

4 July 2009 - KDB

**The Birds, Mammals and Butterflies Recorded  
on the  
Assam: Kaziranga & Nameri National Parks  
Tour**

**March 29-April 7, 2009**

*Compiled by*

**K. David Bishop**

**Leader: K. David Bishop**



© K. David Bishop –Great One-horned Rhinoceros

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## Assam, India 2009

### 'Asia's Serengeti'

Kaziranga, with its almost unimaginably rich melange of swamps and marshes, grasslands, and forests, supports teeming numbers and a diversity of mega-charismatic birds and mammals unequalled anywhere in Asia. As such, the epithet, "Asia's Serengeti," is well-deserved. Nowhere else in Asia can you sit atop a superbly trained elephant and watch an Indian great one-horned rhinoceros at barely a few meters, while herds of wild Asian elephants rumble and splash nearby, and decidedly ugly Greater and Lesser adjutants lumber away in ungainly flight—and all against a backdrop of towering, snow-capped Himalayas. Kaziranga is a gem of a park that provides a rare opportunity to see what the wild lands of Asia were once like.

Albeit relatively small at just ca. 900 square kilometres, Kaziranga, located on the south bank of the mighty Brahmaputra, hosts the highest density of Bengal tigers anywhere in the world. A recent count garnered approximately 90 of these magnificent creatures, and we saw two of them! It is quite astonishing to enumerate the list of globally threatened species that make their homes within this reserve. In addition to the species mentioned above, the list includes Swamp Francolin, Spot-billed Pelican, Pallas's Fish-Eagle, Black-breasted Parrotbill, Asian water buffalo, swamp and hog deer, and Hooloch gibbon to mention but a few, all of which are resident in Kaziranga and regularly seen on our Assam tour.

I doubt any of the participants on our 2009 tour will ever forget our river-raft experience along the Bhoirelli River, Nameri. The peace, the serenity, and the sheer beauty of a wild, untrammelled river garnished by hundreds of dainty Small Pratincoles, a very dapper Ibisbill, and a pair of noisy Great Thick-knees; what could be more perfect? And then in the afternoon to lazily watch not one but three White-winged Ducks on the water, in flight, and perched in a forest tree. It really doesn't get much better!

But oh Kaziranga! The view from the Sohola Bheel watch tower was wonderful; spread out before us in a 250-degree arc were birds and mammals everywhere. Skeins of delightfully dapper Bar-headed Geese shifted and squabbled while the morning sky lit up sumptuous Ruddy Shelducks dappling in the shallows, revealing the richest imaginable colors. And all the while there was the soft susurrant of busily feeding animals. We easily counted 25 rhinos, many with young calves; leviathan Black-necked Storks; a flock of increasingly rare Slender-billed Vultures at a kill; and a gigantic Pallas's Fish-Eagle bugling overhead. We knew there had to be a big cat just sitting there out of sight, and how right we were. For near on two hours we watched as a huge male tiger hid, played hide and seek with a herd of water buffalo, and then began to hunt. Every minute seemed to add another species to an already impressive tally, but it was the sheer spectacle of the scene, the lighting, and the appreciation of what we were seeing that made it all so special. Kaziranga is truly a wonderful place and my year never feels complete unless I have spent some time there.

I need hardly tell you how much I love Assam, so it is hard to enumerate the highlights as different things meant different things to different people. Assam is truly a great birding and wildlife destination. There is no doubt that it offers one of the most amazing wildlife spectacles in Asia, or for that matter anywhere in the world, and the addition of Nameri really enhances and rounds-out our experience here. India is always a special experience and this memorable trip was made even more enjoyable by the wonderful hospitality we found everywhere we went. Our local guide, Jintu, was a joy to work with and my thanks go to him in particular, as well as to our cheerful drivers who also worked very hard to help us find our birds!

Thank you for your support and for sharing in the fun. I look forward to seeing you all again soon. Of course, it goes without saying that I look forward to VENT's return to this wonderful part of Asia.

*K. David Bishop (July 2009)*



White-winged Duck *Cairina scutulata* - Nameri @ K. David Bishop

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## Diary

### Daily Itinerary

31 March      A relatively leisurely mid-morning flight, with impressive Jet Airways from Delhi to Gauhati the capital city of Assam. Birding is so good in India and especially Assam that it is difficult to travel very far without stopping for one wonderful bird or another. However, we had a five hour drive to make and so we eventually dragged ourselves eastwards along the south side of the Brahmaputra valley towards Kaziranga National Park. Though not before stopping to witness the incredible spectacle of 400+ Greater Adjutants - a globally endangered species no less, congregating at the less than salubrious city dump! Thanks to our skillful driver we arrived at our attractive accommodations - Wild Grass Lodge in time for dinner and with time to contemplate what we might see on the morrow.

