taxa of each region as separate species. Clearly the three taxa represent a superspecies, whether or not these taxa have yet evolved into fully-fledged species is open to conjecture. The taxon found in the America's, *Anhinga anhinga* is widely regarded as specifically distinct from Old World form(s).

6. Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* **I:** Several birds on the Yamuna R; Assam.
7. Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* **I:** Yamuna R; Assam.
8. Great Egret *Egretta alba* **I:** Yamuna R; Assam.

NOTE: Placed by some authorities in *Casmerodius* or *Ardea*.

9. Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia* **I:** Yamuna R.
10. Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* **I:** Yamuna R; Assam.

NOTE: Consistent differences between *B. ibis* and *B. coromandus* in breeding plumage, proportions and vocalisations indicate they are better treated as two species. Rasmussen & Anderton. 2005 'Birds of South Asia The Ripley Guide'. Birds in north America are referable to Western or Common Cattle Egret *B. ibis*.

11. Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* **I**: Yamuna R; Assam.
 12. Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans* **I**: Several between the Bhutan border post and Gauhati, Assam.
 13. Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilus dubius* **I**: Great looks at several birds near Gauhati. **Globally threatened.**
 14. Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilus javanicus* **I**: Great looks at several birds near Gauhati. **Globally threatened.**
 15. Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* **I**: Two along the Yumna R. **Globally threatened.**
 16. Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* **I**: One adult male along the Yamuna R. and two near Gauhati airport, Assam. **Globally threatened.**
 17. Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* **I**: Yamuna R.
 18. Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* **I**: Yamuna R.
 19. Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* **I**: A gorgeous flock of ca. 60 along the Yumna River.
- NOTE:** Sometimes treated as conspecific with *P. ruber*.
20. Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* **I**: A flock of 40+ near Gauhati airport.
 21. Cotton Pygmy-Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* **I**: Assam.
 22. Gadwall *Anas strepera* **B**: One drake on the Po Chu near Punakha; a flock of 15 flying up and down the Mangde Chu. **I**: Yamuna R.
 23. Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* **B**: One drake along the Po Chu; **I**: Yamuna R.
 24. Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* **I**: Common along the Yamuna R.

NOTE: This distinctive population has recently been given full species status by some authorities (see for example Rasmussen & Anderton 2005). It can be separated from Chinese Spot-billed Duck by the less uniform sooty black upperparts; green as opposed to a blue speculum and the presence of a pink-red bill spot. This is the resident population that breeds throughout the Indian subcontinent and SE Asia. The second part of the equation is referred to as Chinese Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha* and this

taxon breeds in north and eastern Asia and is a rarely recorded passage migrant in the Indian subcontinent.

25. Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* **I**: Yamuna R.
26. Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* **I**: Yamuna R.
27. Garganey *Anas querquedula* **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.
28. Common Teal *Anas crecca* **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.
29. Common Pochard *Aythya farina* **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.
30. Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* **I**: Several along the Yamuna.
31. Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* **B**: Two just below Wangdi.
32. Oriental Honey-Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* **B**: One dark morph on the west slope of Pele La; one between Trongsa and Shemgang and another above Deothang.
33. Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* **I**: Yamuna R.
34. Black Kite *Milvus migrans* **I**: Yamuna R. and between the Bhutan border post and Gauhati.
- NOTE:** The large and distinctive form found in Asia is treated by some authorities as a separate species, Black-eared Kite, *Milvus lineatus*. However, there is extensive hybridisation in the broad area of contact.
35. Pallas's Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* **B**: Quite simply Fabulous! Two adults and one immature seen superbly, multiple times, soaring over the pine forests lining the Po Chu. **Globally threatened.**
36. White-backed Vulture *Gyps benaglensis* **I**: A bit of a last minute surprise with two adults in flight over the fields near Gauhati airport. **Globally threatened.**
37. Slender-billed Vulture *Gyps indicus* **I**: At least one, possibly three birds in flight over the fields near Gauhati airport. **Globally threatened.**
38. Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis* **B**: A good year for this gigantic species: 2 April - one soaring over Cheli La; 6 April - a total of 15 soaring over the west slope of Pele La including eye-level views; 7 April - 12 coming off a roost on Pele La; 12 April - 2 over

Yutong La; 19 April - following a long period of torrential rain we spied two perched in forest at an unusually low elevation below Rontong; they gave us all wonderfully close and lengthy views before flopping away!; 20 April - one below Narphung; and several *en route* to Gauhati.

39. Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela* **B**: One, Dochu La; two Tashitang Trail; singles most days along the Shemgang Rd.; fabulous views of one along the Limithang Rd. and a juvenile near Deothang.
40. Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* **B**: One migrant female flying north up the Mangdi Chu valley towards Trongsa; one seen by SDM only on the Shemgang Rd.
41. Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* **I**: One or two seen in characteristic flight over reed-beds and scrub along the Yuamuna R.
42. Shikra *Accipiter badius* **I**: Singles seen briefly along the Yamuna R. **B**: Sensational views of one thanks to our driver Wangdi, just below Morong.
43. Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* **B**: Two singles on two days displaying over forest along the road between Shemgang and Tingtibi.
44. Besra *Accipiter virgatus* **B**: One near Yongkola on the Limithang Rd. and one near Morong on our eastern descent.
45. Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* **B**: Notably common this year with excellent studies of 1-2 birds daily from Cheli La east to Trongsa and Tingtibi; thereafter 2-3 daily on our eastern descent.

Also known as Northern Sparrowhawk.

46. Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus* **B**: Four over the Paro valley; two from Cheli La thru Ha to the confluence; one over Thimpu; one along the Tashitang Trail; one over Yutong La.

NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) argue that *burmanicus* is specifically distinct from Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*.

47. Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* **B**: One in the Thimpu valley; one between Shemgang and Trongsa.

[Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* **B**: Photographs taken of perched birds suggest that all birds claimed as this species were likely Long-legged Buzzards]

48. Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis* **B**: One on the lower west slope of Pele La; one over the Limithang Rd; one between Rontong and Narphung.
49. Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* **I**: One adult along the Yamuna R. **Globally threatened.**
50. Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis* **B**: Undoubtedly one of the highlights of a fabulous tour: 10 April - a total of 14 soaring in a loose flock northwards over the Shemgang Rd. The eye-level views were simply stupendous; one the following day over the Shemgang Rd.
- NOTE:** Clark's (1992) excellent study of the Tawny Eagle and Steppe Eagle shows conclusively that these two act as good species towards one another.
51. Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* **B**: One with the flock of Steppe Eagles over the Shemgang Rd.
52. Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* **I**: One immature between Pele La and Trongsa; one over the Shemgang Rd. on 9 April and two with the flock of Steppe Eagles the following day.
53. Rufous-bellied Eagle *Hieraaetus kienerii* **B**: One over forest on the Shemgang Rd; one on our eastern descent.
54. Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis* **B**: Notably widespread and fairly common with as many as four seen on one day between Trongsa and Shemgang.
55. Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* **B**: Widespread and moderately common in open, non forested country: Four in the Paro Valley; 3 between Cheli La, Ha and the confluence; a total of four between Dochu La and the Po Chu including a pair nesting in our hotel; one over the Wangdi valley; three between Trongsa and Tingtibi; singles daily over the Shemgang Rd; one male in the Shonkhar Chu valley.
- Also known as Eurasian Kestrel.
56. Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* **B**: Two seen on our last morning above Deothang.
57. Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* **B**: One nicely spotted by Stephen in the Po Chu valley.
58. Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus* **I**: Several heard along the Yamuna R.

59. Grey Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus* **I**: Several seen along the Yamuna R. and heard near the border crossing.
60. Common Hill Partridge *Arborophila torqueola* **B**: Widespread and heard on several days.
Also known as Hill Partridge.
61. Rufous-throated Hill Partridge *Arborophila rufogularis* **B**: Heard daily from Tingtibi east to Kori La.
62. Chestnut-breasted Partridge *Arborophila mandellii* **B**: Heard commonly along the Limithang Rd. **Globally threatened.**
63. Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus* **B**: An outstanding year for this gorgeous bird: Twelve or more seen superbly well (see the front cover of this document) as we ascended Cheli La on our first morning in Bhutan; gorgeous views of a female and two males right next to the bus as we approached Gayzamchu.
64. Satyr Tragopan *Tragopan satyra* **B**: A very tough, frustrating year for this species - quite the converse to previous years. Several males heard, all very close by, on the Limithang Rd., but only one male seen a long way down-slope. But oh boy we tried.
65. Himalayan Monal *Lophophorus impejanus* **B**: A total of eight including several gorgeous males seen superbly within and at the edge of magnificent Silver Fir forest on the slopes of Cheli La; fabulous looks at an adult male within mixed Rhododendron, Silver Fir, Birch forest on Pele La; and another superbly seen male above Jakar. This too is one of the world's most iridescent and spectacular birds. Amazing to think we completely missed this species on our first handful of tours to the kingdom.

