

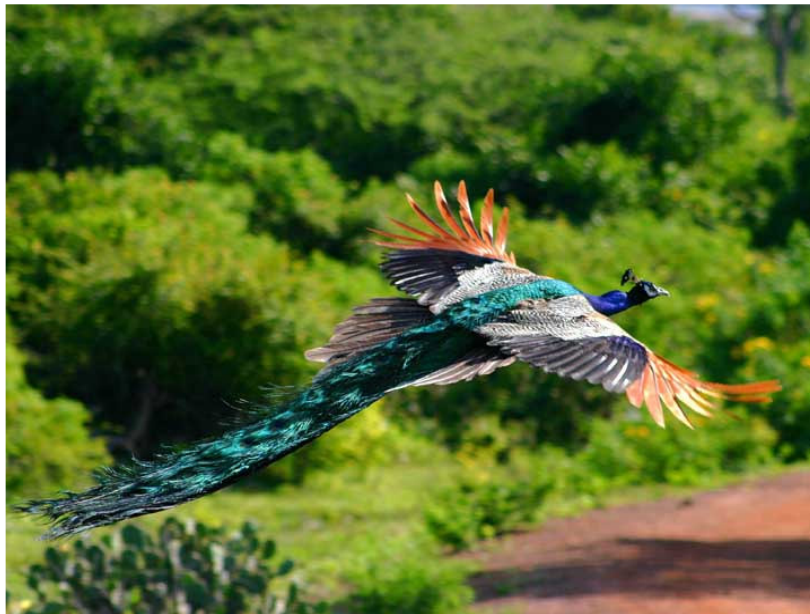


Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

SRI LANKA

20th - 30th November 2006



Indian Peafowl in flight by David Shackelford

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader David Shackelford

Top 10 Birds of the Tour as voted by participants:

1. Yellow-fronted Barbet
2. Chestnut-backed Owlet
3. Red-faced Malkoha
4. Sri Lanka Blue Magpie
5. Pied Thrush
6. Gray-headed Fish-Eagle
7. Lesser Adjutant
8. Malabar Trogon
9. Small Pratincole
10. Indian Pitta

Tour Summary

Arriving from the Southern Indian city of Kochi, we began our explorations of Sri Lanka on the outskirts of the capital city of Colombo, overall a very organized metropolis with tidy infrastructure, efficient transportation, and friendly local people. Travelling on windy roads through rubber tree and teak plantations we eventually found ourselves inside dense montane forest at the edge of the Kelani River. Getting an early start the following morning we boarded the local ferry service comprising of an admittedly older man and his dugout canoe who took us across the white-water rapids. The forest was alive with activity and in short time we had begun knocking out the endemics of the island including the reticent Green-billed Coucal, beautiful Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot, Loten's Sunbird, and phenomenal views of the tiny Chestnut-backed Owlet.

A country widely recognized for producing the finest tea in the world, we continued through immense plantations where we could watch hundreds of local harvesters hard at work selecting the finest of leaves. Continuing through extensive wetlands concealed by blankets of flowering water lilies, terraced rice patties, and scattered settlements, we finally gave into temptation and stopped at a scenic waterfall near a tea producing stall to enjoy some utterly immaculate tea prepared fresh from the rows of ripened bushes nearby, where we located the scarce Black-faced Munia.

The mountain highlands of Sri Lanka were pleasantly cool, and we found ourselves enjoying a morning in the Horton Plains picking through mixed flocks including sought-after species such as the Sri Lanka Bush-Warbler, a gorgeous male Kashmir Flycatcher, and the endemic Dull-blue Flycatcher. Later in the day we enjoyed incredible views of one of the most difficult endemics of the region, the vivid blue but almost hopelessly crepuscular Sri Lanka Whistling-Thrush. With patience and a sudden burst of adrenaline we all managed to obtain astonishing looks at this tricky species along with other denizens of various stunted mountain sites hosting the Sri Lanka Wood-Pigeon, shy Pied Thrush, a confiding Slaty-legged Crake, and very nice views of several agile Purple-faced Leaf-Monkeys.