1 April        The morning was spent exploring the Central Range of Kaziranga National Park with its marvellous mosaic of swamps, marshes, grasslands and woodlands. We encountered our first Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros and a wonderful array of big birds including the spectacular Pallas's Fish-Eagle and endangered Slender-billed Vulture. After lunch we visited lovely Baguri Bheel. Here the combination of tall and short grasslands, woodland, scrub and swampy bheels makes for spectacular and easy birding and mammal watching.

**Kaziranga really is the Serengeti of Asia!**

2 April        We headed off early to nearby Panbari Forest which forms a very important extension to Kaziranga National Park. Working the edge of the forest where it interfaces with a tea plantation we found a good assortment of forest birds including fine views of both Jerdon's Baza and a displaying Crested Goshawk. During the afternoon we returned to the Central Range to almost immediately discover a large male tiger drinking at a small pool. Initially scared off by a disgracefully noisy series of tourist jeeps we persistent and were eventually treated to fabulous and prolonged views of this spectacular carnivore. For a while it played hide and seek with a herd of wild water buffalo but then he emerged and began to hunt. All the while we were treated to nearby herds of elephants and rhinos. Trundling home full of excitement we were further astonished by another male leaping across the track as our jeep made its way in the late afternoon. What a buzz!!!!

- 3 April      Sohola Bheel. Surely Sohola is one of the most enchanting places in Asia with its teeming birds and large mammals. We were treated to fine views of large numbers of both Slender-billed Vultures and Eurasian Griffons attending a kill. During the afternoon exploration of a remnant patch of grassland near Kohora just outside the park boundary produced a total of 12 Greater Painted Snipe in addition to huge numbers of Little Cormorants, starlings and unidentified buntings and weavers going to roost.
- 4 April      A rather frustrating morning in the rain at the edge of Panbari forest before returning for b'fast and a last visit to the Central Range where a rarely encountered Sloth Bear was undoubtedly the highlight. Following lunch we slowly made our way to Nameri with several good birding stops along the way. Despite it being a short drive the birds and mammals along the way conspired to have us arriving some five hours later! But in good time for afternoon tea and a lovely Oriental Hobby.
- 5 April      A delightful morning rafting trip along the Bhorelli River not only produced Ibisbill, Great Thick-knees, hundreds of Small Pratincoles and three Himalayan Crested Kingfishers but it was truly one of the most blissful experiences imaginable. It is so good to see so much great and critical habitat persisting. The early afternoon was spent visiting the recently established Pygmy Hog breeding centre before heading across the river and into Nameri Reserve proper. And what an afternoon which include not one but three White-winged Ducks; at least ten Great Hornbills and hordes of Barred Cuckoo-doves.
- 6 April      From our very attractive camp at Nameri we took an early boat across the very lovely and bird-rich Bhorelli River to Nameri Wildlife Sanctuary. A longer than anticipated walk produced two more White-winged Ducks - amazing; fine looks at a pair of Sultan Tits and a special experience with a group of Vernal Hanging-parrots. The afternoon was spent memorably crossing the border into Aranachal Pradesh and looking wistfully onto the extensively forest foothills.
- 7 April      Very reluctantly we departed from this very hospitable and attractive camp and it was back to Gauhati in time to connect with our flight to Delhi and the conclusion of a wonderful trip.

**I can't wait to go back.**

Our very own tiger which we watched for two hours in Kazairanga National Park  
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## Annotated List of BIRDS

### NON-PASSERINES

1. **Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus***  
One on the Bhorelli River on two days.
2. **Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis***  
Totals of 12 and 20 seen on two days in Kaziranga. Classified as globally Near Threatened.
3. **Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***  
Small numbers (<20) along the Bhorelli River.
4. **Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger***  
Common and seen daily in small numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri. A roost of *circa* 1,000 in a remnant patch of tall grass just outside the Kaziranga park boundary near Kohora presented an impressive sight at dusk.
5. **Asian Darter *Anhinga melanogaster***  
Common (10-20 daily) along watercourses in Kaziranga. Classified as globally Near Threatened.
6. **Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***  
One at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
7. **Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea***  
1-2 seen daily in Kaziranga.
8. **Great Egret *Ardea (Casmerodius, Egretta) alba***  
Quite common and seen almost daily.
9. **Intermediate Egret *Ardea (Mesophoyx, Egretta) intermedia***  
Several seen daily in Kaziranga.
10. **Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***  
Small numbers seen daily in Kaziranga
11. **Indian Pond-Heron *Ardeola grayii***  
Very common throughout including a few individuals in near breeding plumage.  
**Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus***  
Very common in Kaziranga incl. many in breeding plumage and *circa* 300 roosting in a remnant patch of grassland near Kohora.  
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' indicates that birds in North America are referable to Western or Common Cattle Egret *B. ibis*.