Also known as Impeyan Pheasant.
66. Kalij Pheasant *Lophura leucomelana* **B**: Notably uncommon this year except on Cheli La. A total of 9 counted between Cheli La, the Ha valley and the confluence; one male and one female on Yutong La and another pair on Kori La.
67. Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* **B**: At least two heard above Tingtibi and two heard above Deothang.
68. Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* **I**: Several heard along the Yamuna R.

69. Slaty-breasted Rail *Rallus striatus* **B**: One seen with the Black-tailed Crakes by a couple of folks. This is one of only a handful of records of this species for Bhutan.

70. White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.

71. Black-tailed Crake *Amaurornis bicolor* **B**: Two birds seen well at our old site near Rontong. This species was only known from one specimen prior to VENT's tours to Bhutan. It now appears to be locally common throughout the kingdom.

72. Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio* **I**: Yamuna R.

73. Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* **I**: Yamuna R.

Also known as Common Gallinule.

74. Common Coot *Fulica atra* **I**: Yamuna R. **B**: One with a few other northern migrants on the Tsang Chu. There are very few records of this species for Bhutan.

Also known as Eurasian Coot.

75. Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus* **I**: *En route to Gauhati, Assam.*

76. Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* **I**: Two gorgeous males in full breeding plumage along the Yamuna R.

77. Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii* **B**: Four along the Po Chu near to Punakha Dzong including a pair copulating; a pair with three chicks along along the Jakar Chu. Yet again we enjoyed superb views of this grand bird, illustrating yet again that Bhutan is indeed a stronghold for this very special species.

78. Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* **I**: Common along the Yamuna R.

79. Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus* **I**: Yamuna R; Assam.

80. River Lapwing *Vanellus duvauceli* **B**: A total of ten along the Paro Chu; several along the Ha Chu; several along the Tsang, Po and Mo chus. **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.

81. Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* **B**: Two 'roding' at dusk and dawn over our camp on Pele La.

82. Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* **B**: A total of eight flushed from the margins of the Paro Chu.

83. Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* **I**: Yamuna R.
84. Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* **I**: Approximately 60 along the Yamuna R.
85. Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus* **I**: Yamuna R.
86. Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* **I**: Yamuna R.
87. Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* **B**: Two in the Paro Chu valley.
88. Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* **I**: Yamuna R.
89. Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* **B**: One in the Paro Chu valley and three along the Po Chu.
90. Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* **I**: One along the Yamuna R.
91. Common Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* **I**: Yamuna R.
92. Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* **I**: Several hundreds along the Yamuna R.
93. Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* **I**: **B**: Widespread and common. It is now almost impossible to determine which individuals are feral birds and which are wild bred birds.
94. Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota* **B**: Fabulous 'scope study of a flock of 27 at the foot of Cheri Monastery; a spectacular flock of ca. 50 ave Jakar.
95. Ashy Wood-Pigeon *Columba pulchricollis* **B**: Heard between Rontong and Narphung.
96. Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* **B**: Widespread, common and observed almost daily, often foraging on the road.
97. Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* **I**: Yamuna R.
98. Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* **B**: Moderately common locally in open country. Widespread and along the lower slopes of Dochu La; Tsang Chu valley; Po Chu valley; Punakha; Tashigang trail; above Wangdi; one on the Limithang Rd. at Yongkola; several between Kori La and Trashigang and on our eastern descent. **I**: Assam.
99. Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decocto* **I**: Yamuna R.

100. Barred Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia unchall* **B**: Notably common this year with good looks at several daily along the Po and Mo chu valleys and an amazing total of 40 on one day within degraded Sub-tropical Forest surrounding our campsite above Tingtibi .

101. Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* **B**: One on the Tingtibi road within degraded Subtropical Forest.

Also known as Green-winged Ground-Dove.

102. Yellow-footed Green Pigeon *Treron phoenicoptera* **I**: Yamuna R.

103. Pin-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron apicauda* **B**: One or two daily at ca. 650m within degraded Subtropical Forest above Tingtibi. Exceptional 'scope views!

104. Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenura* **B**: One male and one female along the Tashitang Trail; fabulous close studies of a flock of 12 near Rontong.

105. Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia* **B**: Three along the Shemgang Rd. and fine views of several on our eastern descent.

106. Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* **I**: Yamuna R; Assam.

107. Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* **I**: Yamuna R.

108. Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* **B**: Heard ca. 650m within degraded Subtropical Forest above Tingtibi.

109. Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides* **B**: Widespread and common. Seen or heard almost daily.

110. Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx varius* **I**: Heard between the Bhutan border post and Gauhati.

111. Whistling Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisicolor* **B**: Widespread but sparse; one between Trongsa and Shemgang and heard daily in the forests above and below our Yongkola camp, Limithang Rd. and east to Rontong.

NOTE: What was previously treated as Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo *H. fugax* has now been split into at least three species (King 2004, Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

112. Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* **B**: Heard above Deothang but just would not respond to our tape.

113. Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* **B**: Widespread; heard almost daily between Yongkola, Limithang Rd. and Deothang; two seen superbly calling at the Kanglung weaving centre.

Also known as Eurasian Cuckoo.

114. Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus* **B**: Widespread and common; seen or heard most days.

115. Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* **B**: Great looks at one bird along the Shemgang Rd.

116. Asian Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx maculates* **B**: What a simply stunning bird! A male and female seen superbly on two days along the Shemgang Rd and another male spied near Morong.

117. Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* **B**: One male heard and seen all too briefly near Samdrup Jonkhar.

118. Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris* **B**: Heard and seen rather infrequently this year: seen and heard daily along the Shemgang Rd. and just once on the Limithang Rd; one seen well on Kori La; and several on the eastern descent.

119. Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea* **I**: Yamuna R. **B**: Heard near Somdrup Jonkhar.

120. Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* **I**: Yamuna R; Assam.

121. Mountain Scops-Owl *Otus spilocephalus* **B**: Heard daily from Tingtibi east to Narphung.

122. Collared Scops-Owl *Otus lettia* **B**: Heard at Punakha; and close to our Tingtibi and Yongkola camps.

NOTE: Until very recently this taxon was treated as part of a widespread species *Otus bakkamoena* found throughout the Oriental region. However the recent book 'Owls of the World' - Koenig, Weick and Becking (2000) provides evidence that this taxon actually comprises four species: Indian Scops Owl *O. bakkamoena* throughout the Indian subcontinent below 2,200m although absent from the north-west and north-east; Collared Scops Owl *O. lettia* replaces the above species immediately to the north and extends throughout much of China; Sunda Scops Owl *O. lempiji* Malay Peninsula, Borneo, Sumatra, Java and Bali; and Japanese Scops Owl *O. semitorques*.

123. Himalayan Wood Owl *Strix nivicola* **B**: Heard one evening near our our Sengor camp. Despite our best efforts this 'pest' just would not come in to our tape.

NOTE: Split from Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* (see Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

124. Tawny Fish-Owl *Ketupa flavipes* **B**: Fantastic views of a pair of this very rarely seen species near Punakha.

125. Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodeii* **B**: Heard almost daily from Punakha eastwards; one seen superbly on the Shemgang Rd; and another seen very nicely near Morong.

126. Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* **B**: Great views of two thanks to some fine spotting by Bob along the Tashitang Trail; several heard and one seen along the Shemgang Rd; and near our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd.

127. Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* **I**: Two along the Yamuna R.

128. Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus jotaka* **B**: Super views of at least three birds hawking every morning outside our hotel near Punakha; heard at our Tingtibi camp; at 2200m on the Limithang Rd; two seen very nicely at our Rontong camp and heard at our Narphung camp.

NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) point out that Himalayan (*jotaka*) South India (*indicus*) and Sri Lanka (*kelaarti*) populations exhibit clear, consistent morphological and vocal differences such that they should be treated as separate species.

129. Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris* **B**: Locally common with 1000+ migrating northwards over the Shemgang Rd; seen daily from Dochu La east Deothang except between Yutong La and the Limithang Rd.

130. White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* **B**: 40+ migrating northwards over the Shemgang Rd.

131. Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis* **B**: One near our camp above Tingtibi. There are very few records of this species for Bhutan. **I**: Assam.

132. Dark-rumped Swift *Apus acuticauda* **B**: One of the many advantages of the VENT itinerary is that it takes us east to the south-east border of Bhutan and thus permits us to once again encounter this very rarely seen and localised species: a flock of ten just above Deothang put on a great show.

133. Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* **B**: Widespread and locally common. Seen almost daily from Tingtibi east to near Deothang. Nesting birds observed on the Limithang Rd.

134. Little Swift *Apus affinis* **I**: Yamuna R.

135. Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus* **B**: Undoubtedly one of THE highlights of the tour. Whereas this species has eluded us for the last few trips we were all treated to spectacular views of a gorgeous and very territorial male near our Tingtibi camp.

