



# Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

## Northern India

### *Birds & Tigers*

*1 - 18 December 2007*



*Bengal Tiger by Markus Lilje*

**Tour leaders:** David Shackelford & Markus Lilje

**Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader Markus Lilje**

**Top 10 Birds as voted by participants:**

- |                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.Sarus Crane          | 6.Great Hornbill                |
| 2.Orange-headed Thrush | 7.Red-billed Blue Magpie        |
| 3.Indian Skimmer       | 8.Spotted Forktail              |
| 4.Black-bellied Tern   | 9.White-crested Laughing-thrush |
| 5.Black-necked Stork   | 10.Dusky Eagle-Owl              |

**Top 5 Mammals as voted for by participants:**

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1.Tiger         | 4.Common Otter   |
| 2.Jungle Cat    | 5.Indian Gazelle |
| 3.Golden Jackal |                  |

*With an incredibly diverse array of regions spread over a huge area, the country of India promises many special experiences for travelers. We set out to explore a very small part of the northern region of this incredible country that spans from near-equatorial latitudes in the south to snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas in the north. Along the way many highlights and interesting experiences were awaiting us, coupled with the numerous short exchanges we could share with the mostly friendly and always fascinating people.*

## Tour Summary

Delhi, where the tour started, is known as one of the best cities in the world for birding – we were not to be disappointed. After an early start we made our way to the holy Yamuna River where an astounding number of birds awaited us in unbelievably polluted surroundings. Birding along the banks of the River and later on Okhla Island we managed to find all the main targets we had for the day, as well as giving us a great introduction to some of the birds that would accompany us through the coming days. Highlights included Striated Babbler and Striated Grassbird, White-tailed Stonechat, White-tailed Lapwing, Red Avadavat and a stunningly coloured Bluethroat. We also saw all 5 possible species of wagtail near the Okhla island – all sifting through piles of rubbish. After a tasty meal and fighting through Delhi's variety of road-users we made our way to the train-station.

Arriving in Ramnagar before the crack of dawn, we soon realized that we had arrived in another world and were far removed from the bustling streets of Delhi. After warming up with some Masala Chai – the ubiquitous spiced tea of the Indian Subcontinent, we climbed into our Jeeps and gradually made our way to our accommodation along the Kosi River. Along the way we were constantly on the lookout for anything unusual and were lucky to find a wide variety of the species of this mountain forest belt, which included various Woodpeckers, White-rumped Shama, Asian Barred Owllet, Crested Tree-swift, Rufous-bellied Niltava, the gaudy Green Magpie and 3 species of Nuthatch. Around the River that afternoon we found the interesting Spotted and Little Forktail, sought-after Wallcreeper, Brown Dipper and had our first encounter with the outrageous White-crested Laughingthrush.

We then drove into the Corbett National Park to continue our exploration of these lower altitude forests we saw Great Hornbill, Blue-throated Barbet, Lesser Fish-Eagle, Brown Fish-Owl, Yellow-bellied Fantail and both Yellownapes. This park also gave us a good first feel of the other wildlife and we saw Cheetal (Spotted Deer), Indian Mutjac (Barking Deer), Sambar, Hog Deer, Hanuman Langur and fantastic views of Common Otter as well as both the very bizarre Gharial and Marsh Crocodile. Some of the group went out on an elephant ride in the afternoon (and were lucky enough to see wild Asian Elephant) while the rest went out in Jeeps again – everyone was fortunate to find the very restricted and highly endangered wintering Hodgson's Bush-Chat, as well as Hen Harrier and fantastic close views of Changeable Hawk-Eagle.

The other half of the group now had the opportunity to go on the elephant ride through fog, open grasslands and tangles of forest – a great experience for all. After breakfast about half of the participants were fortunate to have a spectacular Tiger sighting very close to the lodge – one of the main targets of the whole tour. Before again driving towards our lodge along the Kosi River we had views of River Tern, Collared Falconet as well as the very restricted and difficult Tawny Fish-Owl.

Near the Quality Inn we had a few new birds on a little walk we did along a River where we saw, amongst others Puff-throated Babbler and Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher.

After a short walk on which we found our first Gold-fronted Leafbird we packed up and drove towards Nainital – a hill station at an altitude of about 2000m. En route we stopped a few times to look at Crested Serpent-Eagle, Common Hawk-Cuckoo, Greater Spotted Eagle and the stunning little Slaty-backed Forktail. Climbing quickly in altitude we entered a new region harboring a different suite of species, some highlights were Red-billed Blue Magpie, Himalayan Griffon, Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, Blue-fronted Redstart and Streaked Prinia. Driving through some stunning mountain scenery, we approached our destination at around sunset and were all glad to settle into our cooler surroundings after a long day.

Despite being hampered by a layer of clouds and windy conditions around Nainital, we managed to find a variety of good birds in these chilly surroundings. We birded from roads that took us to higher altitudes, within some pristine mixed forests. Two species of Shrike-Babbler, the very secretive Koklass Pheasant, Spot-winged Tit and the localized Black-headed Jay were located. In the afternoon the challenging weather conditions continued, but we did find Goldcrest and many Streaked Laughing-thrush. The very elusive Cheer Pheasant was the reason for an extremely early morning – while the pheasants remained out of our sight, we were privileged to witness a wonderful sunrise and saw Altai Accentors, Himalayan Griffon and an Indian Porcupine. On the way back to Nainital we were treated to great views of the Himalayas – some peaks in this region reaching over 7000m, we also found Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and Golden Eagle. On a walk down to the local market in the afternoon we had very good views of Mountain Bulbul, Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush and Grey-winged Blackbird.

En route to Sattal the well-wooded surroundings gave us a chance to see Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush, Russet Sparrow, Red-breasted and Black-chinned Accentor. Along one of the lakes of this region we saw Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Slaty-blue and Rufous-gorgeted Flycatchers as well as great views of the interesting Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler. After lunch we took another walk along a forest trail, where we were constantly in the company of a large flock of Slaty-headed Parakeets. Some great birds were seen in this area and we saw Blue-winged Minla, Red-billed Leiothrix, many Ashy Bulbul and later Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler. Close views were had of Greater Yellownape and Emerald Dove and Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush and a large flock of Red-breasted Parakeet was seen by those participants that opted for a longer walk through forest and dense thickets on the next morning. The trip to the next train station was one of the most fascinating from a cultural point of view – for mile after mile we traveled through markets and areas of intense activity that had everyone spellbound. We were seen off at the train station by a Thick-billed Flowerpecker for the first of two consecutive night-trains.

After some time to freshen up we began what was our ‘normal’ tourist day, spent around Agra, where we marveled at the magnificent Taj Mahal as the sun rose. After visiting the Red Fort everyone was astounded by the extreme intricacies of the marble inlaying process and some time was spent shopping. We then headed back to the train for an overnight trip south.

Arriving early in a little town called Umaria, we transferred to our comfortable lodge in one of the villages inside the Bandhavgarh National Park. The rain that had threatened our enjoyment of the day, cleared up quickly after breakfast, leaving a wonderfully fresh smell in the air. The next few days were to be spent mainly searching for Tigers – while still looking for new species to add to the birdlist. We were extremely fortunate in that everyone had great views of Tiger, most on more than one occasion- in total Tigers were seen on 4 occasions, including one sighting of a Tigress with two cubs! In this reserve the target is almost exclusively Tiger for most visitors, often

leaving the roads almost deserted as the drivers wait for any news from the trackers, before they speed off for the chance to watch a Tiger from the back of an elephant. Due to the fact that the vehicles must split up, not everyone was able to see everything, but all participants saw Painted Spurfowl, Lesser Adjutant, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Red Junglefowl, Brown Fish-Owl, Tickell's Thrush and White-tailed Rubythroat. Around lunch we had the chance to relax or explore the surrounding woodland where Indian Fox and Indian Gazelle, White-eyed Buzzard, Bay-backed Shrike, Verditer Flycatcher, Small Minivet, Eurasian Wryneck, Indian Roller, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Common Iora and White-browed Fantail were to be found. Around the lodge itself Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, White-rumped Munia and Jerdon's Leafbird were not difficult to find. After dinner on day 3 in Bandhavgarh we were transferred back to Umaria to catch our final night-train.