12. **Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax***  
One in flight in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
13. **Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus***  
Thanks to some excellent spotting by Wayne we all enjoyed excellent and prolonged 'scope views of this very handsome species in the Eastern Range, Kaziranga. Normally difficult to see we were treated to 20 minutes of fabulous, close 'scope views as this species forze and then moved infinitesimally as it began to hunt.
14. **Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans***  
Common to very common in open grassland and rural areas, including *circa*. 300 between Gauhati and Kaziranga and >200 in the Central Range.
15. **Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus***  
Small numbers in the central range and 20+ at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
16. **Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus***  
Notably common in Kaziranga with many immatures seen, often two together. Classified as globally as Near Threatened.
17. **Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus***  
Relatively common around Nagaon and within Kaziranga which is very important for this declining species and we recorded 10-20 daily. Three in a tree along the Bhorelli River and a total of ten on the drive back to Gauhati. Classified as globally Vulnerable.
18. **Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius***  
The sight of >400 congregating at the Gauhati city dump was surely one of the highlights of the entire tour. At least six were seen at Sohola Bheel including one swallowing a snake or an eel. It is very encouraging to see this globally endangered species in such large numbers despite the unpleasant locality. The dramatic decline of this spectacularly ugly species now sees it confined to Assam and Cambodia.
19. **Greylag Goose *Anser anser***  
One with a flock of Bar-headed Geese at the very edge of Kaziranga.
20. **Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus***  
*Circa*. 50 at Baguri Bheel and 50 at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
21. **Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea***  
What a delightful bird; we saw a few wintering stragglers including six at Baguri Bheel; five at Sohola Bheel and three along the Bhorelli River.
22. **Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna***  
One female at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga.
23. **White-winged Duck *Cairina scutulata***  
One of the world's rarest species of duck and currently classified as Endangered. Undoubtedly one of THE highlights of the tour. We were treated to exceptional views of at least three birds on a small small pool one afternoon at Nameri and then as they flew

around us in perfect light. An individual perched in a tall tree at the forest edge and provided us all prolonged 'scope views of this rarely seen species. Just to add icing on the cake we saw another two the following day. Classified as globally Vulnerable.

24. **Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope***  
Modest numbers seen daily, Kaziranga
25. **Gadwall *Anas strepera***  
Small numbers at Mikhi Bheel, Kaziranga.
26. **Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca***  
Small numbers at Baguri and Sohola bheels, Kaziranga.
27. **Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha***  
20+ at Mikhi and Baguri and 40+ at Sohola bheels, Kaziranga.  
NOTE: This distinctive taxon has recently been given full species status by some authorities (see for example Rasmussen & Anderton 2005; The Forty-ninth Supplement to the American Check-list of North American Birds (The Auk 125 (3): 758-768, 2008 which is based on Leader, P. J. 2006. Sympatric breeding of two Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* taxa in southern China. Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club 126: 248-252). 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 very rarely recorded passage migrant in the Indian subcontinent.
28. **Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***  
One at Sohola Bheel, Kz; 2-4 daily along the Bhorelli River.
29. **Jerdon's Baza *Aviceda jerdoni***  
Superb views of one in flight over degraded forest at the edge of Panbari forest and then a second perched individual on our second visit to Panbari.
30. **Crested (Oriental) Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus***  
At least eight, mostly dark morphs circling over Panbari; one at Nameri.
31. **Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus***  
One as we drove from Gauhati to Kaziranga.
32. **Black Kite *Milvus migrans***  
Twenty around Gauhati.
33. **Black-eared Kite *Milvus lineatus***  
A flock of 50+ soaring, presumably on migration over Nameri.  
NOTE:
34. **Pallas' Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus***  
A total of ten including several pairs at nests in the Central Range and at the edge of

Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga. One immature along the Bhorelli River. Yet another globally declining species that was wonderfully visible with almost daily sightings in Kaziranga. Classified as globally Vulnerable.

35. **Grey-headed Fish-Eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus***  
Great views of a pair with young at a nest in the Central Range and as many as four counted in the Sohola Bheel area, Kaziranga. Classified as globally Near Threatened.
36. **Slender-billed Vulture *Gyps tenuirostris***  
One of the pleasant surprises of the tour; possibly as many as 12 over the Central Range and a further ten attending a Tiger kill at Sohola Bheel and then three perched in a dead tree alongside several huge griffons which provided a fine size comparison. Classified as globally Critically Endangered.
37. **Eurasian Griffon *Gyps fulvus***  
At least 35 counted in and around Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
38. **Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus***  
One adult in flight in the Central Range, Kaziranga. Classified as globally Critically Endangered.
39. **Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela***  
Several daily in Kaziranga and Nameri.
40. **Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo***  
One seen well in flight as it circled over our heads at the edge of Panbari forest.
41. **Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos***  
Superb males seen over grassland near Baguri, Mikkhi and Sohola bheels, Kaziranga.
42. **Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus***  
Fabulous views of two individuals as they soared low over our heads at the edge of Panbari forest.
43. **Shikra *Accipiter badius***  
One male in the Central Range and another near Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
44. **Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***  
One over the Central Range, Kaziranga.
45. **Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga***  
Great views of an adult in the Central Range, Kaziranga. Classified as globally Vulnerable.
46. **Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus cirrhatus***  
One seen on two days in Kaziranga.
47. **Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***  
One or two daily in Kaziranga.