136. Ward's Trogon *Harpactes wardii* **B**: **Perhaps the ultimate Bhutan bird experience.** What a truly wondrous experience; a pair of very territorial and confiding birds put on a never to be forgotten show as they flirted, called and just sat for *ca.* 15 minutes, providing a life-time of visual memories as they perched for truly amazing 'scope, video and ETE views. Thank you Wangdi. **Globally threatened.**

137. Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* **B**: Four along a tributary of the Tsang Chu and the Po Chu.

Also known as Eurasian or River Kingfisher.

138. White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* **B**: Notably widespread and relatively frequently seen this year. **I**: Yamuna R; Assam.

139. Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris* **B**: Two seen superbly along the Po Chu near Punakha; four along the Mo Chu valley; one near Wangdi; one carrying a fish at the Samdrup Jonkhar immigration post.

140. Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctiornis athertoni* **B**: A fabulous encounter with two along the Shemgang Rd; two near Yongkola along the Limithang Rd; and two in the Shonkhar Chu valley.

141. Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis* **I**: Several along the Yamuna R.

Also known as Green Bee-eater

142. Common Dollarbird *Eurystomous orientalis* **B**: Two near Somdrup Jonkhar. An uncommon species in Bhutan.

143. Hoopoe *Upupa epops* **B**: Six in the Paro valley; two in the Cheri Valley; one along the Po Chu; one near Punakha; one above Wangdi; one in the Shonkhar Chu valley; one on Kori La and one near Deothang. **I**: Yamuna R.

144. Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* **B**: A single bird seen well in flight as we walked out from the Indian immigration post.
145. Rufous-necked Hornbill *Aceros nipalensis* **B**: Without doubt, for many a major highlight of a great tour. Sensational views of several birds along the road from Shemgang to Tingtibi: 8 April: 3 between Trongsa and Shemgang; 9-10 April: a pair attending a nest in a tree over our camp above Tingtibi and single males seen along the Shemgang Rd; 15 April: two pairs above and below our Yongkola camp; 2 seen at 2200m on the Limithang Rd; at total of five between Kanglung and Narphung and six above Deothang. **Globally threatened.**
146. Wreathed Hornbill *Aceros undulatus* **B**: Fabulous looks at four birds in flight and then perched near Somdrup Jonkhar.
147. Great Barbet *Megalaima virens* **B**: Widespread and common, recorded almost daily.
148. Golden-throated Barbet *Megalaima franklinii* **B**: Widespread and generally common; recorded in low numbers; one pair digging a nest near Morong.
149. Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica* **B**: One on Pele La; several heard and seen between Trongsa and Shemgang and Shemgang and Tingtibi; several heard on the Limithang Rd. and one heard in the Shonkhar Chu valley; several heard and seen on the eastern descent.
150. Blue-eared Barbet *Megalaima australis* **B**: One heard near Somdrup Jonkhar. **I**: Heard near the border crossing.
151. Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala* **I**: Delhi. **I**: Heard near the border crossing.
152. Yellow-rumped Honeyguide *Indicator xanthonotus* **B**: One male and a second bird provided superb 'scope studies as they attended a Rock Bee hive along the Thimpu Chu; another male was seen well at a new site on the west slope of Pele La. This is a little known and rarely observed species. **Globally threatened.**
153. Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus* **B**: One along the Tashitang Trail; one on the west slope of Pele La; two seen nicely near Tingtibi; one with a mixed species flock on the lower slopes of Pele La.
154. White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea* **B**: Two birds, possibly a pair responded unusually well to our tape within degraded forest above Deothang.

155. Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus* **B**: One or two pairs seen on two days within degraded Subtropical Forest above Tingtibi.
156. Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Picoides hyperythrus* **B**: Unbelievably uncommon with just one record of a pair calling loudly from an exposed tree on Kori La.
157. Crimson-breasted Woodpecker *Picoides cathpharius* **B**: Great looks at a male in secondary woodland on Pele La; a pair seen very nicely along the Limithang Rd.
158. Darjeeling Woodpecker *Picoides darjellensis* **B**: One striking male seen well in the Cheri Valley and one 'scoped beautifully on Kori La.
159. Rufous Woodpecker *Celeus brachyurus* **B**: Heard on the Shemgang and Limithang roads.
160. Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus* **B**: Great looks at a pair on Dochu La and one near Somdrup Jonkhar.
161. Greater Yellownape *Picus flavinucha* **B**: Fine looks at a male near Tingtibi and another near Somdrup Jonkhar. Heard at several other sites.
162. Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* **B**: Several heard and one seen along the Trongsa to Shemgang Rd. and one below Morong.
163. Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis* **B**: A very obliging male put on an incredible show along the Tashitang Trail. Heard regularly at several locations including: Trongsa to Tingtibi; the Limithang Rd. and on our eastern descent.

PASSERINES

164. Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae* **B**: Heard below our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd.
165. Grey-throated Sand-Martin *Riparia chinensis* **I**: Good looks at many birds along the Yamuna R.

NOTE: Split from Plain Martin (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

166. Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* **I:** Several along the Yamuna R; also Assam. **B:** One in the Paro valley; nesting under the eaves of the shops of Mongar village; also seen near Trashigang.
167. Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* **B:** Four with other 'hirundines' below Trashigang.
168. Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus* **B:** Approximately 1000 together with Nepal House Martins at a nesting colony, just below Shemgang; ca. 40 above Jakar and several along the Limithang Rd.
169. Nepal House Martin *Delichon nipalensis* **B:** Approximately 50 on the slopes of Pele La; several between Chendibji and Trongsa; and Trongsa and Shemgang; one with a nest colony of ca. 1000 Asian House Martins on the Shemgang Rd; also 40 nesting at ca. 3000m on the Limithang Rd.
170. Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba* **I:** Yamuna R. also Assam. **B:** Widespread and moderately common along creeks and rivers and associated open habitats such as farmland: Paro Valley; Cheli La and Ha Valley; Thimpu; Tsang and Po chus; Jakar Chu; Gayzamchu; Pele La. Mostly we observed the distinctive subspecies *alboides*, however, as we moved east we encountered some individuals of the subspecies *dukhunensis*.
- Also known as White Wagtail
171. White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla maderaspatensis* **I:** Yamuna R..
172. Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* **I:** Yamuna R. **B:** Astonishingly common among the scrub and river gravels associated with the Paro Chu. This species is normally regarded as an uncommon passage migrant in Bhutan.
173. Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* **I:** Several attractive grey-headed birds along the Yamuna R.

NOTE: 'Yellow' Wagtail taxonomy is currently being re-evaluated. Until now most authorities have included all races within *M. flava*. However, Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) point out that the results of three separate studies strongly suggest that 'Yellow' Wagtail actually comprises several discrete species.

174. Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* **B**: Not seen until we reached the eastern extremity of our tour: four near Rontong; three below Morong and several near Deothang.

175. Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus* **I**: Yamuna R.

NOTE: The recent revision of the taxonomy of the Richard's Pipit (including Paddyfield Pipit) complex has resulted in the large northern migratory form *richardi* being accepted as a distinct species *Anthus richardi*. Consequently the name *Anthus novaeseelandiae* is now restricted to the species occurring in New Zealand and Australia. The relatively small(ish) form found in the cultivated lowlands of south and south-east Asia is now treated as Paddyfield Pipit *A. rufulus*.

176. Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* **B**: Widespread and common; seen in moderate numbers (range 2-20) most days, including several individuals uttering their full song.

177. Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus* **B**: One in the Paro River valley; a total of six on Cheli La in various plumage states from delicate, near-full breeding plumage to relatively drab, in grassy open areas; one below Trongsa.

178. Maroon Oriole *Oriolus trailli* **B**: Moderately common this year: several on the slopes of Dochu La; two on the Tashitang Trail; several on the west slope of Pele La; several heard and seen daily along the Trongsa to Shemgang Rd.; several seen and heard most days along the Limithang Road, 1900 - 2400m; one male just above Deothang.

179. Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthonotus* **I**: One just beyond the Indian immigration post.

180. Large Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei* **I**: Several *en route* to Gauhati.

181. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschista* **B**: Widespread and locally moderately common.

182. Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* **B**: Notably widespread and fairly common this year.

183. Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus* **B**: Absolutely amazing - none seen or heard other than the flock of ca. 20 KDB saw briefly on 21 April above Deothang.

184. Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris* **B**: Widespread and generally, seen and/or heard on ten days.

185. Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus* **B:** Widespread and generally common, seen and/or heard on 12 days.

NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) show that southern India populations should be treated as a separate species. Consequently northern populations adopt the specific name *speciosus*.

186. Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus* **B:** Two on the west slope of Pele La; a flock of 12 in one tree between Trongsa and Shemgang; several daily within degraded Subtropical Forest below our Tingtibi camp and along the Shemgang Rd.