The much-anticipated Chambal River boat trip proved to be one of the trip highlights; the River is still in a much better state than many other Rivers that we had seen during the trip and hold some very special and rare species. We did not need to wait long before one of the main targets – the Indian Skimmer – made an appearance when 17 birds flew over the River. Another of the specials was not to be outdone when a Black-bellied Tern gave us an even closer fly-by. The boat trip itself produced a number of highlights that included many of the bizarre Gharial, a large flock of Bar-headed Goose, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Sand Lark, Great Thick-knee, Sirkeer Malkoha and Red-crested Pochard. Back on dry land we spotted a distant Demoiselle Crane – a single bird that had remained in this area for a few months longer than normal and one of the big bonus birds for the trip. As we moved closer we were accompanied by a number of circling Egyptian Vultures and Long-legged Buzzards while a Laggar Falcon flew past. Back at the lodge we had a little time to look at the roosting Indian Flying Foxes and an unusual Brown Hawk-Owl on its day roost.

Unfortunately the Keoladeo-Ghana National Park near Bharatpur has had a few tough years as the monsoon has failed in this part of India for two consecutive seasons. This reserve is world-renown for its amazing diversity of waterfowl, most of which was absent along the very limited amount of available water. Nonetheless we were able to find some spectacular birds, assisted by some expert local knowledge. Grey Nightjar, Dusky Eagle-Owl, an amazing rufous-form Oriental Scops-Owl and stunning views for everyone of the colorful Orange-headed Thrush. In addition to the large Nilgai and Sambar that are quite common in the reserve, we also saw Golden Jackal and were amazed by a very relaxed Jungle Cat that gave all participants extensive viewing pleasure. During our last loop of the day we had what turned out to be the tour highlight for many participants as we saw a pair of the magnificent Sarus Crane at close quarters, we could watch them calmly going about their business. A very successful final morning was spent around what little water there is in the reserve- the main target the Black-necked Stork even stood for photographs while we also had Spotted Redshank and another pair of Sarus Crane. Before heading back towards the Indian Capital we made a short roadside stop and had great views of Greater Painted - and Common Snipe and Common Redshank. While on the road to Delhi there was much to see - as always in the busy Indian cultural landscape as we moved from rural farming areas to the extensive urban spread that is Delhi.

Northern India is an incredible wildlife and birding destination that offers new surprises around every corner, add to this the incredible cultural richness of the region and you have something for almost everyone.

## **BIRD SPECIES LIST**

### **Grebes Podicipedidae**

#### **Little Grebe (Dabchick)**

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Our best sighting was of a number of these birds along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Red-necked Grebe***Podiceps grisegena*

One of these rare out-of-range vagrants was recorded on a lake near Sattal.

**Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae****Little Cormorant***Phalacrocorax niger*

Seen regularly at a number of water bodies throughout the tour.

**Indian Cormorant***Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

A few seen at a distance on the Yamuna River.

**Great Cormorant***Phalacrocorax carbo*

Commonly encountered in large numbers at most wetland localities during the tour.

*NOTE: The white-breasted African subspecies of the widely distributed Great Cormorant P. carbo is sometimes considered a different species: P. lucidus.*

**Anhinga & Darter Anhingidae****(Oriental) Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

Some participants had very distant views of a few at the lake in Corbett National Park.

*NOTE: The African form P. rufa is sometimes lumped with the Asian P. melanogaster and the enlarged species called Darter. Clements uses the latter treatment of lumping these forms.*

**Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae****Little Egret***Egretta garzetta*

Encountered at many wetland locations around the region.

*NOTE: Clements lumps Little, Western Reef (E. gularis) and Madagascar's Dimorphic (E. dimorpha) Egret into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.*

**Gray Heron***Ardea cinerea*

Seen at most wetland localities, with peak numbers along the Yamuna and Chambal Rivers.

**Purple Heron***Ardea purpurea*

This sleek heron was sighted at quite close quarters from the banks of the Yamuna River.

**Great (White) Egret***Ardea alba*

A common sight, particularly around the Kosi River and Corbett National Park.

*NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.*

**Intermediate (Yellow-billed) Egret***Egretta intermedia*

One bird was seen along the Yamuna River on the first full day of birding.

*NOTE: This group may be split into 3 species, the Africa Yellow-billed Egret (E. brachyrhyncha), Plumed Egret (E. plumifera) and the nominate Intermediate Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.*

**Cattle Egret***Bubulcus ibis*

Commonly recorded throughout northern India. Seen almost every day, other than in the higher mountains.

**Indian Pond Heron***Ardeola grayii*

A very common species that was encountered almost daily.

**Little (Striated) Heron***Butorides striatus*

This global species was seen near Ramnagar and in Bandhavgarh.

*NOTE: Controversial to some authorities, Clements includes a full twenty-nine subspecies under this species. The only split he recognizes is the Green Heron (B. virescens) of North and Central America.*

**Storks Ciconidae****Asian Openbill***Anastomus oscitans*

Two birds were seen on the banks of the Chambal River.

**Painted Stork***Mycteria leucocephala*

Disappointingly, only one bird was seen far away at the Yamuna River.

**Black Stork***Ciconia nigra*

2 birds were seen along the River on both days in Corbett NP.

**Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia episcopus*

The most widespread of the storks in India, this species was seen very well in Corbett NP and from the Taj Mahal.

**Black-necked Stork** *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

An elegant species of Stork that many participants listed as one of their favorite species. A single bird was seen near the little surface water that was in the Keoladeo NP.

**Lesser Adjutant** *Leptoptilos javanicus*

This scarce species was sighted on a number of occasions near the entrance gate to Bandhavgarh NP, a total of about 6 birds were present over the days spent there.

### Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

**Black-headed Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

One bird flew over the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

A few birds were seen from the train near Agra.

### Swans, Geese & Ducks Anatidae

**Lesser Whistling-duck** *Dendrocygna javanica*

Some birds were seen in Bandhavgarh, before we had a flock of about 60 on the Chambal River.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

30 were seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi with about 15 showing along the Chambal River.

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Spectacular views of a large flock of 30 along the Chambal River.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Seen regularly at a variety of wetland locations around the region, the largest numbers near Ramnagar.

**Common Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Our only sighting was 1 bird flying over the Yamuna River.

**Comb Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Small numbers were found along the Chambal River.

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

A small number of these birds were seen along the Yamuna River.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

This species was seen in small number during the first few days of the tour.

**Spot-billed Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha*

Seen in small numbers along the Yamuna River and at Keoladeo NP where 4 flew over.

**Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

A very common species at the Yamuna River in Delhi where we saw hundreds.

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Small numbers were encountered along the Yamuna River, while one male showed well on the Chambal River.

**Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca*

5 birds were spotted along the Yamuna River, one seen along the Chambal River.

**Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*

A group of 1 male and 2 females of these beautiful ducks flew over our heads at the Chambal River.

**Common Pochard** *Aythya farina*

20 birds found along the Yamuna River in Delhi in a large group that held a variety of species.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

About 30 birds were seen swimming on the Yamuna River.

**Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila*

A few of these wintering ducks, uncommon in northern India were seen on the Yamuna River

**Common Merganser** *Mergus merganser*

A few birds were seen on three occasions along the Kosi River near Ramnagar and our lodge.

### Osprey Pandionidae

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

A few were sighted near the lake in Corbett NP as well as along the Chambal River.

### Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae

**Oriental Honey-Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

A single bird was sighted flying over our heads at the Yamuna River, more fleeting glimpses later on in the tour.

**Black-shouldered (-winged) Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*

This widespread small raptor was commonly seen at most locations during the tour.