48. **Oriental Hobby *Falco severus***  
Superb views of a resident female as we watched her at length calling and preening over our tented camp at Nameri.
49. **Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus***  
One pair of the pale *calidus* race hunting during the morning near Sohola Bheel.
50. **Swamp Francolin *Francolinus gularis***  
Yet another trip highlight, at least two birds were seen daily and sometimes superbly well throughout Kaziranga. The species is classified as globally Vulnerable.
51. **Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus***  
Commonly seen and heard in Kaziranga and to a lesser degree in Nameri.
52. **Kalij Pheasant *Lophura leucomelanos lathami***  
Wonderful sightings of a pair in the Sohola area and a single male and two females in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
53. **Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum***  
One heard in Panbari forest, Kaziranga.
54. **White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus***  
Several seen most days in Kaziranga.
55. **Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio***  
Locally common in Kaziranga.  
NOTE:
56. **Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***  
Small nos. in Kaziranga
57. **Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus***  
One or two, rather distantly, at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
58. **Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus***  
Common and seen daily with as many as 15 at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
59. **Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii***  
Superb, prolonged views of one of these charismatic birds wintering along the Bhorelli River.
60. **Greater Painted-Snipe *Rostratula bengalensis***  
A total of twelve in moist short grassland near Kohora on the edge of Kaziranga.
61. **Great Thick-knee *Esacus recurvirostris***  
Just one pair but great looks along the Bhorelli River, Nameri.
62. **Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea***  
*Circa* 1,000 in total along the Bhorelli River, Nameri.
63. **Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus***  
A total of ten at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga.

64. **River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii***  
A total of 15 along the Bhorelli River.
65. **Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus***  
Four at Baguri and Sohola bheels, Kaziranga.
66. **Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus***  
Recorded almost daily in Kaziranga.
67. **Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***  
One in Kaziranga and three along the Bhorelli River.
68. **Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura***  
One seen typically in flight at Kaziranga and another at Nameri.
69. **Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago***  
Ten flushed by elephants in the Central Range, Kaziranga
70. **Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***  
Singles in Kaziranga and Nameri.
71. **Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***  
Small numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri.
72. **Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus***  
One of the commonest shorebirds in Kaziranga.
73. **Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***  
One at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga.
74. **Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***  
Twenty near the entrance to the Central Range, Kaziranga.
75. **Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***  
Small numbers in Kaziranga and along the Bhorelli River.
76. **Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus***  
Two at Baguri Bheel.
77. **Little Stint *Calidris minuta***  
Four at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga.
78. **Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii***  
Two in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
79. **River Tern *Sterna aurantia***  
One of the most attractive of the terns and we saw four at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga; a total of thirty including several breeding pairs along the several Bhorelli River.
80. **Rock Dove *Columba livia***  
Widespread and ubiquitous.

81. **Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis***  
Common on one morning in Nameri.
82. **Red-collared Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica***  
Widespread and seen in good numbers daily.
83. **Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis***  
Widespread and ubiquitous.
84. **Barred Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia unchall***  
An exceptional congregation of *circa* 100 in tall forest in Nameri.
85. **Emerald Ground-Dove *Chalcophaps indica***  
Two in the Central Range, Kaziranga and one or two daily in Nameri.
86. **Thick-billed Green Pigeon *Treron curvirostra***  
Twelve at a fruiting on the edge of Panbari forest.
87. **Yellow-footed Pigeon *Treron phoenicoptera***  
We had a number of superb views of this attractive pigeon both in Kaziranga and Nameri where it was quite common.
88. **Wedge-tailed Green-Pigeon *Treron sphenurus***  
A group of six in tall forest at Nameri.
89. **Green Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula aenea***  
Common but not as common as 2008; this year we saw totals of six on three days in both Kaziranga and Nameri.
90. **Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria***  
Notably common and conspicuous in Kaziranga.
91. **Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri***  
Hundreds seen daily at Kaziranga and Nameri.
92. **Blossom-headed Parakeet *Psittacula roseata***  
Much scarcer than the other parakeets and only one or two of these exquisite birds seen or heard daily in Kaziranga.
93. **Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri***  
10-20 seen daily in Kaziranga and Nameri.
94. **Vernal Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus vernalis***  
This infrequently seen species put on a great show in Nameri. We first saw several individuals foraging high in a tall, canopy tree and then deep within the forest found four birds feeding at eye-level apparently delicately flecking away at the outer bark of a large forest tree. Wonderful to see these birds at such close quarters and to see how very lovely they truly are.
95. **Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus***  
Heard commonly in Kaziranga.