187. Striated Bulbul *Pycnonotus striatus* **B:** A strikingly handsome bulbul. Two on the west slope of Pele La; several daily along the Shemgang Rd.; 2-6 daily near our Yongkola camp, Limithang Rd; an impressively noisy flock of 100+ just above Narphung; common between Morong and Deothang.

188. Himalayan Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys* **B:** A total of ten between Kori La and Trashitang.

189. Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus flaviventris* **B:** Six in degraded Subtropical Forest surrounding our camp near Tingtibi; common in the Somdrup Jonkhar area. **I:** Assam.

NOTE: The Black-crested Bulbul group is better treated as a superspecies consisting probably of five allopatric species: *P. melanicteris* - Sri Lanka; *P. gularis* Western Ghats, South India; *P. flaviventris* - Himalayas and Central India eastwards to Vietnam; *P. dispar* - Sumatra; and *P. montis* - Borneo. (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

190. Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* **B:** Two near Somdrup Jonkhar.

191. Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* **B:** Ubiquitous in all but the most densely forested areas up to c. 2300m. **I:** Yamuna R.

192. White-throated Bulbul *Alphoixus flaveolus* **B:** Several seen within Subtropical Forest below our camp near Tingtibi.

193. Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flavala* **B:** Seen superbly in secondary woodland on three days along the Shemgang to Tingtibi Road and between Morong and Somdrup Jonkhar.

NOTE: For the change of genus see Inskipp *et al* (1996).

194. Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mccllellandi* **B:** Six along the Tashitang Trail; common, seen daily along the Shemgang Rd.; two on two days on our eastern descent.

195. Himalayan Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* **B**: Common and widespread; seen almost daily.

NOTE: For details of the revised taxonomy of this interesting but complex group see Rasmussen & Anderton (2005).

196. Asian Fairy Bluebird *Irena puella* **B**: Fine views of glowing males as well as females near Somdrup Jonkhar.

197. Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii* **B**: A fine pair showed off beautifully on the west slope of Pele La; six or more seen daily along the Shemgang Rd.; one or two most days near our Yongkola camp, Limithang Rd; and two seen daily on our eastern descent.

198. Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia* **I**: Near the border crossing, Assam.

199. Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii* **B**: Widespread and 1-3 seen on most days from Paro east to Trongsa. Adults feeding young along the Po Chu.

200. Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* **B**: A flock of eight seen nicely near our camp on Pele La and a total of ten between Jakar and Thrumsing La.

201. Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiata* **B**: Widespread but rather more common this year than in 2005. Invariably encountered within scrubby areas adjoining farmland: 10+ Paro Chu valley; Chelila; Cheri Valley; 4 Trongsa to Shemgang; 1 above Tingtibi; a total of 12 between the Jakar valley and Thrumsing La; 2 between Rontong and Narphung.

202. Maroon-backed Accentor *Prunella immaculate* **B**: This is a species that has essentially eluded us on recent tours. Consequently it was especially pleasing to renew acquaintances with this dapper bird: a very confiding group of four feeding near our camp-site on Pele La.

203. Blue-capped Rock-Thrush *Monticola cinclorhynchus* **B**: The male is not only a beautiful looking creature but a great songster. Widespread and common with several individuals and pairs being recorded on most days.

204. Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush *Monticola rufiventris* **B**: Yet another very handsome species that we saw on several occasions including the very striking male.

205. Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius* **B**: Two on Dochu La; several males between Trongsa and Shemgang and Shemgang and Tingtibi; two males below Mongar and a total of six between Rontong and Narphung.
206. Blue Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* **B**: Common and ubiquitous; recorded daily 150 - 3200m; at times pairs were recorded along every 100 - 200m of road; many nest in the concrete road culverts.
207. Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina* **B**: A total of ten seen superbly along the Shemgang Rd. including at least one bird in song.
208. Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima* **B**: A total of 4-6 seen remarkably well on the upper slopes of Dochu La; and then thanks to some brilliant spotting by Susan a single was seen from the bus as we descended the Limithang Rd. to our Sengor camp.
209. Long-billed Thrush *Zoothera monticola* **B**: One or possibly two birds flushed from the sides of the Shemgang Rd. at dusk. Essentially a leader only bird.
210. White-collared Blackbird *Turdus albocinctus* **B**: Moderately common in the Blue Pine forests of the west east to Trongsa, thereafter sparse and uncommon: Chelila; Cheri Valley; Dochula; Pelela; Pelela to Trongsa; Yutongla; and Jakar to Sengor.
211. Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus boulboul* **B**: Two males on Dochu La; one male on Pele La; 1-2 on a couple of days along the Shemgang Rd; and two on Kori La.
212. Black-throated Thrush *Turdus atrogularis* **B**: A total of four in the Paro Chu valley and six on Cheli La. An infrequently encountered migrant in Bhutan.
213. Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys* **B**: Heard along the Tashitang Trail; one seen well above our Yonkola Camp and several others heard along the Limithang Rd.
214. Bluethroat *Luscinia obscura* **I**: At least three seen including one superb individual in splendid breeding dress, Yamuna R.
215. Orange-flanked Bush Robin *Tarsiger cyanurus* **B**: One very lovely male in the Cheri valley.
216. Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* **B**: Moderately common at low and medium elevations in lightly wooded farmland and around settlements. **I**: Assam.
217. White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* **B**: Heard near Somdrup Jonkhar.

218. Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulicata* **I**: Yamuna R.

219. Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* **B**: One male near our Tingtibi camp.

220. Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni* **B**: Relatively common this year with a nice scattering of both males and females: Paro Chu valley; Dochu La; along the Tashitang Trail a total of 12 along the Trongsa to Shemgang Rd; two on the Shemgang Rd; and one female on the Limithang Rd.

221. Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis* **B**: Locally common to very common: 20 Chelila and the Ha valley; ca. 50 in the Cheri Valley; low numbers recorded from Pele La east to Tingtibi; two above Ura; and two on the Limithang Rd.

222. White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps* **B**: Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the tour! David's first adult male put on a superb show together with a group of other altitudinal migrants in the Cheri valley.

223. White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus* **B**: Widespread and common; seen almost daily and found on virtually every creek, stream and river that we encountered; c. 700 - 3500m. A thoroughly delightful and dapper bird.

Also known as River Chat, River Redstart, White-capped Chat, White-capped River Chat.

224. Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* **B**: Widespread and common; seen almost daily with as many as 12 on one day; usually seen in pairs with many males singing; found along virtually every stretch of creek, stream and river we encountered in addition to cliff-side waterfalls and springs; from near the Paro Valley east to Somdrup Jonkhar.

Also known as Plumbeous Redstart.

225. White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurum* **B**: Thanks to some great work by Susan we all enjoyed exceptional views of this sublime creature: three just below Shemgang and two the following day; and then one below Morong.

226. Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri* **B**: One on the Po Chu was John's 1000 lifer! Great looks at one foraging on the sides of a spectacular waterfall that tumbles over the road between Trongsa and Shemgang; one on the Namling 'Death Drop'; and a total of six on one day on the Limithang Rd.

227. Black-backed Forktail *Enicurus immaculatus* **B**: It took a bit of work but eventually everyone got to see this rather elusive species on our last afternoon near Somdrup Jonkhar.
228. Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus* **B**: Astonishingly absent this year with just one seen along the Limithang Rd.
229. Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculatus* **B**: Fabulous views of this often elusive bird on Dochu La and two seen nicely on Pele La.
230. Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura* **I**: Yamuna R. **B**: Several in the Paro Chu valley and two in the Mo Chu valley.
- NOTE:** Some authorities treat the population wintering in the Indian sub-continent as a full species separate from Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*. See, however, Rasmussen & Anderton (2005).
231. White-tailed Stonechat *Saxicola leucura* **I**: One pair seen very nicely in the 'scope in tall riverside grasslands along the Yamuna R. An increasingly uncommon and localised species.
232. Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata* **I**: Yamuna R. **B**: One female below Mongar.
233. Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea* **B**: Widespread and common; observed almost daily in open scrubby country, especially farmland.
234. Chestnut-headed Tesia *Tesia castaneocoronata* **B**: Widespread; two seen very nicely on Pele La and two seen on the Shemgang Rd; heard daily along the Limithang Rd. and below Morong.
235. Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea* **B**: One seen and several heard along the Tashitang Trail; one seen superbly well and several heard along the Limithang Road, and heard below Morong.
236. Grey-bellied Tesia *Tesia cyaniventer* **B**: Several heard along the Limithang Rd. east to Somdrup Jonkhar and seen by a lucky few.
237. Brownish-flanked Bush-Warbler *Cettia fortipes* **B**: Heard or seen on several days, invariably in open, scrubby country: one seen in the Mo Chu valley; heard on Pele La; heard between Trongsa and Shemgang; others heard and one seen very well along the Limithang Rd.; thereafter heard daily east to Somdrup Jonkhar.