*NOTE: Clements has split the two species Black-shouldered Kite (Elanus caeruleus) of the Old World and White-tailed Kite (Elanus leucurus) of the New World. This split is not universally accepted.*

**Black Kite** *Milvus [migrans] lineatus*

Recorded on most days at most sites throughout the tour, amazing numbers around Delhi.

*NOTE: This locally breeding form of the Black Kite M. migrans is considered by most authorities as a distinct species, M. parasitus We also recorded the sometimes split Black-eared Kite M.m.lineatus.*

**Pallas's Fish-Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*

A magnificent species that was seen very well daily in Corbett NP and along the Kosi River.

**Lesser Fish-Eagle** *Ichthyophaga humilis*

A total of about four birds were seen in Corbett NP.

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus*

A very distinctive species of vulture that was seen at various locations throughout the country, particularly well along the Chambal River.

**Long-billed [Indian] Vulture** *Gyps indicus*

This species has suffered a major decline in numbers throughout the region. We had roughly 15 birds on each day spent in Bandhavgarh NP where the birds breed on the cliffs in the reserve.

**Himalayan Griffon** *Gyps himalayensis*

Good numbers were seen in the high areas around the town of Nainital.

**Eurasian Griffon** *Gyps fulvus*

Small numbers were encountered while in the Corbett area and from our lodge along the Kosi River.

**Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*

A huge Vulture, seen in Corbett NP and near Nainital by most participants.

**Red-headed Vulture** *Sarcogyps calvus*

Confined mainly to the national parks where small numbers were found in Corbett NP, Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Crested Serpent-Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*

The first bird was found along the Kosi River, two further birds were later seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

About half a dozen were found around Okhla Island and the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Northern [Hen] Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A total of 5 birds were found patrolling the grasslands around Dikhala camp in Corbett NP, one male was seen from Okhla island.

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius*

The common Accipiter in India that was encountered fairly regularly in woodland habitat throughout the region.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

One was seen flying over by some in Corbett NP.

- Besra** *Accipiter virgatus*  
One was seen flying high above the Mongoli valley.
- Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentiles*  
A single bird could be watched flying towards forest in the mountains above Nainital.
- Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus*  
Another accipiter seen only in flight, this one near a Great Spotted Eagle before we started the ascent towards Nainital.
- White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa*  
A total of 2 were found on a very productive walk in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*  
One seen at high altitude above Nainital, two more along the Chambal River.
- Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*  
A few birds were located and seen beautifully near the Chambal River.
- Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga*  
A single bird was seen on the drive from Ramnagar to Nainital, before we started to climb in altitude.
- Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina*  
A single bird was located at Keoladeo NP near Bharatpur.
- Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*  
Encountered fairly regularly in the Himalayan foothills around Nainital and Sattal.
- Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos*  
A single bird was observed soaring over our heads in the Nainital area, an uncommon bird in this area.
- Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus fasciatus*  
A single bird was observed by some participants in flight in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Booted Eagle** *Hieraetus pennatus*  
A single was seen flying over us along the Yamuna River, Delhi.
- Rufous-bellied Eagle** *Hieraetus kienerii*  
A single adult bird was seen in flight during lunch at the lodge along the Kosi River.
- Changeable Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus [cirrhatus] linnaeetus*  
A total of 3 birds were found in and around the Corbett NP and along the Kosi River.
- [Crested Hawk-Eagle]** *Spizaetus cirrhatus*  
A single bird and a pair were seen perched in woodland in Bandhavgarh NP.  
*NOTE: Some authorities split this species from the Changeable Hawk-Eagle which inhabits mountainous areas and higher altitudes. This split is not universally accepted.*
- Mountain Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus nipalensis*  
Several birds were seen very well along the Kosi River (where one obligingly circled above our lunch) and in Corbett NP.

### Falcons & Caracaras Falconidae

- Collared Falconet** *Microhierax caerulescens*  
A tiny falcon, the best view was of a bird perched near Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.
- Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*  
Small numbers were observed in the Corbett National Park.
- Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*  
A single bird was seen at great distance in Corbett NP.
- Laggar Falcon** *Falco jugger*  
A close flight view was enjoyed from the bank of the Chambal River.

### Pheasants & Partridges Phasianidae

- Black Francolin** *Francolinus francolinus*

Very good views were had of 3 birds in the grasslands near Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

**Gray Francolin***Francolinus pondicerianus*

The first birds were found along the Chambal River, while it was also commonly seen in Keoladeo NP after having been heard on numerous occasions during the first part of the tour.

**Jungle Bush-quail***Perdicula asiatica*

2 birds were seen in very thick grassland by some participants.

**Hill Partridge***Arborophila torqueola*

A single bird was heard in the Nainital area.

**Painted Spurfowl (E)***Galloperdix lunulata*

After much searching most participants were rewarded with good views of these smart, but shy birds in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Red Junglefowl***Gallus gallus*

This species was seen in and around Corbett NP and in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Koklass Pheasant***Pucrasia macrolopha*

Two single birds were briefly seen around Nainital, giving fleeting glimpses to many participants.

**Kalij Pheasant***Lophura leucomelanos*

A spectacular sighting was shared by Jeeps and Elephant-riding participants in Corbett NP when a group of 4 stayed on the road for a while.

**Indian Peafowl***Pavo cristatus*

A truly spectacular species that was recorded daily in all the lower lying areas of Northern India.

**Buttonquails Turnicidae****Barred Buttonquail***Turnix suscitator*

A single bird seen by some in the Chambal Safari Lodge gardens.

**Cranes Gruidae****Demoiselle Crane***Anthropoides virgo*

One of the big surprises of the trip, an individual of this elegant species was seen at the Chambal River, a few months later than it would be expected here.

**Sarus Crane***Grus antigone*

A pair was seen spectacularly well and at close quarters at Keoladeo NP on both days, a few more pairs were seen on the drive from Bharatpur to Delhi. The world's tallest flying bird, crowned the number 1 bird of the trip by many participants.

**Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae****White-breasted Waterhen***Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Commonly seen at most wetland localities throughout the country.

**Gray-headed Swampphen***Porphyrio [Porphyrio] poliocephalus*

First seen along the Yamuna River and then again on the road from Bharatpur to Delhi.

*NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognised as distinct species. The form we recorded would then become Gray-headed Swampphen (P. poliocephalus) Other forms to be recognised may include African Swampphen (P. madagascariensis), Philippine Swampphen (P. pulverulentus) and Eastern Swampphen (P. melanotus).*

**Common Moorhen***Gallinula chloropus*

A widespread species that was encountered on the Yamuna River and near Sattal.

**Eurasian Coot***Fulica atra*

A species that was, like the last species, again seen in Delhi and on one of the lakes of Sattal.

**Painted Snipes Rostratulidae****Greater Painted-snipe***Rostratula benghalensis*

A total of about 4 birds were seen near Keoladeo NP, in Bharatpur on the last morning.

### Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

#### **Black-winged Stilt**

*Himantopus himantopus*

A common species that was encountered at most wetland localities throughout the country, in particularly large numbers on Okhla Island and in Bharatpur.

#### **Pied Avocet**

*Recurvirostra avosetta*

This species was only seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi where one bird was spotted in flight.

### Thick-knees Burhinidae

#### **Great Thick-knee**

*Esacus recurvirostris*

An impressive species that was encountered along the Kosi River before we had amazing views on the Chambal River.

### Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

#### **Little Ringed Plover**

*Charadrius dubius*

2 of these birds were seen on the banks of the Chambal River.

#### **Snowy [Kentish] Plover**

*Charadrius alexandrinus*

A handful of this species was seen along the banks of the Chambal River.

#### **Lesser Sand Plover**

*Charadrius mongolus*

A single bird was seen near the Chambal River.

#### **Yellow-wattled Lapwing (SE)**

*Vanellus malabaricus*

A bird of dry, open areas that was encountered in fields around a village in Bandhavgarh NP.