Returning to warmer climates near the south coast we entered the reserve of Yala National Park where wildlife sightings were prolific throughout the extensive park including delights such as the elegant Black-necked Stork, boldly patterned Malabar Pied-Hornbill, awesome views of Barred Buttonquail, Sirkeer Malkoha, a spectacular Gray-headed Fish-Eagle, and the dazzling displays of male Indian Peafowl. The devastating effects of the tsunami two years before was still painfully obvious in many areas throughout the reserve, and whole trees could be seen uprooted and strewn over the ground. The dry scrub and open wetlands throughout the park were also very productive for mammals and we had several groups of Asian Elephant, mammoth Water Buffalo, giant stag Sambar deer, the playful Black-faced Langur, Golden Jackal, and a fantastic sighting of an Asiatic Leopard.

On our way to conclude our tour at Sinharaja National Forest we stopped into Bundala Wildlife Sanctuary recording such avian delights as Small Pratincole and Yellow Bittern followed by an afternoon encounter with an endangered Lesser Adjutant.

The vast mountainous forest of Sinharaja is the country's last viable tract of primary tropical rainforest supporting over half of Sri Lanka's endemic species of mammals and butterflies. Our lodge tucked away in a valley overlooking a quiet sparkling stream allowed us to venture into the forest to study unique carnivorous pitcher plants, find a variety of fascinating reptiles including a vibrant Green Pit-Viper, awe at glittering bird-wing butterflies dancing over the forest floor, and enjoying the antics of sprightly Nilgiri Langurs acrobatically swinging through the tree branches with fearless agility. Birds were no less impressive and we finished off our successful tour with scope views of the secretive Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Red-faced Malkoha, the diminutive Spot-winged Thrush, Sri Lanka Myna, White-faced Starling, and of course we all enjoyed the exquisitely colorful Sri Lanka Blue-Magpie. After saying goodbye to our local guide Hetti, we concluded our tour relaxing on a beach resort watching the local fishing sailboats pass us by as we bid farewell to the incredible nation of Sri Lanka.



Green Pit Viper and Sri Lanka Junglefowl by David Shackelford

BIRD SPECIES LIST

E = Endemic, SE = Sub-continent endemic

<u>Grebes</u>	<u>Podicipidae</u>
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
<u>Pelicans</u>	<u>Pelicanidae</u>
Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
<u>Cormorants</u>	<u>Phalacrocoracidae</u>
Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
<u>Anhingas</u>	<u>Anhingidae</u>
Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
<u>Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns</u>	<u>Ardeidae</u>
Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>
<u>Storks</u>	<u>Ciconiidae</u>
Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
<u>Ibis and Spoonbills</u>	<u>Threskiornithidae</u>
Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
<u>Ducks, Geese and Swans</u>	<u>Anatidae</u>

Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
Hawks, Eagles and Kites	<u>Accipitridae</u>
Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	<i>Heliaetus leucogaster</i>
Gray-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>
Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i>
Jerdon's Baza	<i>Aviceda jerdoni</i>
Falcons	<u>Falconidae</u>
Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Pheasants and Partridges	<u>Phasianidae</u>
Sri Lanka Spurfowl E	<i>Galloperdix bicalcarata</i>
Sri Lanka Junglefowl E	<i>Gallus lafayetii</i>
Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
Buttonquails	<u>Turnicidae</u>
Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
Rails, Gallinules and Coots	<u>Rallidae</u>
Slaty-legged Crake	<i>Rallina eurizonoides</i>
Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Jacanas	<u>Jacanidae</u>
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
Avocets and Stilts	<u>Recurvirostridae</u>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Thick-knees	<u>Burhinidae</u>
Eurasian [Indian] Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>
Great Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus recurvirostris</i>
Pratincoles and Coursers	<u>Glareolidae</u>
Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
Plovers and Lapwings	<u>Charadriidae</u>
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
Yellow-wattled Lapwing SE	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Black-bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Mongolian Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>