238. Chestnut-crowned Bush-Warbler *Cettia major* **B**: A total of three seen well in dense undergrowth along the Limithang Rd. including one seemingly in full song! This is a very rarely encountered species anywhere.

239. Himalayan Aberrant Bush-Warbler *Cettia flavolivacea* **B**: Thanks to some brilliant work by Susan we finally found this 'gem' on a Bhutan tour.

240. Hume's Bush-Warbler *Cettia brunnescens* **B**: Several heard and then one seen superbly on the upper slopes of Yutong La; also heard above Ura; Limithang Rd; and below Rontong.

NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) separate Himalayn populations from those in China which have a quite different song, hence the amended common name.

241. Grey-sided Bush-Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons* **B**: Widespread and fairly common. Superb views of a few individuals and pairs as they responded dramatically to our tape.

242. Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cucullatus* **B**: Heard only just above our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd. and on our eastern descent.

243. Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* **B**: One or two below Trashigang.

244. Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* **I**: Several in scrub just beyond the Indian immigration post, Assam.

245. Indian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus brunnescens* **I**: One or two seen well in scrub just beyond the Indian immigration post, Assam.

NOTE: The taxonomy of this group of reed-warblers is very complex. For a recent reappraisal see Rasmussen & Anderton (2005).

246. Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* **I**: One or two seen well in scrub just beyond the Indian immigration post, Assam.

247. Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* **I**: Yamuna R.

NOTE: Split from Common Chiffchaff (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005)

248. Tickell's Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus affinis* **B**: Moderately common but only recorded between Trongsa and Shemganag and along the Shemgang Rd.

249. Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher* **B**: Several seen and heard: one Ha Chu valley; six between Pele La and Trongsa; two on Yutong La; six between Jakar and Sengor; and several along the Limithang Rd.

Also known as Orange-barred Warbler

250. Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis* **B**: Most frequently encountered in mixed species flocks: Dochu La; Pele La; imithang Rd. and on our eastern descent.

Also known as Grey-faced Warbler, Grey-faced Leaf-Warbler, Grey-throated Willow Warbler

251. Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus* **B**: Just two seen with a mixed flock above Ura and one below Sengor.

NOTE: Several small and very similar *Phylloscopus* warblers were until recently considered to be a sub-species of Pallas's Warbler *P. proregulus*. Fieldwork in the mountains of central China by Per Alstrom and Urban Olsson has established that the forms *chloronotus* and *kansuensis* which were formerly considered to be subspecies of *P. proregulus* are in fact distinct species; Lemon-rumped Warbler *P. chloronotus* and Gansu Leaf Warbler *P. kansuensis*.

252. Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* **B**: Two seen well on the lower slopes of Cheli La; two on the Shemgang Rd; two above Ura and one on the Limithang Rd. This and a couple of other very similar and very confusing species provide quite a challenge.

253. Large-billed Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris* **B**: Widespread and fairly common this year especially towards the east

254. Blyth's Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* **B**: Widespread and common, locally very common.

Also known as Blyth's Crowned Leaf Warbler, Blyth's Crowned Willow Warbler.

255. Yellow-vented Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus cantator* **B**: Great looks at a flock of six along the Tashitang Trail; common along the Shemgang to Tingtibi Rd. especially below 900m. This is a distinctive and little known *Phylloscopus* species.

Also known as Yellow-faced Leaf Warbler or Yellow-throated Leaf Warbler

256. Whistler's Spectacled Warbler *Seicercus whistleri* **B**: Most of the Golden Spectacled Warblers we encountered belonged to this taxon.

257. Golden-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii* **B**: Birds we saw below Trongsa down to Tingtibi almost certainly belonged to this taxon.

NOTE: The Golden-spectacled Warbler has until very recently been treated as a single species, *Seicercus burkii*, widely distributed in the mountains of southern Asia. A recent paper by Per Alstrom provides strong evidence that this taxon is actually a complex of four or five species. At least two species occur and probably breed in Bhutan: Golden-spectacled Warbler *S. burkii* and Whistler's Warbler *S. whistleri*. See Ibis (1999)141, pp 545-568.

258. Grey-hooded Warbler *Seicercus xanthoschistos* **B**: Widespread and common throughout much of the tour except at the highest elevations.

259. White-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus affinis* **B**: Two below Rontong and one below Morong.

260. Grey-cheeked Warbler *Seicercus poliogenys* **B**: Common along the Limithang Rd. above our Yongkola camp.

261. Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps* **B**: Widespread in low numbers, often with mixed species flocks: Dochu La; Pele La; Chendibji area; several along the Shemgang Rd; and notably common daily along the Limithang Rd. and on Kori La.

262. Broad-billed Warbler *Abroscopus hodgsonii* **B**: One surprised all of us by popping up in the middle of a mixed flock along the Shemgang Rd. **Globally threatened.**

263. Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis* **B**: Sensational views of two singing within degraded sub-tropical forest above Tingtibi. You should see Susan's photo!

264. Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps* **B**: One of the most attractive and charming of all Old World Warblers. Two on Dochu La; Pele La; four on the Shemgang Rd; notably common along the Limithang Rd. below Namling with several seen on a number of days; several on our eastern descent.

265. Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris* **I**: Four along the Yamuna R.

266. Common Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* **B**: Two seen well in Silver Fir Forest on Cheli La.

267. Striated Prinia *Prinia criniger* **B**: Scattered records of ones and twos.

268. Hill Prinia *Prinia atrogularis* **B**: Superb views of a singing male in breeding plumage in roadside scrub along the Shemgang Rd.; several seen and heard on our eastern descent.
269. Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris* **I**: Several in superb fresh breeding plumage along the Yamuna R.
270. Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis* **I**: Yamuna R.
271. Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* **I**: Yamuna R; also Assam.
272. Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* **B**: One observed regularly around our Tingtibi camp and one below Morong.
- Also known as Siberian Sooty Flycatcher.
273. Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa (latirostris) dauurica* **B**: Notably very uncommon with just one this year near our camp above Tingtibi.
274. Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsonii* **B**: One just below Sengor, Limithang Rd.
275. Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophhiata* **B**: Widespread and locally common, recorded: 10 Cheri valley; 6 Dochu La; 1 Pele La; 10 Pele La to Trongsa; 1 on the Shemgang Rd; 2 Yutong La; several Jakar to Sengor; several daily along the Limithang Rd; and two below Rontong.
276. Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* **B**: One near Deothang.
277. Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* **I**: One male seen well near the Indian border crossing, Assam.
- NOTE**: Most authorities now treat Red-throated and Taiga flycatchers as separate species (see Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).
278. White-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula monnileger* **B**: Two individuals gave us the run around along the Shemgang to Tingtibi Rd. This is usually heard only and regarded as an almost impossible bird to see.
279. Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni* **B**: Scattered ones and twos, usually striking males with mixed species flocks.

280. Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris* **B**: A truly lovely bird that graced us with fine views on just three occasions: Pele La; near Tingtibi and on the Limithang Rd.
281. Sapphire Flycatcher *Ficedula sapphire* **B**: After much deliberation we finally realised that what we had seen was a rather worn female of this infrequently encountered species; Shemgang Rd.
282. Verditer Flycatcher *Muscicapa thalassina* **B**: Widespread and often very common bird (50+ between Trongsa and Shemgang), seen almost daily except at high elevations on Cheli La and the Limithang Rd. A truly spectacular bird. **I**: Assam.
283. Large Niltava *Niltava grandis* **B**: Heard regularly from Trongsa east to Somdrup Jonkhar; several males and females seen nicely along the Limithang Rd.
284. Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae* **B**: Several superb views of glowing males and females singing on territory including one incredible 'scope study of a male along the Tashitang Trail where a total of ten were counted; several heard and seen along the Limithang Rd. east to near Deothang.
285. Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara* **B**: A real stunner, several males gave us great views: one male on Pele La; one male near Tingtibi; several seen and heard daily on the Limithang Rd; and a total of six on our eastern descent.
286. Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor* **B**: One male at Morong.
287. Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* **B**: Several daily between Shemgang and Tingtibi.
288. Large Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis magnirostris* **B**: A male studied at length and photographed within lightly degraded hill-forest, ca. 700m elevation, just above Tingtibi.
- NOTE:** Owing to the similarity of several of the 'blue flycatchers' treatment of this taxon as a full species was overlooked until specimens were reviewed by Rasmussen (in Rasmussen & Anderton 2005). This species is now split from Hill Blue Flycatcher *C. banyumas*.
289. Pygmy Blue Flycatcher *Muscicapella hodgsoni* **B**: Fabulous looks, after a bit of a struggle, at a pair of these lovely flycatchers in dense bramble thicket on the west slope of Pele La.
290. Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicacapa ceylonensis* **B**: Widespread and moderately common; seen daily except at higher elevations.

291. Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha* **B**: One as we descended into the Ha Valley; one in the Cheri Valley; six on the west slope of Pele La; four on the Shemgang Rd., two on the west slope of Yutong La; several between Bumthang and Sengor and along the Limithang Road.
292. White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis* **B**: Several seen most days from Pele La eastwards except along the Shemgang Rd. and Yutong La. Several observed attending nests in dense bamboo *ca.* 1900m elevation, Limithang Rd. **I**: Assam.
293. Asian Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradise* **I**: Amazingly one rufous and one glorious silver male seen superbly under the Banyan tree along the Yamuna R.
294. Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* **B**: Two within degraded Subtropical Forest above Tingtibi.
295. Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys* **B**: Moderately common and several pairs seen superbly well: in scrub just above Wangdi; several heard and seen between Trongsa and Tingtibi; heard at our campsite at Rotong.
296. White-browed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii* **B**: Sensational views of a single, eventually, very responsive bird within partially degraded Subtropical woodland, *c.* 650m elevation, near Tingtibi and a total of six others seen and/or heard daily near Tingtibi.
297. Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* **B**: Only a handful of records this year: great views of a very confiding pair at the top of the Shemgang Rd. and a second pair seen beautifully between Rotong and Kanglung.
298. Coral-billed Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus ferruginosus* **B**: Undoubtedly one of **THE** highlights of the entire tour: a spectacular flock containing as many as ten individuals together with both Lesser and Greater Rufous-headed parrotbills put on a great show as they foraged among wild banana palms and bamboo, *ca.* 1600m elevation, above Deothang. This typically by far the most difficult of the scimitar-babblers to see and to see well.
299. Slender-billed Scimitar-Babbler *Xiphirhynchus superciliaris* **B**: Yet another major tour highlight with a very responsive pair providing incredible views within their bamboo habitat on Yutong La; heard above Sengor and a single bird seen with a mixed species flock as we descended to our camp at Narphung.
300. Long-billed Wren-Babbler *Rimator malacoptilus* **B**: This surely is what birding is all about - certainly Asian Birding! One of these almost mythical birds gave us an encounter

none of us will ever forget - sitting singing and swearing at us from just a few feet on the Limithang Rd.

301. Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler *Phoepyga albiventer* **B:** A quiet year for this charming sprite! Nevertheless we managed an incredible experience with one very territorial individual as he almost jumped on to my foot, just below Sengor on the Limithang Rd. Also heard on Yutong La and on the eastern descent.
302. Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Phoepyga pusilla* **B:** Widespread and rather uncommon as well as being very difficult to see again this year. One seen below Trongsa.
303. Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler *Spelaeornis caudatus* **B:** Absolutely astounding views of this fabulous little songster along the Limithang Rd. **Globally threatened.**
304. Bar-winged Wren-Babbler *Spelaeornis troglodytoides* **B:** Despite all the disturbance to this species habitat happily it appears to slowly coming back and this year we all had fabulous views of a single songster and then a very confiding pair, all on the Limithang Rd. Interestingly the birds in Bhutan look decidedly more like those illustrated for SE Arunachal Pradesh than the eastern Himalayas.
305. Spotted Wren-Babbler *Spelaeornis formosus* **B:** One seen beautifully, BUT naturally only after first leading us on a merry dance along the Shemgang Rd. Heard also along Tashitang, Shemgang Rd., Limithang Rd., and at several sites on the eastern descent.
306. Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-Babbler *Sphenocichla humei* **B:** I would not have thought it possible! Everyone got to see not one but a pair of these near-mythical birds as they sang and foraged within the deepest of thickets on the Limithang Rd. **Amazing!**
- NOTE:** Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) treat the population of wedge-billed wren-babbler that occurs north of the Brahmaputra as a separate species from that which is south of the Brahmaputra viz: Cachar Wedge-billed Wren-Babbler *S. roberti*.
307. Rufous-fronted Babbler *Stachyris rufifrons* **B:** Several seen on two days on the Shemgang Rd.
308. Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* **B:** Commonly heard and/or seen along the Limithang Rd. east to near Deothang.
309. Golden Babbler *Stachyris chrysaea* **B:** One on the west slope of Pele La; a total of ten on the Shemgang Rd., and then commonly most days along the Limithang Rd. east to near Deothang.

310. Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps* **B**: Four seen in degraded sub-tropical forest above Tingtibi.
311. Striped Tit-Babbler *Macronus gularis* **B**: A total of ten seen near Somdrup Jonkhar.
312. Striated Babbler *Turdoides earlei* **I**: Several seen in scrub surrounding the OKhla marshes along the east bank of the Yumna River.
313. Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striatus* **I**: Several in the grounds of our hotel, Delhi; also Assam.
314. Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris* **B**: Common, often in flocks of ten or so from Morong to Deothang.
315. Cutia *Cutia nipalensis* **B**: One male on the Shemgang Rd; and a pair at our breakfast site on the Limithang Rd. A very handsome species.
316. Black-headed Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius rufiventer* **B**: One fabulous male of this rarely seen species brilliantly spotted by Betsy on the Limithang Rd.
317. White-browed Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis* **B**: Widespread and fairly common with birds heard most days and some fine views of individuals, often with mixed species flocks.
318. Green Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius aenobarbus* **B**: One with a mixed species flock along the Ha valley Rd.; great looks at one with a mixed species on Yutong La; two with a mixed species flock at ca. 9,000 feet on the Limithang Rd. and two near our Yongkola camp. Bhutan is probably the most reliable place to see this elusive species.
319. Black-eared Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius melanotis* **B**: Stunning views of this truly gorgeous gem in mixed species flocks: one on the Shemgang Rd; several daily near our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd. and two on two days on our eastern descent.
320. Rusty-fronted Barwing *Actinodura egertoni* **B**: Fabulous views of several wonderful flocks. Six on the Tashitang Trail; two groups of eight along the Shemgang Rd; moderately common along the Limithang Rd. below Namling down to and beyond our Yongkola camp and on our eastern descent.
321. Hoary Barwing *Actinodura nipalensis* **B**: Exceptional views of one below Kanglung.
322. Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* **B**: Notably common this year with total of 50+ on the Limithang and Kori La

323. Chestnut-tailed Minla *Minla strigula* **B:** Common and widespread with groups of as many as 20 seen.

Also known as Bar-throated Siva.

324. Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta* **B:** Widespread and fairly common, often with mixed species. A total of 30+ on the Shemgang Rd. is exceptional.

325. Golden-breasted Fulvetta *Alcippe chrysotis* **B:** Superb views of this gorgeous bird: two on one day and four on another on the Limithang Rd.

326. Yellow-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe cinerea* **B:** In many ways this species epitomises the quality of the birding in Bhutan. A little known and rarely if ever seen species throughout most of its range it is locally common in Bhutan especially along the Limithang Road. We saw it daily at this fabulous site including as many as 20 on one day!

327. Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Alcippe castaneiceps* **B:** Widespread and locally common; often in mixed species flocks in cool mixed Broad-leaved Forest.

328. White-browed Fulvetta *Alcippe vinipectus* **B:** Widespread and locally common usually with mixed species flocks in the understorey of both mixed Evergreen and Cool Mixed Broad-leaved Forest at high elevations including as many as 20 on Cheli La.

329. Nepal Fulvetta *Alcippe nipalensis* **B:** Usually very skulking and locally quite numerous, this year, however, we were treated to several very good views of this interesting looking Fulvetta: ca. 20 along the Tashitang Trail; 2 on Pele La; several daily on the Shemgang Rd.

330. Rufous-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe rufogularis* **B:** One heard singing on steep slopes at ca. 1000 m along the Shemgang to Tingtibi Rd. This is a very poorly known species in Bhutan.

331. Rufous-backed Sibia *Heterophasia annectans* **B:** Frustratingly one heard near Tingtibi but would not come in to our tape.

332. Rufous Sibia *Heterophasia capistrata* **B:** Common to occasionally abundant and ubiquitous; seen almost daily.

Also known as Black-capped Sibia.