#### **River Lapwing**

*Vanellus duvaucelii*

Seen on all big Rivers throughout India, which include the Yamuna, Kosi and Chambal Rivers.

#### **Red-wattled Lapwing**

*Vanellus indicus*

A very common species that was encountered almost daily on tour, particularly during the last week.

#### **White-tailed Lapwing**

*Vanellus leucurus*

Small numbers were located at Okhla Island in Delhi and at Keoladeo NP.

### Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

#### **Common Snipe**

*Gallinago gallinago*

Small numbers were found at Okhla Island and around Keoladeo NP.

#### **Spotted Redshank**

*Tringa erythropus*

2 birds were seen on the last morning of the tour around Keoladeo NP.

#### **Common Redshank**

*Tringa tetanus*

First encountered at Okhla Island with larger numbers seen from the Taj Mahal and on the last three days.

#### **Marsh Sandpiper**

*Tringa stagnatilis*

The only bird of the trip was found on the last morning in Keoladeo NP.

#### **Common Greenshank**

*Tringa nebularia*

Small numbers were encountered quite regularly at various water bodies throughout the region.

#### **Green Sandpiper**

*Tringa ochropus*

A common bird in Northern India, where we had sightings of small numbers on many days.

#### **Wood Sandpiper**

*Tringa glareola*

A few were found at Okhla Island and on the last day.

#### **Common Sandpiper**

*Actitis hypoleucos*

Another regularly encountered species at water bodies throughout mainly the first week of the tour.

#### **Little Stint**

*Calidris minuta*

Small numbers were seen from the Taj Mahal on the Yamuna River.

#### **Temminck's Stint**

*Calidris temminckii*

3 of these birds were seen feeding on the banks of the Chambal River.

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*

This species was only seen on Okhla Island, from the Taj Mahal and along the Chambal River.

### Gulls Laridae

**Great Black-headed [Palla's] Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus*

This species was best seen in small numbers along the Chambal River.

**Brown-headed Gull** *Larus brunnicephalus*

A few birds were spotted in flight along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*

Over a hundred of these widespread birds were also seen along the Yamuna River.

### Terns Sternidae

**River Tern** *Sterna aurantia*

A few of these very elegant birds were seen at the lake below Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

**Black-bellied Tern** *Sterna acuticauda*

A total of 2 birds were found on our boat trip along the Chambal River. This has become a very rare bird and was rated as one of the top birds of the tour by most participants.

### Skimmers Rynchopidae

**Indian Skimmer** *Rynchops albicollis*

A total of 17 of these extremely sleek birds were seen flying over the water of the Chambal River.

### Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

**Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus*

A few flocks, totaling a few dozen birds were seen along and over the Chambal River from our boat.

### Doves & Pigeons Columbidae

**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia*

Common at every locality throughout the entire tour.

**Oriental Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*

Small numbers were seen between Nainital and Sattal.

**Laughing (Palm) Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Commonly encountered at many localities throughout India.

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*

Quite common at Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

This species was seen mainly in Delhi, while smaller numbers were seen later in the tour.

**Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon** *Treron phoenicoptera*

Most easily seen at Bandhavgarh NP, this species was first encountered at the Yamuna River, Delhi.

**Pin-tailed Green-Pigeon** *Treron apicauda*

A few very uncooperative birds were seen inside Corbett NP.

**Wedge-tailed Green-Pigeon** *Treron sphenurus*

A small feeding party was seen together with the above species.

### Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

**Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria*

A small flock was seen in Corbett NP, while more were seen at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Encountered almost daily throughout northern India, particularly numerous on the lower lying areas.

**Slaty-headed Parakeet***Psittacula himalayana*

Huge numbers were seen near Sattal after we encountered smaller numbers earlier on in the Himalayan foothills.

**Plum-headed Parakeet (SE)***Psittacula cyanocephala*

A small group of these gaudy birds were seen along the Kosi River, while they were common in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Red-breasted Parakeet***Psittacula alexandri*

This species was encountered in Corbett NP, before a large flock was seen near Sattal.

**Cuckoos Cuculidae****Common Hawk-Cuckoo***Hierococcyx varius*

Two single birds were observed near Ramnagar on the day we traveled up to Nainital.

**Indian Cuckoo***Cuculus micropterus*

A single bird gave great, extended views near the Yamuna River on the first full day of the tour.

**Sirkeer Malkoha***Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii*

From the boat on the Chambal River we had great view of a single perched bird.

**Asian Koel***Eudynamis scolopacea*

This species was seen in Delhi and at the Keoladeo National Park.

**Coucals Centropodidae****Greater Coucal***Centropus sinensis*

Encountered many times throughout the region at most sites, particularly during the last few days.

**Typical Owls Strigidae****Indian Scops-Owl***Otus indicus*

Encountered on both days at a day roost in Keoladeo NP.

**Dusky Eagle-Owl***Bubo coromandus*

A single bird seen beautifully at a day roost in Keoladeo NP, the only owl on our Top Ten.

**Brown Fish-Owl***Ketupa zeylonensis*

A few birds were observed during the day at Corbett NP, and a single was found at least twice in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Tawny Fish-Owl***Ketupa flavipes*

Cracking views were had of this species during the day in forest in Corbett NP on two separate day roosts.

**Mottled Wood-Owl***Strix ocellata*

A single bird was seen by some near the park entrance to Bandhavgarh NP.

**Asian Barred Owlet***Glaucidium cuculoides*

This charismatic species was first encountered along the Kosi River and offered good views on a number of subsequent days.

**Jungle Owlet***Glaucidium radiatum*

Encountered during the day in Corbett NP and later in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Spotted Owlet***Athene brama*

First seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi, later at the Taj Mahal and Keoladeo NP.

**Brown Hawk-Owl***Ninox scutulata*

A single bird was located at a roost site at our Chambal Safari Lodge.

**Nightjars Caprimulgidae****Grey Nightjar***Caprimulgus indicus*

Two of these cryptically coloured birds were seen on day roosts in Keoladeo NP.

**Indian Nightjar***Caprimulgus asiticus*

A total of 3 birds were seen in the evening while driving from the Mongoli valley to Nainital.

**Swifts Apodidae****White-rumped Needletail***Zoonavena sylvatica*

Small groups of these birds were seen flying above Riverbeds on both days in Corbett NP.

**Himalayan Swiftlet***Aerodramus brevirostris*

Small numbers of this species were noted on each day in Corbett NP and along the Kosi River.

**Little Swift***Apus affinis*

The largest number of these birds during the tour was sighted at the Keoladeo NP.

**Crested Treeswifts Hemiprocnidae****Crested Treeswift***Hemiproctne coronata*

Encountered quite regularly in small flocks at our lodge near the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

**Kingfishers Alcedinidae****Common Kingfisher***Alcedo atthis*

A stunning and quite common species that was seen at most water-bodies throughout the country.

**Stork-billed Kingfisher***Halcyon capensis*

A single bird was seen by some on the second day in Bandhavgarh.

**White-throated Kingfisher***Halcyon smyrnensis*

The region's most common Kingfisher, we recorded this species on almost every day.

**Crested Kingfisher***Megaceryle lugubris*

Seen daily in the Corbett area and along the Kosi River, this very impressive species is confined to large, fast flowing Rivers at higher altitudes.

**Pied Kingfisher***Ceryle rudis*

The world's most widespread kingfisher, was seen regularly along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

**Bee-eaters Meropidae****Green Bee-eater***Merops orientalis*

A delightful species that was found along the Yamuna River and in woodland around Bandhavgarh NP.

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

A single bird was seen by many participants in Corbett NP or later in Bandhavgarh.

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

This flashy species was seen on every day of the last week of the tour.

**Hoopoes Upupidae****Eurasian (African) Hoopoe***Upupa epops*

A striking species that was encountered at most localities throughout the tour.

*NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognised by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar (U. marginalis) and Eurasian (U. epops). The white-winged African form is often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe (U. senegalensis) with the fourth species being African Hoopoe (U. africana). However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African.*

**Hornbills Bucerotidae****Indian Gray Hornbill (SE)***Tockus birostris*

A common species, which was seen regularly in the lowlands of north India during the final week.

**Great Hornbill** *Buceros bicornis*

3 of these massive hornbills were well seen by all, soon after we entered Corbett NP.

**Oriental Pied Hornbill** *Anthraceros albitrostris*

A number of these birds were seen by some, the best view along the Kosi River.

**Malabar Pied Hornbill** *Anthraceros coronatus*

A good number of these were beautifully seen on all three days in woodland in Bandhavgarh NP.

### Barbets Capitonidae

**Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*

Good views were had of perched birds in the Nainital and Sattal areas, their calls were also common.

**Brown-headed Barbet (SE)** *Megalaima zeylanica*

First seen along the Yamuna River, Delhi, followed by more in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Lineated Barbet** *Megalaima lineata*

This species was well seen in forest along the Kosi River and in Corbett National Park.

**Blue-throated Barbet** *Megalaima asiatica*

Excellent views were had of this colourful bird around Corbett National Park.

**Coppersmith Barbet** *Megalaima haemacephala*

A woodland species that was quite regular, great views were had at close range on the first full day near the Yamuna River.

### Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

**Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

A single bird was found in dry woodland on a walk outside Bandhavgarh NP.

**Speckled Piculet** *Picumnus innominatus*

A few single birds were seen on 3 different occasions, in Corbett NP and near the town of Sattal.

**Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker (SE)** *Dendrocopos nanus*

This species was only seen on a few occasions, the best was on one afternoon in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus*

A common species of high altitude forest. We found them regularly at Corbett NP, along the Kosi River and around Nainital.

**Brown-fronted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos auriceps*

First seen in the Mongoli valley, we found them regularly in forest around Nainital and Sattal.

**Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos macei*

Initially located in Corbett NP, we enjoyed further sightings in the forests around Nainital.

**Yellow-crowned Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos mahrattensis*

A species of the lower lying areas, seen by some participants near Bandhavgarh NP.

**Rufous-bellied Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*

A gorgeous woodpecker species. We had a total of 2 birds on the second day of birding the forests above the town of Nainital.

**Himalayan Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos himalayensis*

Another high altitude forest species that was seen 3 times in total around Nainital.

**Rufous Woodpecker** *Celeus brachyurus*

Great views were had of a feeding individual on the first day near the Kosi River.

**Lesser Yellownape** *Picus chlorolophus*

Seen three times on tour, in Corbett NP and along the Kosi River.

**Greater Yellownape** *Picus flavinucha*

A fairly common species that was seen around Corbett NP as well as around Sattal area.

**Streak-throated Woodpecker** *Picus xanthopygaeus*

Our first bird was located in open woodland in Corbett NP and more were seen by some Jeeps in the woodlands of Bandhavgarh NP.

**Scaly-bellied Woodpecker** *Picus squamatus*

A pair of these birds was seen by some in forest inside Corbett NP.

**Gray-headed Woodpecker** *Picus canus*

Recorded on four consecutive days in high altitude forests on the tour, mainly along the Kosi River.

**Himalayan Flameback** *Dinopium shorii*

This species was seen on one occasion along the Kosi River only.

**Black-rumped Flameback** *Dinopium benghalense*

A few birds were encountered along the Kosi River with higher numbers recorded at Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Greater Flameback** *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*

This impressive Woodpecker was seen on both days in Corbett NP

**White-naped Woodpecker** *Chrysocolaptes festivus*

Two separate sightings were had of this uncommon Woodpecker around Bandhavgarh NP.

**Great Slaty Woodpecker** *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*

Unfortunately this huge bird remained the only unseen of the 18 possible woodpeckers, some heard them on a ridge above the Kosi River.

### Larks Alaudidae

**Indian Bushlark (SE)** *Mirafra erythroptera*

A total of 4 birds were seen, the best view was of two birds on Okhla Island, Delhi.

**Ashy-crowned Sparrowlark (SE)** *Eremopterix grisea*

A few small flocks were seen from the boat near the Chambal River.

**Sand Lark** *Calandrella raytal*

About 5 single birds were observed feeding and flying along the Chambal River

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*

Our only bird was a single on the banks of the Chambal River.

**Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula*

2 birds were seen on our first day in Delhi, when we saw them just before we left Okhla Island.

### Swallows Hirundinidae

**Plain Martin** *Riparia paludicola*

Large numbers were found in the skies above Corbett NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Eurasian Crag Martin** *Hirundo rupestris*

Roughly 100 birds were seen sitting on electric wires over a valley near the town of Nainital.

**Dusky Crag Martin** *Hirundo concolor*

A total of 5 birds were found in the town of Ramnagar and many more were seen at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

This species was encountered at most sites throughout the tour.

*NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is found throughout the world and generally regarded as a single species. Some authorities agree that the Old World H. rustica should be split from the New World H. r. erythrogaster. Also, there is an isolated population in the Egyptian delta (H. r. savignii) that some authorities regard as a separate species, the Egyptian Swallow.*

**Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo [smithi] filifera*

Some participants were lucky to glimpse this species along the Yamuna River.

*NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form that would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow that would be H. filifera. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.*

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica*

Good numbers of birds were seen during particularly the first two-thirds of the tour, many around the Kosi River and Corbett NP.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Hirundo fluvicola*

The only time we encountered this species on tour was when we found a bird quickly cruising over the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Asian House Martin** *Delichon dasypus*

A small group of these birds was seen in flight near the town of Nainital.

**Nepal Martin** *Delichon nipalensis*

A small flock was found along the Kosi River during our first lunch there.

### Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

India's most common Wagtail, we found this species on many days of the tour.

**White-browed Wagtail (SE)** *Motacilla madaraspatensis*

Good numbers were found along the Yamuna and Kosi Rivers, Corbett NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*

Our first sightings were at Okhla Island where we found 15 birds and enjoyed further sightings at Keoladeo NP.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

The only day that produced this species was the day in Delhi: a total of 5 at Okhla Island.

**Gray Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

A common species that was seen in small numbers at most wetland localities on tour.

**Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus*

3 birds were found on Okhla Island, 3 more in Bandhavgarh.

**Long-billed Pipit** *Anthus similis*

1 bird was found in Bandhavgarh on the last day there.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Birds were encountered at Bandhavgarh NP, particularly in the more open village areas.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

This species was seen in Corbett NP, along the Kosi River, Nainital and Bandhavgarh NP.

**Rosy Pipit** *Anthus roseatus*

2 birds were found near Okhla Island, one was seen along the Kosi River.

### Cuckoo-shrikes Campephagidae

**Large Cuckooshrike** *Coracina macei*

This species was regularly seen in the tall woodland found within and around Bandhavgarh NP.

**Small Minivet** *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*

This stunning species was found to be fairly common in Bandhavgarh NP and near the Chambal River.

**Long-tailed Minivet** *Pericrocotus ethologus*

This species was quite frequent in feeding flocks along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

**Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus*

We encountered them along the Kosi River and saw them well in Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP.

**Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike** *Hemipus picatus*

Many were seen in the forests along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP, as well as near our Sattal Lodge.

### Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

**Black-crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus melaniterus*

The only birds found on tour were about 10 seen in and around Corbett NP.

**Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*

A few birds were found during the first few days of the trip.

**White-eared Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucotis*

Our first bird was seen by some along the Chambal River and we had more sightings in Keoladeo NP.

**Himalayan Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucogenys*

A very common species that we found every day in the highlands of the country.

**Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer*

An extremely common bird that was seen in all habitats and on nearly every day of the tour.

**Ashy Bulbul** *Hemixos flavala*

This species was recorded mainly in Sattal area during on of our walks in the forest.

**Mountain Bulbul** *Hypsipetes maclellandii*

A pair of these interesting birds was seen in Nainital, on the walk to the marketplace.

**Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

A good number of these birds were encountered around the higher-lying areas around areas around Nainital and Sattal areas.

### Kinglets Regulidae

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

A small group of these busy little birds was seen in Nainital.

### Leafbirds Chloropseidae

**Blue-winged [Jerdon's] Leafbird** *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*

This good looker was found in woodland around Bandhavgarh NP.

*NOTE: The Jerdon's Leafbird often gets split off as C. jerdoni from the nominate C. cochinchinensis. Clement's does not recognize this split.*

**Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons*

Two of these nectar-feeders were seen near the Kosi River, more were seen around Bandhavgarh NP.

### Ioras Aegithinidae

**Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia*

First seen along the Kosi River with further sightings were enjoyed in Bandhavgarh NP.

### Dippers Cinclidae

**Brown Dipper** *Cinclus pallasii*

A single bird was seen quite well along the Kosi River.

### Accentors Prunellidae

**Himalayan [Altai] Accentor** *Prunella himalayana*

While in the Nainital area we came across two large groups totaling about 40 birds.

**Rufous-breasted Accentor** *Prunella strophiatea*

This species was well seen on both days in the and Sattal areas.

**Black-throated Accentor** *Prunella atrogularis*

A stop on the drive from Nainital to Sattal at some fields gave us some good views of around 6 birds.

### Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

**Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** *Monticola rufiventris*

This species was noted in the Nainital and Sattal areas with a total of 7 birds, the very different males and females were both seen well.

**Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*

A single, stunning male was seen well by all, from the boat, along the Chambal River.

**Blue Whistling-Thrush** *Myophonus caeruleus*

A very common species that was seen every day on the Himalayan stretch of the tour.

**Orange-headed Thrush** *Zoothera citrina*

A gorgeous bird that was first seen by some in Bandhavgarh, before everyone was impressed by a very relaxed male in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Scaly Thrush** *Zoothera dauma*

Good views were had of a single bird in Bandhavgarh.

**Gray-winged Blackbird** *Turdus boulboul*

A total of 8 birds were found in the Sattal area where the group was actively feeding above our heads.

**Tickell's Thrush** *Turdus unicolor*

This species was located in Bandhavgarh NP on all 3 days where most participants had good views.

**Dark-throated Thrush** *Turdus ruficollis*

One female bird was seen and showed well near one of the Sattal lakes.

### Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*

Numerous birds were seen each day in Bandhavgarh NP, some also in Corbett NP.

**Striated Prinia** *Prinia criniger*

This species was seen around the town of Nainital and in the Mongoli valley.

**Gray-breasted Prinia** *Prinia hodgsonii*

A total of 6 birds were seen near the Kosi River as well as at higher altitudes over the next few days.

**Jungle Prinia (SE)** *Prinia sylvatica*

A few birds were seen in the Sattal area as well as around Bandhavgarh.

**Yellow-bellied Prinia** *Prinia flaviventris*

A single bird was found in dense scrub along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Ashy Prinia (SE)** *Prinia socialis*

A good-looking little species that was recorded often in Delhi as well as at Keoladeo NP.

**Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata*

A common species that was encountered at many locations on the tour.

### Old World Warblers Sylviidae

**Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

This species was only seen by some at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Sykes's Warbler** *Hippolais rama*

The only bird sighted on the tour was on the first day in Delhi.

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius*

An extremely common species that was sighted on almost every day of the tour at lower altitudes.

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

A common species that was seen at most low-altitude localities on this tour.

**Sulphur-bellied Warbler** *Phylloscopus griseolus*

Good views were had of 1 bird in woodland habitat in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Buff-barred Warbler** *Phylloscopus pulcher*

We encountered this species every day while in the Corbett, Nainital and Sattal areas.

**Lemon-rumped Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

This species was seen on a number of occasions around the Nainital and Sattal area.

**Inornate (Hume's) Warbler** *Phylloscopus [inornatus] humei*

Few birds were seen around Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo National Parks.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

The most common *Phylloscopus* warbler of the tour, seen at a variety of locations.

**Blyth's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus reguloides*

Seen most frequently around the Nainital and Sattal areas.

**Black-faced Warbler** *Abroxcopus schisiceps*

3 individuals were seen on two separate days around the Nainital area.

**Whistler's Warbler** *Seicercus whistleri*

This species was located in forested areas near Ramnagar and near Sattal.

**Gray-hooded Warbler** *Seicercus xanthoschistos*

A common species that was seen at all the highland sites visited on tour.

**Striated Grassbird** *Megalurus palustris*

A pair was well seen and heard on the Okhla Island in Delhi.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

This species was a common sight in Delhi and especially in the Keoladeo NP.

### Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

**Dark-sided Flycatcher** *Muscicapa sibirica*

An out-of-range species seen by one Jeep in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher** *Ficedula strophciata*

A beautiful species that was first seen along the Kosi River, also in the Sattal area.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*

This species was located in good numbers at Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**[Red-throated Flycatcher]** *Ficedula albicilla*

Initially located at our Lodge along the Kosi River, it was also seen in Corbett NP, this is the mountain form of the previous species.

*NOTE: Clements considers F. albicilla to be a subspecies of F. parva and does not recognise the split that some authorities claim.*

**Ultramarine Flycatcher** *Ficedula superciliaris*

The only sightings were in woodland around Bandhavgarh NP where 2 single birds were found.

**Slaty-blue Flycatcher** *Ficedula tricolor*

This species was well seen along the Kosi River on a few occasions and again in the Sattal area.

**Verditer Flycatcher** *Eumyias thalassina*

This species was seen in woodland outside Bandhavgarh NP where it often moves in mixed flocks.

**Small Niltava** *Niltava macgregoriae*

A few of these beautiful little birds were seen well in the Corbett NP area.

**Rufous-bellied Niltava** *Niltava sundara*

A superb gem of tall forest in the Himalayan foothills. Seen near the Kosi River and around Sattal.

**Tickell's Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis tickelliae*

A few were seen daily in Bandhavgarh NP and the surrounding woodlands.

**Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Fair numbers were found particularly along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP

**Siberian Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*

A single bird seen along the Kosi River was the only one located on tour.

**White-tailed Rubythroat** *Luscinia pectoralis*

Excellent views were had of a single bird by a few participants in Bandhavgarh.

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*

A few great looking individuals of this species showed on Okhla Island, near the Chambal River and in Keoladeo NP.

**Red-flanked Bluetail (Orange-flanked Bush-Robin)** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

This usually shy species was located in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

**Oriental Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis*

A common species that was particularly widespread during the latter half of the trip.

**White-rumped Shama** *Copsychus malabaricus*

A single bird was seen along the Kosi River.

**Indian Robin (SE)**

*Saxicoloides fulicata*

Seen at a few localities however especially common at Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Blue-capped Redstart**

*Phoenicurus caeruleocephalus*

A fairly common species in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

**Black Redstart**

*Phoenicurus ochruros*

We found them to be fairly common in and around Bandhavgarh NP and in Keoladeo NP.

**Blue-fronted Redstart**

*Phoenicurus frontalis*

Fair numbers were seen around Nainital and Sattal.

**White-capped Redstart**

*Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

A species that is closely associated with water and was seen on most Rivers in Corbett NP, along the Kosi River and at small streams in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

**Plumbeous Redstart**

*Rhyacornis fuliginosus*

As with the previous species it is always found close to water and was seen at the same localities.

**Little Forktail**

*Enicurus scouleri*

Only a single bird was seen, it showed very well in rapids along the Kosi River.

**Slaty-backed Forktail**

*Enicurus schistaceus*

One of these lovely birds was seen extremely well at the Corbett Waterfall.

**Spotted Forktail**

*Enicurus maculates*

This lovely species was seen exceptionally well along the Kosi River where it flew and hopped from rock to rock, no wonder it was voted onto the favourites list.