96. **Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus***  
Two seen well in response to our tape at Kaziranga and several other heard.
97. **Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo *Surniculus (lugubris) dicruroides***  
One heard at Panbari forest and one heard in Panbari.
98. **Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea***  
Heard daily and one male seen in Kaziranga.
99. **Green-billed Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus tristis***  
One seen well near Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
100. **Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis***  
Seen and heard many times in Kaziranga and Nameri.
101. **Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis***  
One seen well in Nameri on our first afternoon.
102. **Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia***  
Heard most evenings around our tented camp at Nameri.
103. **Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis***  
Fabulous views of a roosting pair at Baguri Bheel, Kaziranga.
104. **Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides***  
Very common, singles seen or heard daily in Kaziranga.
105. **Spotted Owlet *Athene brama***  
Great views of one in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
106. **Brown Hawk-Owl *Ninox scutulata***  
Great views of two at our tented camp at Nameri
107. **Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus***  
Good views of a male as we headed for home at dusk in the Central Range, Kaziranga; heard around our tented camp at Nameri.
108. **Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris***  
Four over Nameri.
109. **Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis***  
Six flying low over Panbari forest, Kaziranga.
110. **Asian Palm-Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis***  
Small numbers most days.
111. **Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***  
Totals of five and then four along the Bhorelli River.
112. **Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis***  
Amazingly only one seen this year in the Central Range, Kaziranga.

113. **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*  
Very common, recorded daily in many different habitats.
114. **Ruddy Kingfisher** *Halcyon coromanda*  
Heard at Panbari forest.
115. **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*  
Common and seen daily around the bheels and healthy watercourses of both Kaziranga and Nameri.
116. **Himalayan Crested Kingfisher** *Ceryle lugubris*  
Something of a surprise; at least three birds seen very nicely along the Bhorelli River.
117. **Blue-bearded Bee-eater** *Nyctyornis athertoni*  
An attractive and unusual bird; two in the Eastern Range put on a great show, Kaziranga.
118. **Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis*  
Rather circumspect this year with small numbers just seen on three days in Kaziranga.
119. **Blue-tailed Bee-eater** *Merops philippinus*  
A total of ten in the Central Range and two at Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
120. **Chestnut-headed Bee-eater** *Merops leschenaulti*  
Small nos. in Kaziranga but more common in Nameri. One of THE dems of this part of the world.
121. **Indian Roller** *Coracias benghalensis*  
Common and seen daily in open habitats, especially along roadsides.
122. **Common Dollarbird** *Eurystomus orientalis*  
One or two on two days in Nameri.
123. **Common Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*  
Seen daily in in low numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri.
124. **Oriental Pied-Hornbill** *Anthracoceros albirostris*  
Notably uncommon this year with just one seen daily (but very likely a different individual) in Kaziranga.
125. **Great Hornbill** *Buceros bicornis*  
Yet another trip highlight; our first view of this impressive bird was of a pair at the edge of Panbari forest; we saw a further four near Baguri Bheel; one more in the Sohola area, Kaziranga and then along the Bhorelli River we enjoyed fine views of a pair and in the afternoon watched at least ten birds going to roost in Nameri. Wonderful to see this charismatic bird still so common. Classified as globally Near Threatened.
126. **Wreathed Hornbill** *Aceros undulatus*  
All hornbills are spectacular and this one is no exception - we saw a total of six in one morning along the Bhorelli River and then a single female in Nameri.

127. **Lineated Barbet** *Megalaima lineata*  
Two seen daily in Kaziranga but as many as ten seen in one day in Nameri.
128. **Blue-throated Barbet** *Megalaima asiatica*  
Seen and heard commonly, daily at both Kaziranga and Nameri.
129. **Blue-eared Barbet** *Megalaima australis*  
One seen well at the edge of Panbari forest.
130. **Coppersmith Barbet** *Megalaima haemacephala*  
One seen near our lodge in Kaziranga.
131. **Grey-capped Pygmy-Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus*  
Fine views of a pair at Panbari forest and a female at Nameri.
132. **Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos macei*  
Fine views of a pair in the gardens at Wild Grass Lodge.
133. **Streak-throated Woodpecker** *Picus xanthopygaeus*  
1-2 seen daily in Kaziranga; this species appears to like the lower trunk of trees in lightly wooded areas of tall elephant grass.
134. **Black-rumped Flameback** *Dinopium benghalense*  
Singles on two days in Kaziranga.
135. **Greater Flameback** *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*  
Two in the Central Range of Kaziranga and a male seen superbly well in Nameri.
136. **Great Slaty Woodpecker** *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*  
Heard only but this may be the first record of this increasingly uncommon species at Nameri.