333. Long-tailed Sibia *Heterophasia picaoides* **B**: Yet another species that has returned to the fold as a result of us now being able to travel out of Bhutan via the south-east. Fairly common below Morong.
334. Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps* **B**: A rather localised species; notably common along the along the Shemgang to Tingtibi Rd; the Shonkhar Chu valley and below Morong, with totals of 6 - 50 recorded, often in large flocks.
335. White-naped Yuhina *Yuhina bakeri* **B**: Notably common this year with total of 10 and 6 on two days along the Shemgang Rd; and two seen by Steven on the Limithang Rd.
336. Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis* **B**: Wonderfully widespread and common; recorded almost daily; observed in mixed species flocks and mono-specific flocks in mixed Broad-leaved Forest.
337. Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis* **B**: Widespread and common, especially at high elevations.
338. Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis* **B**: Widespread and common, especially at high elevations.
339. Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta* **B**: Six along the Tashitang Trail; ten and six on two days along the Shemgang Rd; a group of ten near Deothang.
- Also known as Black-lored Yuhina.
340. White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis xantholeuca* **B**: One with a mixed species flock on the Shemgang Rd.
341. Fire-tailed Myzornis *Myzornis pyrrhoura* **B**: Undoubtedly one of the tour's many highlights; two seen at wonderfully close quarters on the slopes of Yutong La; one seen by Steven along the Limithang Rd; and two on Kori La.
342. White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis* **B**: Widespread and common, locally very common; occasionally in flocks of >50 with daily totals exceeding 200. Recorded almost daily.
343. White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus* **B**: One of the most attractive and effervescent of Asia's laughingthrushes. Common, seen daily over four days (range 3-50) along the road between Trongsa and Tingtibi; several in the Shonkhar Chu Valley and east to near Somdrup Jonkhar.

344. Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax monileger* **B:** Singles on two days in secondary woodland and partially degraded Subtropical Forest below our camp near Tingtibi.

345. Greater-necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis* **B:** Twenty on one day and 14 on the next within secondary woodland and partially degraded Subtropical Forest below our camp near Tingtibi. Sorting out this species from Lessers is a no mean feat.

346. Striated Laughingthrush *Grammatoptila striata* **B:** Common and recorded widely in suitable forested habitat on most days.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

347. Rufous-necked Laughingthrush *Dryonastes ruficollis* **B:** Fabulous views of several very responsive birds in scrubby areas of woodland below our camp near Tingtibi and in the Shonkhar Chu valley.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

348. Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla rufogularis* **B:** One on the Shemgang Rd. gave good views from the bus.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

349. Spotted Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla ocellatus* **B:** Superb and prolonged views of pair above Ura. Definitely one of the most attractive of all laughingthrushes.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

350. Bhutan Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron imbricatum* **B:** A total of four on Pele La; several daily along the Shemgang and Limithang roads; also on our eastern descent.

NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) present good evidence for splitting this taxon from Streaked Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron (Garrulax) lineatus*. The Bhutan Laughingthrush ranges throughout Bhutan eastwards to W Aranchal Pradesh.

351. Blue-winged Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron squamatum* **B:** Two heard so close and yet only glimpsed as it snivelled and grovelled in the densest thicket imaginable, on the Shemgang Rd. and two seen on our eastern descent.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

352. Scaly Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron subunicolor* **B:** Heard between Rotong and Narphung.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

353. Black-faced Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron affinis* **B:** Widespread and but rather uncommon this year. Typically found at high elevations: Cheli La; Dochu La; Yutong La; between Ura and Sengor and at upper elevations on our eastern descent.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

354. Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron erythrocephalum* **B:** Two in the Ha Valley; ten on Pele La; and several on the Limithang Rd.

NOTE: This species is no longer placed in *Garrulax*.

355. Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea* **B:** Heard near Deothang.

356. Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium* **B:** At least six very confiding birds hooping and hollering on Pele La.

357. Brown Parrotbill *Paradoxornis unicolor* **B:** Fabulous views of a flock of ten in the Jakar valley.

358. Black-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis nipalensis* **B:** Sensational views of at least twenty along the Limithang Rd.

359. Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis atosuperciliaris* **B:** At least two seen together with Coral-billed Scimitar-Babblers and Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbills in banana dominated secondary growth above Deothang. There are very few records of this species for Bhutan.

360. Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis ruficeps* **B:** A group of 12 seen beautifully just below our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd. and two there specially for Betsy a couple of days later; six near Deothang.

361. Rufous-vented Tit *Parus rubidiventris* **B:** Small number seen regularly at high elevations.

362. Coal Tit *Parus ater* **B:** Widespread and moderately common in all high elevation forests.

363. Grey-crested Tit *Parus dichrous* **B**: Widespread and moderately common in all high elevation forests.

Also known as Brown-crested Tit.

364. Great Tit *Parus major* **I**: Assam.

365. Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus* **B**: Common to locally abundant and ubiquitous in suitable forested habitat. Seen daily at all localities visited. One of the most frequently seen but nevertheless most attractive Himalayan species.

366. Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus* **B**: This is a very snazzy looking bird. Three near Chendibji; 2-6 daily along the Shemgang Rd.; several along the Limithang Rd, Kori La and on our eastern descent.

367. Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus* **B**: Widespread and moderately common, especially in mixed species flocks.

368. Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea* **B**: What a stunner! Exceptional views of a pair along the Shemgang Rd.; heard on the Limithang Rd. and on our eastern descent.

369. Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus* **B**: A delightful species and a great favourite with everyone.

Also known as Red-headed Tit.

370. Rufous-fronted Tit *Aegithalos iouschistos* **B**: Some good sightings this year, including several on the lower slopes Cheli La; Cheri Valley; Dochu La; Thrumsingla and the Limithang Rd.

Also known as Black-browed Tit.

371. Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta citrinocristata* **B**: One pair seen 'beautifully' daily along the Shemgang Rd.; also in the Shonkhar Chu valley.

NOTE: Treated as a separate species from that in the lowlands of India (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005).

372. White-tailed Nuthatch *Sitta himalayensis* **B**: Widespread but rather scarce this year; usually in mixed species flocks.

373. Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa* **B**: For the first time in many years we dipped on this species, only hearing it along the Shemgang Rd. This is one of Asia's most infrequently seen and consequently least known birds. **Globally Threatened**.
374. Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* **B**: Two on the lower slopes of Cheli La; one on Pele La; two near Thrumsing La.
Also known as Common Treecreeper
375. Rusty-flanked Treecreeper *Certhia nipalensis* **B**: Exceptional views of two on Pele La and one near Thrumsing La.
376. Brown-throated Treecreeper *Certhia discolor* **B**: Excellent views of one on Pele La; two on the Shemgang Rd. and one on the Limithang Rd.
377. Purple Sunbird *Nectarinia asiatica* **I**: Several in scrub along the Yamuna R.
378. Mrs Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae* **B**: Rather sparse this year. The resident subspecies in Bhutan is especially spectacular.
379. Green-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga nipalensis* **B**: Widespread and common to abundant and often ubiquitous. Seen virtually daily except in the Paro Valley, Cheli La and below c. 1200 m elevation.
380. Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata* **B**: Common and widespread especially at elevations generally lower than the previous two species.
381. Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* **B**: Great looks at a gorgeous and very confiding male in scrubby woodland in the Shonkhar Chu valley.
382. Fire-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga ignicauda* **B**: A One male in flight right in front of us on the slopes of Yutong La; and one immature male below Morong.
383. Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna* **B**: Two seen daily along the Shemgang Rd; one near our Yongkola camp and common on our eastern descent with 30+ in the forests above Somdrup Jonkhar.
384. Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostris* **B**: Two near Somdrup Jonkhar.
385. Yellow-vented Flowerpecker *Dicaeum chrysorrheum* **B**: Two near Somdrup Jonkhar.
386. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* **B**: Notably more common this year than last.

Also known as Buff-bellied Flowerpecker.

387. Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatus* **I:** Superb views of a gorgeous male *en route* to Gauhati, Assam.
388. Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosa* **B:** Widespread, locally common, seen most days except at high elevations. **I:** Assam.
389. Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* **I:** Assam.
390. Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* **B:** Moderately common and widespread.
391. Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus* **B:** Widespread, common and seen almost daily especially in areas of open country. **I:** Assam.
392. Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* **I:** Yamuna R; also Assam.

NOTE: Asian populations once united with African Black Drongo under *D. adsimilis* are now widely treated as a separate species *macrocercus*.

393. Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* **B:** Widespread and common to very common; recorded almost daily except on Cheli La and between Ura and Sengor.
394. Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus* **B:** Notably common along the lower section of the Shemgang Rd. and above Somdrup Jonkhar.
395. Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer* **B:** Common, seen daily along the Shemgang Rd.; one pair nesting below our Yongkola camp and several seen.
396. Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus* **B:** Much more frequently seen this year: as many as 20 in one day along the Shemgang Rd.; two along the Limithang Rd.

NOTE: Dear old Ripley again. This time he lumped all the drongos from India to Melanesia and Australia as one huge polymorphic species Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus*. This was very unfortunate as the islands of Indonesia e.g. Sumatra, Sulawesi, and the Lesser Sundas all support distinctive and intervening forms. As a consequence the taxonomy of this group has been revised and at least four well-defined species have resulted. The specific name *hottentotus* now only applies to populations in south and south-east Asia. They are characterised by their filamentous hair-like crest (hence the common name). This species ranges east to the Moluccas. The Spangled

Drongo, which is confined to New Guinea, Australia and nearby islands, now receives the specific scientific name *D. bracteatus*. For more information see Sibley & Monroe (1990).

397. Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus* **I**: Assam.

398. Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* **B**: One on Cheli La; heard in the Cheri valley.

399. Yellow-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa flavirostris* **B**: One of the many great birds of Bhutan and the Himalayas. Widespread and common, especially at the forest edge and around relatively undisturbed farm-houses from Chelila east to near Deothang.

Also known as Gold-billed Magpie or Gold-billed Blue Magpie

400. Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis* **B**: Two between Trongsa and Shemgang; several seen and heard near Somdrup Jonkhar.

401. Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* **I**: Yamuna R. and Assam.

402. Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae* **B**: Widespread and locally moderately common.

Also known as Himalayan Treepie.

403. Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica* **B**: Common in the upland valleys of the Bumthang Region.

404. Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes* **B**: Widespread and common in higher elevation evergreen forests from Cheli La and the Cheri Valley east to the Limithang Road

NOTE: This taxon is split from populations to the west viz. Larger Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga multipunctata*.

405. Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* **B**: Moderately common in the Paro Valley; Cheli La; Ha Valley; Cheri Valley; common in the Bumthang valleys, east to Thrumsing La. Mostly seen in small flocks and pairs around human habitation and in agricultural land.

406. House Crow *Corvus splendens* **B**: Three in Punakha. **I**: Yamuna R. and Assam.

407. Large-billed Crow *Corvus japonensis* **B**: Common to very common and widespread, recorded daily.

NOTE: The entire 'Large-billed Crow' complex has been revised (see Rasmussen and Anderton 2005). The very large-billed birds that inhabit the Himalayas from Afghanistan eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh are the birds we observed in Bhutan and they appropriately retain the name Large-billed Crow but are given the specific name *japonensis*. Populations in the lowlands of NE India are now referred to as Eastern Jungle Crow *C. levaillantii* and populations in peninsula India, south from the base of the Himalayas are referred to as Indian Jungle Crow *C. culminatus*. Based on my own observations of Indian sub-continent and populations elsewhere in SE Asia I completely concur with these authors revision of this fascinating group.

408. Indian Jungle Crow *Corvus culminatus* **I:** Yamuna R. and Assam.

409. Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnus malabaricus* **B:** Several around Punakha.

Also known as Grey-headed Starling.

410. Asian Pied Starling *Gracupica contra* **I:** Yamuna R. and Assam.

Previously placed in *Sturnus*.

411. Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* Common and ubiquitous in open country including the midst of urban madness! **B:** Common in and around the Paro Valley east to Trongsa. **I:** Delhi, Yamuna R. and Assam

412. Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus* **I:** Moderately common especially as a commensal of man, sometimes in horribly yucky areas.

413. Rosy Starling *Sturnus roseus* **I:** A flock of c. 50 near Ghandi's memorial

414. Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans* **B:** Common in suitable scrub and open country especially around farm buildings. Often together with Eurasian Tree Sparrows.

Also known as Cinnamon Sparrow.

415. Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* **B:** Ubiquitous in suitable open country especially around farm buildings.

416. House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Common and ubiquitous, especially as a commensal of man. **B:** Mongar, Somdrup Jonkhar. **I:** Delhi; Yamuna R. Assam.

417. Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar* **I:** Several in breeding plumage along the Yamuna River.

418. Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava* **I:** A total of c. 30, in various plumage states, scrub, grassy areas and farmland adjacent to marshes on the east bank of the Yumna R.
419. White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* **B:** A group of six feeding quietly in a patch of seeding bamboo, within partially degraded Subtropical Forest, c. 850m elevation, above Tingtibi.
420. Indian Silverbill *Lonchura malabarica* **I:** Yamuna R.
421. Yellow-breasted Greenfinch *Carduelis spinoides* **B:** A flock of ca. 20 in the Cheri valley; 100+ on Pele La; 100+ between Trongsa and Shemgang and ca. 15 near Morong.
422. Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola* **B:** An amazing flock of 1000+ in the Cheri valley; several on Pele La; 100+ on Thrumsing La and 20 near Sengor.
423. Blandford's Rosefinch *Carpodacus rubsecens* **B:** At least 20 on Pele La.
424. Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Carpodacus nipalensis* **B:** One female studied at length on Pele La Camp.
425. Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* **I:** Yamuna R. **B:** Common on our eastern descent.
426. Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus* **B:** Superb views of a flock of 15 in the village of Ura.
427. Dark-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus edwardsii* **B:** Two males in the Cheri valley; one female on Dochu La.
428. White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura* **B:** A total of four females and two males high on Cheli La and 12 on Pele La including some lovely males.
429. Scarlet Finch *Haematospiza sipahi* **B:** Absolutely stunning 'scope views of a total of eight, mostly males above Deothang.
430. Red-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythrocephala* **B:** Just one female seen on Kori La.
431. Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca* **B:** A rarely encountered species in Bhutan we were treated to superb views of a single male on Kori La.

432. Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis* **B**: What a gorgeous bird! Approximately 30 seen on Cheli La; ten on Pele La; 30+ feeding on the ground right in front of the bus in the Jakar valley; and finally 20+ just below Morong.
433. White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes* **B**: Great looks at a total of 40+ on Cheli La; 50+ on Pele La and six in the Jakar valley.
434. Gold-naped Finch *Pyrrhoptes epauletta* **B**: Four males and one female on Kori La was a lovely surprise - despite the rain.
435. Crested Bunting *Melophus lathamii* **B**: One male near Thimpu; one male along the Po Chu; common in farmland below Trongsa; four in the Shonkhar Chu valley.
436. Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* **B**: A flock of six in wet ricefields and scrub at Rontong was a surprise so late in the year.

MAMMALS

1. Assamese Macaque *Macaca assamensis* **B**: Widespread and common especially at lower elevations.
2. Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta* **I**: Delhi.
3. Common (Hanuman) Langur *Presbytis entellus* **B**: Notably larger and more heavily furred than populations in India.
4. Capped Langur *Presbytis pileatus* **B**: Wonderful looks a troop of these handsome primates along the Limithang Road.
5. Golden Langur *Presbytis geei* **B**: Notably common from just below Trongsa to Shemgang and down to our camp near Tingtibi. Large numbers (20 - 70) seen on four days with several troops feeding on or at the side of the road including taking dirt from exposed cliffs.
6. Small Indian Mongoose *Herpestes auropunctatus* **I**: One seen along the Yamuna R.

7. Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula* **B**: One of the highlights of the tour - two gambolling up the road in front of our bus on the Limithang Rd; also seen in the Cheri valley.
8. Hodgson's Flying Squirrel *Petaurista magnificus* **B**: One gliding over our Yongkola camp at dusk. A truly gorgeous creature.
9. Giant Pied Squirrel *Ratufa bicolor* **B**: One or two seen daily along the Shemgang Rd.
10. Hoary-bellied Squirrel *Callosciurus pygerythrus* **B**: Several seen daily along the Shemgang Rd. and in the Shonkhar Chu valley.
11. Five-striped Squirrel *Funambulus pennanti* **I**: Delhi.
12. Himalayan Striped Squirrel *Tamiops macclellandi* **B**: Common and widespread especially along the Limithang Road.
13. Common Barking Deer (Muntjac) *Muntiacus muntjak* **B**: One on Dochu La; one on the Shemgang Rd.; heard near our Yongkola camp on the Limithang Rd.
14. Royle's Pika *Ochotona roylei* **B**: Cheli La; Pele La.
15. Asian Elephant *Elaphus maximus* **B**: Fresh footprints and dung found near Somdrup Jonkhar.

And all this in addition to a wonderful variety of skinks, lizards, frogs, dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies. Not to mention of course a profusion of delightful flowering plants.

GPS references

Riverview Hotel, Thimpu	2308 metres	27° 28.29' N., 89° 38.81' E.
Cheri Valley	2711 metres	27° 35.19' N, 89° 38.09' E.
Dochu La (summit)	3112 metres	27° 29.39' N., 89° 45.14'E.
Zangtho Pelri Hotel, Wolakha	1397 metres	27° 32.16' N., 89° 52.21' E.
Wangduephodrang town centre	1311 metres	27° 28.76' N., 89° 54.11' E.

Pele La	3404 metres	27° 32.15' N, 90° 12.12' E
Pele La camp	3367 metres	27° 32.41' N, 90° 11.97' E
Tingtibi Camp site	740 metres	27° 10.37' N, 90° 41.90' E
Om Leki's Lodge	2607 metres	27° 33.92' N, 90° 44.45' E
Thrumsing La	3763 metres	27° 24.07' N., 90° 59.47' E.
Thrumsing La is 43 kms after the Ura (Sheltang) La, 17 kms before Sengor, 33 before the Namling cliffs & 38 before Namling.		
Namling village	2309 metres	27° 20.15' N., 91° 06.37' E.
Yongkola Campsite	1855 metres	27° 19.16' N, 91° 07.42' E