**White-throated (Hodgson's) Bushchat**

*Saxicola insignis*

With a bit of careful searching we managed to locate a few of these very rare individuals in the grasslands surrounding Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

**Siberian Stonechat**

*Saxicola maura*

A species that was seen mostly on the days we had in Corbett NP.

**White-tailed Stonechat**

*Saxicola leucera*

A total of 3 birds were found on the Okhla Island in Delhi, where they perched conspicuously for us.

**Pied Bushchat**

*Saxicola caprata*

This species was first seen at Okhla Island in Delhi and thereafter at the Keoladeo NP.

**Gray Bushchat**

*Saxicola ferrea*

A common species that was found throughout mostly the higher lying areas.

**Desert Wheatear**

*Oenanthe deserti*

2 single birds were located on the dry open banks of the Chambal River.

**Indian (Brown Rock) Chat (SE)**

*Cercomela fusca*

Birds were located in Delhi, at the Taj Mahal and near the Chambal River.

### Fantails Rhipiduridae

**Yellow-bellied Fantail**

*Rhipidura hypoxantha*

A striking bird that was first seen at the entrance to Corbett NP, further sightings were had in that area.

**White-throated Fantail**

*Rhipidura albicollis*

A species that was fairly common at higher elevations, at the Kosi River, at Corbett NP and Sattal.

**White-browed Fantail**

*Rhipidura aureola*

Replaces the previous species at lower altitude and was seen commonly at Bandhavgarh NP.

### Monarch Flycatchers Monarchidae

**Black-naped Monarch**

*Hypothymis azurea*

A fleeting glimpse of this good-looker was had by some participants in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Babblers Timaliidae**

- White-throated Laughingthrush** *Garrulax albogularis*  
Often occurs in big groups. We managed to find three flocks, in Corbett NP and in the Sattal region.
- White-crested Laughingthrush** *Garrulax leucolophus*  
Occurs in groups of up to 10 birds. We recorded this species on a number of occasions at all of the higher altitude sites on the tour.
- Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush** *Garrulax rufogularis*  
This very popular bird among the participants was seen quite well in dense undergrowth on an optional walk near the Sattal lakes.
- Streaked Laughingthrush** *Garrulax lineatus*  
A common species in the more open, bushy areas around Nainital and Sattal.
- Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush** *Garrulax erythrocephalus*  
5 birds were found in the town of Nainital, where it had us entertained for a few minutes.
- Puff-throated Babbler** *Pellorneum ruficeps*  
2 birds were seen well near the Kosi River, later two more showed up in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*  
A striking bird, a pair was found in bushy areas near one of the Sattal Lakes.
- Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler** *Pnoepyga albiventer*  
2 birds were found and seen by some participants in dense undergrowth in the lake area of Sattal.
- Immaculate (Nepal) Wren-Babbler** *Pnoepyga immaculate*  
A single bird was only heard in thick, streamside vegetation near Sattal.
- Black-chinned Babbler (SE)** *Stachyris pyrrhops*  
A species that was seen on a few occasions along the Kosi River, Corbett NP and in the Nainital area.
- Tawny-bellied Babbler** *Dumetia hyperythra*  
Our first sighting was near the Kosi River, thereafter we found them to be fairly common in Bandhavgarh NP and the surrounding woodland.
- Yellow-eyed Babbler** *Chrysomma sinense*  
Only seen on one occasion: along the Yamuna River in Delhi where one presented itself well.
- Common Babbler** *Turdoides caudatus*  
A single bird was found in dense scrub along the Yamuna River in Delhi.
- Striated Babbler** *Turdoides earlei*  
Again only a single bird was seen during the trip, also along the Yamuna River.
- Large Gray Babbler (SE)** *Turdoides malcolmi*  
The first birds were located on the train drive near Agra, thereafter we had more sightings at the Chambal River and in the Keoladeo NP.
- Jungle Babbler (SE)** *Turdoides striatus*  
A very common species that was encountered on most days of the tour.
- Red-billed Leiothrix** *Leiothrix lutea*  
This stunning species of the forest edge was located around the lakes in the Sattal area, after being glimpsed by some near the Kosi River.
- White-browed Shrike-Babbler** *Pteruthius flaviscapis*  
A delightful species that was located on one occasion above Nainital: 5 males and a lone female.
- Green Shrike-Babbler** *Pteruthius xanthochlorus*  
A smaller and less common species that was located on two occasions in the same area as above.
- Blue-winged Minla** *Minla cyanouroptera*  
A bird of the Himalayan forests that was sighted around the Sattal area on two consecutive days.
- Rufous Siberia** *Heterophasia capistrata*  
This species was fairly common in mature forest around Nainital and Sattal.

**Long-tailed Tits Aegithalidae**

**Black-throated Tit***Aegithalos concinnus*

Good numbers were found in feeding flocks around Nainital and Sattal, while the first group was seen in Corbett NP.

**Creepers Certhiidae****Bar-tailed Treecreeper***Certhia himalayana*

Good numbers were found in feeding flocks around Nainital and Sattal, while the first birds were seen in Corbett NP.

**Tits Paridae****Spot-winged Tit***Periparus melanolophus*

Around 20 birds were seen on both days in the Nainital area.

**Great Tit***Parus major*

A common species that was regularly encountered throughout the country. Greater numbers however were noted in the mountains below Nainital.

**Green-backed Tit***Parus monticolus*

A common species that was found mainly in forest around the towns of Nainital and the Sattal area.

**Black-lored Tit (SE)***Parus xanthogenys*

This good-looking species was seen daily near the Kosi River, in Corbett NP, Nainital and the Sattal area.

**Yellow-browed Tit***Sylviparus modestus*

A total of 10 of these drab tits were found in forest above Nainital.

**Nuthatches Sittidae****Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch***Sitta castanea*

This species was found at many destinations, most commonly along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

**White-tailed Nuthatch***Sitta himalayensis*

Was quite common during the first half of the tour, when we were at higher elevations.

**Velvet-fronted Nuthatch***Sitta frontalis*

Fairly common along the Kosi River and the forests in Corbett NP, as well as around Sattal.

**Wallcreeper Tichodromidae****Wallcreeper***Tichodroma muraria*

A highly sought-after monotypic family. One bird was seen by all as it slowly flew over us near the Kosi River.

**Sunbirds & Spiderhunters Nectariniidae****Purple Sunbird***Cinnyris asiatica*

This species was located in Delhi and Keoladeo NP however it was common in the woodland around Bandhavgarh NP.

**Green-tailed Sunbird***Aethopyga nipalensis*

One stunning male was seen near a lake edge in the Sattal area.

**Black-throated Sunbird***Aethopyga saturata*

Another lovely sunbird that was seen in forest near Sattal by some participants.

**Crimson Sunbird***Aethopyga siparaja*

Another jewel that was seen twice in open forest and scrub near the Kosi River.

**Flowerpeckers Dicaeidae****Thick-billed Flowerpecker***Dicaeum agile*

Good numbers of up to 10 birds in a single day were recorded at Bandhavgarh NP and the adjacent woodlands, our first pair was at the train station below Sattal.

**Pale-billed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum erythrorhynchus*

A single bird found in Bandhavgarh and seen by few participants was the only bird seen on the tour.

**Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum erythrorhynchus*

A single male bird was seen well near one of the lakes around Sattal.

### White-eyes Zosteropidae

**Oriental White-eye** *Zosterops palpebrosus*

A common species that was regularly and well seen at most localities on tour.

### Old World Orioles Oriolidae

**Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus*

This species was located in small numbers along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and Bandhavgarh NP.

### Shrikes Laniidae

**Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*

A few were very well seen in tall grasslands in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus*

Singles were recorded daily in the woodland outside Bandhavgarh NP and in Keoladeo NP.

**Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach*

A very common species that was seen frequently throughout the whole tour.

### Helmetsrikes and Allies Prionopidae

**Large Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis gularis*

An uncommon species in this area, sighted once in Corbett NP.