## PASSERINES

137. **Bengal Bushlark** *Mirafra assamica*  
One or two daily in Kaziranga.
138. **Sand Lark** *Calandrella raytal*  
Four incl. several giving song display flights along the Bhorelli River.
139. **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda galgula*  
Several seen both on the ground and in song-flight in Kaziranga.
140. **Sand Martin (Bank Swallow)** *Riparia riparia*  
Two with hundreds of other hirundines feeding over rice-fields on the edge of Kaziranga and two along the Bhorelli River.
141. **Grey-throated Sand Martin** *Riparia (paludicola) chinensis*  
Abundant (as many as 5,000 on one day) in Kaziranga and very common along the Bhorelli River at Nameri.

142. **Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica***  
Abundant (as many as 20,000 on one day) daily in Kaziranga and Nameri.
143. **Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica***  
Just two with hundreds of other hirundines over rice-fields at the edge of Kaziranga.
144. **Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus***  
Ones and two *en route* to and within Kaziranga.
145. **Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni***  
Approx. 100 roosting in a remanant patch of tall grass just outside the border of Kaziranga; a total of ten flushed along the trail in Nameri.
146. **Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus***  
Four in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
147. **Pied (White) Wagtail *Motacilla alba***  
Low numbers daily in Kaziranga and Nameri.
148. **Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola***  
Wonderful studies of at least four birds in full breeding plumage in the muddy, wet fields at Kohora, Kaziranga; ones and twos seen daily at Kaziranga.
149. **Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***  
Just one this year at the Gauhati dump
150. **Large Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei***  
1-2 on two days at the edge of Panbari Forest.
151. **Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus***  
A spectacular flock of *circa* 60 at Panbari; low numbers daily at Nameri.
152. **Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus***  
Recorded daily throughout.
153. **Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer***  
Common; recorded daily throughout.
154. **White-throated Bulbul *Alophoixus flaveolus***  
Small numbers seen on two mornings at the edge of Panbari Forest.
155. **Himalayan Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus***  
A flock of *circa* 40 in the Central Range, Kaziranga and a huge flock of *circa* 300 at Nameri presumably winter migrants readying to head up into the Himalayas.
156. **Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons***  
Great views of pairs at the edge of Panbari forest and Nameri.
157. **Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii***  
One female still lingering in her winter quarters at Nameri.

158. **Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia*  
Small numbers seen most days in Kaziranga and Nameri.
159. **Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*  
A total of three along the Bhorelli River and then fine views of a male in Nameri.
160. **Blue Whistling Thrush** *Myophonus caeruleus*  
Something of a surprise, one flushed from a forest trail at Nameri.
161. **Ashy Prinia** *Prinia socialis*  
One or two on two days in Kaziranga.
162. **Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata*  
One singing in tall grassland in Kaziranga.
163. **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola*  
Fine views of two individuals in tall grassland in Kaziranga.
164. **Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius*  
Several in the gardens of Wild Grass lodge and around the tented camp at Nameri.
165. **Dark-necked Tailorbird** *Orthotomus fuscatus*  
Great looks at two at the edge of Panbari Forest.
166. **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*  
One or two daily in Kaziranga.
167. **Tickell's Leaf-Warbler** *Phylloscopus affinis*  
Common in woodland in Kaziranga.
168. **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*  
Small numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri.
169. **Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*  
One in woodland in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
170. **Striated Grassbird** *Megalurus palustris*  
Several seen daily in Kaziranga incl. displaying birds.
171. **Taiga (Red-throated) Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla*  
Just two seen in Kaziranga.
172. **Verditer Flycatcher** *Eumyias thalassinus*  
A superb 'scope study of a striking male as he glowed in the afternoon sun at Nameri and then a second bird the following day.
173. **Pale-chinned Blue-Flycatcher** *Cyornis poliogenys*  
This devilishly sneaky albeit responsive bird really gave us the runaround in Panbari Forest but most of us eventually got to see it well. Several heard in Nameri.