Sandpipers	<u>Scolopacidae</u>
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Areneria interpres</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Gulls	<u>Lorae</u>
Brown-headed Gull	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>
Terns	<u>Sternidae</u>
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Great Crested Tern	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
Saunders's Tern	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>
Pigeons and Doves	<u>Columbidae</u>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Sri Lanka Wood-Pigeon E	<i>Columba torringtoni</i>
Oriental Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron bicincta</i>
Pompadour [Ceylon] Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora</i>
Green Imperial-Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>
Parrots	<u>Psittacidae</u>
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
Plum-headed Parakeet SE (H)	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
Layard's Parakeet E	<i>Psittacula calthropae</i>
Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot E	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
Cuckoos	<u>Cuculidae</u>
Pied Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
Gray-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopacea</i>
Blue-faced Malkoha SE	<i>Phaenicophaeus viridirostris</i>
Sirkeer Malkoha SE	<i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii</i>
Red-faced Malkoha E	<i>Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus</i>
Green-billed Coucal E	<i>Centropus chlororhynchus</i>
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
Typical Owls	<u>Strigidae</u>
Serendib Scops-Owl E (H)	<i>Otus thilohoffmannii</i>
Chestnut-backed Owlet E	<i>Glaucidium castanonotum</i>

Frogmouths	<u>Podargidae</u>
Sri Lanka Frogmouth SE	<i>Batrachostomus monileger</i>
Swifts	<u>Apodidae</u>
Indian Swiftlet SE	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i>
Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>
Asian Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
Crested Treeswifts	<u>Hemiprocnidae</u>
Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
Trogons	<u>Trogonidae</u>
Malabar Trogon SE	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
Kingfishers	<u>Alcedinidae</u>
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher	<i>Cyax erithracus</i>
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Bee-eaters	<u>Meropidae</u>
Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
Rollers	<u>Coraciidae</u>
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
Hoopoes	<u>Upupidae</u>
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Hornbills	<u>Bucerotidae</u>
Sri Lanka Gray Hornbill E	<i>Ocyrceros gingalensis</i>
Malabar Pied-Hornbill SE	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
Barbets	<u>Capitonidae</u>
Brown-headed Barbet SE	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>
Yellow-fronted Barbet E	<i>Megalaima flavifrons</i>
Crimson-fronted [Ceylon Small] Barbet SE	<i>Megalaima rubricapilla</i>
Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
Woodpeckers	<u>Picidae</u>
Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Picoides mahrattensis</i>
Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>
Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
Greater [Crimson-backed] Flameback (H)	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>
Pittas	<u>Pittidae</u>
Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>
Larks	<u>Alaudidae</u>
Rufous-winged [Jerdon's] Bushlark SE	<i>Mirafra assamica</i>

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark SE	<i>Eremopterix grisea</i>
Swallows	<i>Hirundinidae</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Hill Swallow SE	<i>Hirundo domicola</i>
Red-rumped [Ceylon] Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Wagtails and Pipits	<i>Motacillidae</i>
Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Gray Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Oriental [Paddyfield] Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>
Cuckoo-shrikes	<i>Campephagidae</i>
Black-headed Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>
Scarlet [Orange] Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
Bulbuls	<i>Pycnonotidae</i>
Black-crested [capped] Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
Yellow-eared Bulbul E	<i>Pycnonotus penicillatus</i>
White-browed Bulbul SE	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i>
Yellow-browed Bulbul SE	<i>Iole indica</i>
Black [Square-tailed] Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
Leafbirds	<i>Chloropseidae</i>
Blue-winged [Jerdon's] Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
Ioras	<i>Aegithinidae</i>
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
Thrushes	<i>Turdidae</i>
Sri Lanka Whistling-Thrush E	<i>Myophonus blighi</i>
Spot-winged Thrush E	<i>Zoothera spiloptera</i>
Scaly [Ceylon] Thrush E	<i>[Zoothera dauma imbricata]</i>
Pied Thrush SE	<i>Zoothera wardii</i>
Eurasian [Indian] Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Cisticolas and Allies	<i>Cisticolidae</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Gray-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>
Jungle Prinia SE	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>
Ashy Prinia SE	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
Old World Warblers	<i>Sylviidae</i>
Sri Lanka Bush Warbler E	<i>Bradypterus palliseri</i>
Clamorous Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
Green Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>