**Common Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*

A fairly common species that was regularly seen, mainly in Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

### Drongos Dicruridae

**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*

The most common Drongo in India that was seen daily, particularly in high-lying areas.

**Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

This species was found in a huge feeding flock over the Kosi River, more individuals and small groups in this area and also around Nainital.

**White-bellied Drongo (SE)** *Dicrurus caerulescens*

A single was found before Corbett NP, however this species was fairly common in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus*

A forest species that was recorded by some participants around the Sattal area.

**Hair-crested (Spangled) Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*

A total of 7 of these outrageous birds were found in and near Corbett NP.

**Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus*

This species was found in tall woodland within Bandhavgarh NP after one was glimpsed in Corbett NP.

### Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

**Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Good numbers were found in the forests above Nainital where 25 birds were seen over two days.

**Black-headed Jay***Garrulus lanceolatus*

This beautiful, restricted species was well seen in forested areas above Nainital and in the Sattal area.

**Green Magpie***Cissa chinensis*

A single bird was observed in a mixed flock on two separate days along the Kosi River.

**Red-billed Blue Magpie***Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

An extravagant bird that always provided great entertainment whenever seen, we found small groups in all the higher lying areas on tour.

**Rufous Treepie***Dendrocitta vagabunda*

A common, beautiful species that was seen at most localities almost daily, other than high mountains.

**Gray Treepie***Dendrocitta formosae*

This species was surprisingly only seen once along the Kosi River.

**House Crow***Corvus splendens*

An often abundant species, especially around people throughout the country's lower-lying areas.

**Large-billed Crow***Corvus macrorhynchos*

An abundant species that was seen on every day of the tour.

**Starlings Sturnidae****European (Common) Starling***Sturnus vulgaris*

We saw around 50 birds along the Yamuna River near Okhla Island.

**Brahminy Starling***Temenuchus pagodarum*

A good looker that was encountered in Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Chestnut-tailed Starling***Sturnus malabaricus*

A single flock was observed flying over the Keoladeo NP.

**Asian Pied Starling***Gracupica contra*

A common species that was seen around urban centres: large numbers in Delhi and Bharatpur, with smaller numbers around Agra and the Chambal River.

**Common (Indian) Myna***Acridotheres tristis*

Common in and around urban centres throughout the country, seen every day.

**Bank Myna (SE)***Acridotheres ginginianus*

A species that was encountered at most urban centres throughout the country though in smaller numbers than the above species.

**Old World Sparrows Passeridae****House Sparrow***Passer domesticus*

Widespread and common in urban areas throughout India.

**Russet Sparrow***Passer rutilans*

This species prefers open areas at high altitude and 20 were recorded between Nainital and Sattal.

**Chestnut-shouldered Petronia***Petronia xanthocollis*

Many were seen (about 150) on a walk in the woodland around Bandhavgarh NP.

**Weavers & Allies Ploceidae****Bengal (Black-breasted) Weaver (SE)***Ploceus benghalensis*

A total of about 30 birds were found in reedbeds on and around Okhla island.

**Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae****Red Avadavat***Amandava amandava*

Small groups were seen around Delhi near the Yamuna River.

**Indian Silverbill***Lonchura malabarica*

Small groups were encountered on a few occasions along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Chestnut [Tri-colored] Munia***Lonchura atricapilla*

A single bird was seen with other Munias in reeds in Bandhavgarh NP.

**White-rumped Munia***Lonchura striata*

Good numbers were seen around our lodge near Bandhavgarh on all three days in the area.

**Scaly-breasted Munia***Lonchura punctulata*

Numerous groups totaling 25 birds were located along the Yamuna, 6 later in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Siskins, Crossbills & Allies Fringillidae****Yellow-breasted Greenfinch***Carduelis spinoides*

3 birds were seen on two consecutive days in high country near Nainital.

**Common Rosefinch***Carpodacus erythrinus*

This species was seen on three days in the high areas of Nainital and Sattal, including stunning males.

**Pink-browed Rosefinch***Carpodacus rhodochrous*

A single female was seen perched on a bush in a valley near the town of Nainital.

**Buntings Emberizidae****Crested Bunting***Melophus lathami*

A good-looking species, we found 4 very co-operative birds near the Chambal River.

**White-capped Bunting***Emberiza stewarti*

This species was first located in the Mongoli Valley, more were seen later between Nainital and Sattal as well as a pair in Bandhavgarh.

**MAMMAL SPECIES LIST****Fruit Bats Pteropodidae****Indian Flying Fox***Pteropus giganteus*

A roost of around 20 strong was found at our Chambal River Lodge.

**Naked-rumped Tomb-Bat***Taphozous nudiventris*

Some individuals were seen hiding in cracks in the Red Fort, Agra.

**Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae****Rhesus Macaque***Macaca mulatta*

Very common at all localities and along the roads while traveling.

**Hanuman Langur***Semnopithecus entellus*

As above, very common other than the drier parts around Delhi, the Chambal River and Bharatpur.

**Hares & Rabbits Leporidae****Indian Hare***Lepus nigricollis*

Seen by some near Sattal and the Chambal River.

**Squirrels Sciuridae****Northern Palm Squirrel***Funambulus pennantii*

Common and regularly encountered at most lowland localities.

**Porcupines Hystricidae****Indian Porcupine***Hystrix indica*

A single animal was observed moving through dense grass on a very steep slope above Nainital.

**House Rats Muridae**

**Brown Rat***Rattus norvegicus*

Many of these very successful animals could be seen at some train stations.

**Otters Mustelidae****Eurasian Otter***Lutra lutra*

4 animals were amazingly well seen for such a shy species on two days in Corbett National Park

**Mongoose Herpestidae****Common Mongoose***Herpestes edwardsii*

A single was seen on two days at Keoladeo NP, also along the Yamuna River.

**Ruddy Mongoose***Herpestes smithii*

3 animals were spotted while on drives around the Bandhavgarh NP.

**Small Indian Mongoose***Herpestes javanicus*

A single was sighted near the Yamuna River in Delhi.

**Dogs & Allies Canidae****Golden Jackal***Canis aureus*

A total of around 15 were seen in Corbett NP, Bandhavgarh NP and in the Keoladeo NP.

**Indian Fox***Vulpes bengalensis*

3 adults were seen very well in open terrain near our lodge at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Cats Felidae****Bengal Tiger***Panthera tigris*

For many participants this was the number one target of the trip. We were all treated to breath-taking views of this great cat. First seen in Corbett NP where some were fortunate to see a young male. We later had 5 in total in Bandhavgarh NP, including some from elephant back. Some participants even saw a tigress with 2 cubs!

**Jungle Cat***Felis chaus*

A single animal was observed in the late afternoon at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Elephants Proboscidae****Asian Elephant***Elephas maximus*

Good views were had of a group of 3 by some of the participants.

**Pigs Suidae****Wild Boar***Sus scrofa*

Good views were had of large groups in Corbett NP, Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Deer Cervidae****Barking Deer (Indian Muntjac)***Muntiacus muntjak*

This small species was observed in Corbett NP, around the town of Sattal and in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Spotted Deer (Cheetal)***Cervus axis*

Very common in the large national parks of Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo.

**Sambar***Cervus unicolor*

Smaller numbers of this huge deer were noted in Corbett NP, Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP.

**Hog Deer***Axis porcinus*

This localised deer was observed well by some in the grasslands around Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

**Bovids Bovidae**

**Nilgai**

*Bosephalus tragocamelus*

This massive species was seen along the Chambal River and in Keoladeo NP.

**Dorcas Gazelle**

*Gazella dorcas*

5 were found in dry, open woodland outside Bandhavgarh NP.

**Goral**

*Naemorhedus goral*

A single animal was seen near the road between Nainital and Sattal.

**Photo credits: all photos taken on the above tour by Markus Lilje: Morning in Corbett NP, Sarus Crane, Bengal Tiger and Taj Mahal.**

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