174. **White-tailed (Himalayan) Rubythroat**  
Fabulous views of two singing males in tall but recently burnt grassland in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
175. **Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis***  
Common and widespread throughout.
176. **White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus***  
Several heard at the edge of Panbari Forest and one seen nicely in Nameri.
177. **Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***  
Handsome males seen on two days in Kaziranga and a female seen in Nameri.
178. **Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus***  
One male seen well in lightly wooded farmland near Wild Grass Lodge; one female in forest edge near Sohola Bheel.
179. **Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni***  
Two females seen well at the edge of Nameri.
180. **Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura***  
Recorded daily in low numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri.
181. **Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea***  
Females seen on two days at the edge of forest and woodland in Kaziranga.
182. **Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis***  
Good views of one bird in a roadside tree and others heard at the edge of Panbari forest.
183. **Abbott's Babbler *Trichastoma abbotti***  
Heard but very unresponsive at Panbari forest.
184. **Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps***  
A very vocal individual was seen nicely within tall forest in Nameri; also heard at the edge of Panbari forest.
185. **White-browed Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus schisticeps***  
Heard at the edge of Panbari forest.
186. **Pin-striped (Striped) Tit-Babbler *Macronous gularis***  
Eventually good looks at this species at the edge of Panbari forest.  
NOTE: The Timalidae (Babblers) has and will continue to undergo a massive revision and is a reflection of the recent overdue examination of the taxonomy of Oriental birds. Many of the suggested changes are quite simply commonsense and this is just one such example. Populations on Borneo, Java and associated small islands is now treated as a separate species Bold-striped Tit-Babbler *M. borneensis*. The common English name aptly reflect one of the most striking difference between these taxa.
187. **Chestnut-capped Babbler *Timalia pileata***  
Eventually seen well in the grasslands at Kaziranga where this fine songster is common.

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188. **Yellow-eyed Babbler** *Chrysomma sinense*  
Two of these striking birds were seen well in tall grassland in Kaziranga.
189. **Striated Babbler** *Turdoides earlei*  
Great looks at a pair in the grasslands of the Central Range, Kaziranga.
190. **Great Tit** *Parus major*  
4-6 seen daily in Kaziranga.
191. **Sultan Tit** *Melanochlora sultanea*  
One very responsive pair gave us all fabulous views of this spectacular species in Nameri.
192. **Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch** *Sitta cinnamoventris*  
Fine views of pairs enjoyed on two days in Kaziranga; heard in Nameri.  
NOTE: Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) and HBW (2008) treat populations in the Himalayan foothills, Assam SE Bangladesh, S China, N Mynamar, NW Thailand as a separate species from taxa in the Indian peninsula and SE Asia. These taxa differ morphologically.
193. **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch** *Sitta frontalis*  
Heard in Nameri.
194. **Ruby-cheeked Sunbird** *Chalcoparia (Anthreptes) singalensis*  
One male seen very nicely at the edge of Panbari forest.
195. **Purple Sunbird** *Cinnyris (Nectarinia) asiaticus*  
Heard and seen briefly *en route* to Kaziranga
196. **Eastern Crimson Sunbird** *Aethopyga siparaja*  
Several males seen beautifully at the edge of Panbari forest and at Nameri.
197. **Little Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera longirostris*  
Heard at Panbari and Nameri.
198. **Streaked Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera magna*  
Two individuals gave us fine views at Panbari.
199. **Yellow-vented Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum chrysorrheum*  
One feeding at flowering mistletoe at the edge of Panbari forest.
200. **Plain Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum concolor*  
One feeding in mistletoe at the edge of Panbari forest two at Nameri.
201. **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*  
Heard commonly and a fine male eventually seen in the gardens of Wild Grass Lodge.
202. **Oriental White-eye** *Zosterops palpebrosus*  
Common in the gardens of Wild Grass Lodge where flocks of 20-20 regularly observed.  
Also recorded in Nameri.

203. **Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus*  
This gorgeous species was seen daily in low numbers in Kaziranga and Nameri; a truly striking species.
204. **Maroon Oriole** *Oriolus traillii*  
Excellent views a wintering male at Nameri.
205. **Asian Fairy-bluebird** *Irena puella*  
One male and two females seen at the edge of Panbari forest and heard in Nameri.
206. **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*  
One and two seen near Sohola Bheel, Kaziranga.
207. **Grey-backed Shrike** *Lanius tephronotus*  
Several daily (maxima 12) in Kaziranga and Nameri.
208. **Large Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis gularis*  
One or two on both days at Nameri.
209. **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*  
Seen commonly and daily throughout.
210. **Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus*  
Just one at the edge of Panbari forest.
211. **Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*  
Low numbers seen daily in Kaziranga.
212. **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus*  
One seen well at the edge of Panbari forest; two on two days within tall forest at Nameri.
213. **Ashy Woodswallow** *Artamus fuscus*  
Many along the roadside leading to Kaziranga and a few within the park.
214. **Rufous Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda*  
Seen in low numbers at Kaziranga.
215. **House Crow** *Corvus splendens*  
Common in the towns and cities of Assam.
216. **Eastern Jungle Crow** *Large-billed Crow* *Corvus levaillantii*  
Common throughout.
217. **Common Hill Myna** *Gracula religiosa*  
Low numbers seen in the forest near Sohola Bheel and at the edge of Panbari forest; *circa.* 10 attending a fruiting tree at our camp at Nameri.
218. **White-vented Myna** *Acridotheres grandis*  
Notably abundant and seen daily at Kaziranga and Nameri.