Large-billed Leaf-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>
Old World Flycatchers	<u>Muscicapidae</u>
Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>
Dull-blue Flycatcher E	<i>Eumyias sordida</i>
Kashmir Flycatcher SE	<i>Ficedula subrubra</i>
Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>
Gray-headed Canary-flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>
Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
Indian Robin SE	<i>Saxicoloides fulicata</i>
Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
Fantails	<u>Rhipiduridae</u>
White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
Monarch Flycatchers	<u>Monarchidae</u>
Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
Babblers	<u>Timaliidae</u>
Ashy-headed Laughingthrush E	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>
Indian [Ceylon] Scimitar-Babbler SE	<i>Pomatorhinus horsfieldii</i>
Brown-capped Babbler E	<i>Pelleorneum fuscocapillum</i>
Dark-fronted Babbler SE	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>
Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>
Orange-billed Babbler E	<i>Turdoides refescens</i>
Yellow-billed Babbler SE	<i>Turdoides affinis</i>
Tits	<u>Paridae</u>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Nuthatches	<u>Sittidae</u>
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
Sunbirds and Spiderhunters	<u>Nectariniidae</u>
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>
Purple-rumped [Small] Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>
Long-billed [Loten's] Sunbird SE	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i>
Flowerpeckers	<u>Dicaeidae</u>
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
White-throated [Legge's] Flowerpecker E	<i>Dicaeum vincens</i>
White-eyes	<u>Zosteropidae</u>
Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
Sri Lanka White-eye E	<i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i>
Old World Orioles	<u>Oriolidae</u>
Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
Shrikes	<u>Laniidae</u>
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>

Helmetshrikes and Allies	<i>Prionopidae</i>
Common [Ceylon] Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>
Drongos	<i>Dicruridae</i>
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>
White-bellied Drongo SE	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
Woodswallows	<i>Artamidae</i>
Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>
Crows, Jays and Magpies	<i>Corvidae</i>
Sri Lanka Blue Magpie E	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
Starlings	<i>Sturnidae</i>
Southern [Lesser] Hill Myna SE	<i>Gracula indica</i>
Sri Lanka Myna E	<i>Gracula ptilogenys</i>
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
White-faced Starling E	<i>Sturnia senex</i>
Brahminy Starling	<i>Temenuchus pagodarum</i>
Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>
Old World Sparrows	<i>Passeridae</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Weavers and Allies	<i>Ploceidae</i>
Baya [Indian] Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
Waxbills and Allies	<i>Estrildidae</i>
White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
Black-throated Munia SE	<i>Lonchura kelaarti</i>
Chestnut [Tri-colored] Munia	<i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
White-throated [Indian] Silverbill	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>

MAMMAL SPECIES LIST

Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>
Toque Macaque	<i>Macaca radiata</i>
Hanuman (Common) Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>
Purple-faced Leaf-Monkey	<i>Trachypithecus vetulus</i>
Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
Black-naped Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>
Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>
Indian Gray Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>
Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>
Indian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
Spotted Deer (chital)	<i>Cervus axis</i>
Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>
Indian Spotted Chevrotain	<i>Tragulus meminna</i>

Layard's Squirrel
Ceylon Palm Squirrel
Dusky Striped Squirrel
Ceylon Giant Squirrel

Funambulus layardi
Funambulus palmarum
Funambulus sublineatus
Ratufa indica

REPTILE & AMPHIBIANS SPECIES LIST

Green Rat Snake sp.
Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard
Common Skink
Green Forest Lizard
Water Monitor
Land Monitor
Tropical House Gecko sp.
Mugger (Marsh Crocodile)
Green Vine Snake
Green Pit-Viper

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