219. **Jungle Myna** *Acridotheres fuscus*  
Very common and seen daily at Kaziranga and Nameri.
220. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*  
Very common and seen daily.
221. **Asian Pied Starling** *Gracupica contra*  
Common and seen daily.
222. **Chestnut-tailed Starling** *Sturnia malabaricus*  
Common to very common and seen daily.
223. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*  
Very common and seen daily.
224. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*  
Fairly common and seen daily.
225. **Baya Weaver** *Ploceus manyar*  
Three incl. one in breeding plumage foraging near Wild Grass Lodge.
226. **White-bellied Munia** *Lonchura striata*  
A flock of six at the edge of Panbari forest.
227. **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola*  
Excellent looks at an adult female in tall grassland in the Central Range, Kaziranga.
228. **Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*  
Fine looks at a male in tall grassland in the Central Range, Kaziranga.

## MAMMALS

1. **Rhesus Macaque** *Macaca mulatta*  
Two seen in Kaziranga and Nameri.
2. **Capped Langur** *Trachypithecus pileatus*  
Fabulous close views of this very attractive primate including totals of six and then ten in Panbari forest and daily in Nameri.
3. **Hooloch Gobbon** *Bunopithecus hoolock*  
Fabulous sounds of at least two adult males in Panbari forest, but not accessible because of your leader's concerns about rampaging elephants!
4. **Hoary-bellied Himalayan Squirrel** *Callosciurus pygerythrus*  
One or two seen almost daily in all areas.
5. **Smooth-coated Otter** *Lutrogale perspicillata*  
One on our last morning in Kaziranga.

6. **Tiger *Panthera tigris***  
Surely THE highlight of the entire tour! We watched a male drinking then slinking then hunting and all the while to the close accompaniment of herds of Asian Elephants, rhinos and some very inquisitive wild water buffalo. Undoubtedly one THE great experiences of my life! Despite that Kaziranga supports the highest density of tigers anywhere in the species range it is very rarely seen owing to the opaqueness of its habitat. And then just to round things off a second male lept across the road as we headed for home in the dark - what a buzz!!!!
7. **Asian Elephant *Elaphus maximus***  
Many seen daily in Kaziranga with a maxima of 30 on one afternoon.
8. **Indian Great One-horned Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis***  
Truly amazing to see these magnificent beasts in such amazingly good numbers just roaming about the grasslands, sometimes even in sight of the main road. We counted 80+ in and around Bagurir Bheel.
9. **Wild Boar *Sus scrofa***  
Quite common throughout Kaziranga.
10. **Sambar *Cervus unicolor***  
One female along the Bhorelli River, Nameri.
11. **Swamp Deer *Cervus duvaucelli***  
Very common in the grasslands of Kaziranga.
12. **Common Barking Deer *Muntiacus muntjak***  
At least one seen in the Baghuri and Sohola areas, Kz.
13. **Hog Deer *Axis porcinus***  
Notably common this year with 100 counted on just one day in Kaziranga.
14. **Asiatic Wild Buffalo *Bubalus arnee***  
Fabulous to see these truly wild animals, which have almost disappeared throughout their entire range
15. **Indian Flying Fox *Pteropus giganteus***  
Many *en route* to Kaziranga.
16. **Sloth Bear**  
Distant but good views of this rarely seen species in the Central Range of Kaziranga.
17. **Black-naped Hare**  
One on our last morning at Nameri.

## REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

18. Water Monitor *Varanus indicus*
19. Indian Soft-shelled Turtle

20. Indian Tent Terrapin *Kachuga tentauria*  
Fabulous views of a two terrapins basking by a small pool in Nameri.

## BUTTERFLIES

The following is a list of some of the butterflies we observed in Kaziranga National Park and Nameri Wildlife Santctuary:

Common Birdwing  
Common Rose  
Paris Peacock  
Great Mormon  
Tailed Jay  
Commander  
Spotted Blue Crow  
Tawny Raja  
Common Tiger  
Glassy Tiger  
Large Yeoman  
Common Yeoman  
Bush Brown sp  
Grey Panzie  
Common Jay  
Grass Yellow  
Common Hedge Blue  
Golden Sapphire  
Purple Sapphire  
Hair-streak sp  
Plain Puffin  
Cabbage White  
Yellow Helen  
Common Fritillary  
Large Orange-tip  
Common Map  
Common Panzie  
Lemon Panzie  
Common Crow  
Himalayan Five Ring  
Common Immigrant  
Common Sailor

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