



# Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

## Northern India

Private

*9<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2008*



*Bengal Tiger*

All photos by D. Shackleford

### Tour Summary

Our bus squeezed through jam-packed streets overcrowded with people, colorful vendors and wandering sacred cows, we soon realized that this set the trend of things to come over the next two weeks. Heading out of Delhi into the countryside we started racking up several new birds including our first of many Indian Roller, Red-wattled Lapwing, Pied Bushchat, Black Drongo and Cattle Egrets. Further along the road we were excited to find two pairs of the stately Sarus Crane, one pair with a large chick, was watched and photographed close to the road. We then stopped at a village reservoir to

stretch our legs and scan through hundreds of birds that were settled here. Good numbers of wintering Palearctic ducks and wading birds including, Indian Pond Heron, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Spotted Redshank, Temminck's Stint and Green Sandpiper. A lone Painted Stork, Purple Heron and River Tern were good finds. Arriving at our luxurious hotel in the town of Bharatpur we settled in and with the last rays of sun for the day we added Inornate (Hume's) and Brooke's Leaf Warblers as well as our first Spotted Owl, the first of seven owl species recorded.

The next day dawned and an excited group of birders stood below a nursery tree admiring the delicately patterned plumage of a Brown Hawk Owl. Here we entered the world famous Keoladeo Ghana National Park or Bharatpur as it is affectionately referred to. This park was established in 1971 and was previously used as a wildfowling preserve by the Maharaj of Bharatpur for duck hunting. The water levels this year were low and so we concentrated our efforts on "bush birds". Walking the network of trails we added many exciting birds to our growing list. Brahminy Starling, White-eared Bulbul, a pair of Dusky Eagle-Owl with two chicks, a colorful flock of Long-tailed Minivets, Citrine Wagtail, Oriental Honey Buzzard and a scarce wintering Scaly Thrush were some of the highlights. A pair of Indian Rock Pythons at their nest hole was also admired. After lunch we scoured several dry fields and eventually came up trumps with seven Indian Coursers. A late scan at a pool of water gave us another pair of stately Sarus Crane, a Black-necked Stork, an over-wintering Rosy Pipit, hundred's of Citrine Wagtail and a Crested Serpent Eagle.

Due to the lack of water in Bharatpur, we drove to Bund Baretha, a large reservoir that supplies water for several towns. Shortly after we left Bharatpur we stopped to scope several large raptors sitting in trees alongside the road. Singleton's of Oriental Honey Buzzard, Indian Spotted-Eagle and an immature Bonelli's Eagle were appreciated and added to our growing list. At Bund Baretha large rafts of ducks, egrets and cormorants were seen. Highlights here included Bar-headed Goose and Cotton Pygmy Goose, Pheasant-tailed and Bronze-winged Jacana, Red-crested Pochard and the scarce Ferruginous Duck. Birding the Acacia scrub near the fort we added the scarce Rufous-tailed Lark, Bluethroat, Jungle Prinia and Indian Rock Chat. A dusk visit to a nearby rocky mountain yielded three Long-billed Vulture at their nesting sites.

We then moved on to Chambal Safari Lodge, custodians in the conservation of the Chambal River, which includes the protection of the rare Ganges River Dolphin. We had a very pleasant stay here enjoying the farm environment and new ticks were Barred Buttonquail, Black-breasted Weaver and an Indian Palm Civet. Although we did not see the Gangetic Dolphin due to a breezy wind, we found other noteworthy species such as the very rare Indian Skimmer, Brown Crake, Black-bellied Tern, Great Thick-knee, Bonelli's Eagle and close up looks at Mugger Crocodile and Gharial-a prehistoric looking beast! Later that afternoon we visited the temples at Fatepursikri, the soft evening light made for stunning colorful images.

A visit to the Taj Mahal was without saying an absolute highlight. It's beauty is indescribable and a humbling experience and I should mention that we did see our first Red-collared Dove and Yellow-footed Green Pigeon in the well manicured grounds. From here we caught an overnight train to Umaria and transferred to our lodge in Tala at the edge of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve. Bandhavgarh was set up twenty years ago and is one of the most popular Tiger viewing reserves. Our stay here was magnificent. The majestic Bengal Tiger enthralled and absorbed us during our stay. We viewed a male, Lady Killer II resting up in a bamboo thicket and a few days later he was seen having a territorial dispute with an older male named Boka.....awesome!. A visit to the Fort and Vishnu Temple were another highlight allowing splendid panoramic views of the Park. Our birdlist increased

with sightings of Lesser Adjutant, the scarce White-rumped and Red-headed Vulture, White-eyed Buzzard, Buffy Fish-Owl, Mottled Wood Owl, Scaly, Orange-headed and Tickell's Thrush, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Black-naped Monarch and the much sought after Blyth's Reed Warbler. With a sad heart we bade Bandhavgarh farewell and drove to Khajuraho.

Birding at our hotel grounds in Khajuraho we were excited to find our first exquisite Verditer Flycatcher, a stunning individual wintering from the Himalayas, Woolly-necked Stork, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Paddyfield Pipit, hundreds of Chestnut-shouldered Petronia's were feeding on Eucalyptus seeds and a male Blue Rock Thrush was seen. Next morning we visited the Khajuraho Temple and were guided through by a local expert. Here we admired the astonishing architecture. The temple grounds held Tawny-bellied and Yellow-eyed Babblers and a few Indian Rollers. Later in the afternoon we caught our flight to Delhi, only House Crow were noted en route to the hotel. We finished our birding at Okhla Bird Sanctuary (a river with small islands, heavily polluted but very attractive to birds) in Delhi and soon we were enjoying the birds this area attracts. Large numbers of ducks, geese, gulls and waders were noted and new for our list were Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Marsh Harrier, Caspian and Black-headed Gulls, Striated Babbler, White-tailed Stonechat and the much wanted Red Avadavat's. And so ended our Northern India Tour, a splendid two weeks which had flown by, much enjoyed by everyone and with a yearning to return as soon as possible.



*Taj Mahal*

## **BIRD SPECIES LIST**

**E** = Endemic, **SE** = Sub-continent endemic

### **Grebes Podicipedidae**

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

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Our first sighting was of en route to Keoladeo NP with further sightings at Bund Baretha and Okhla.

#### **Great Crested Grebe**

*Podiceps cristatus*

A single non-breeding plumaged bird was seen on our boat ride at the Chambal River

### **Pelicans Pelecanidae**

#### **Great White Pelican**

*Pelecanus onocrotalus*

Our only sighting was of two birds seen at Okhla

### Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

#### **Indian Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

Seen at Bund Baretha and Okhla.

#### **Great Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

Recorded at the Chambal River and at Gapoori Lake at Bandhavgarh.

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

#### **Little Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax niger*

Seen regularly at most water bodies countrywide.

### Anhinga & Darter Anhingidae

#### **(Oriental) Darter**

*Anhinga melanogaster*

A single bird was seen en route to Keoladeo NP with a further ten at Bund Baretha.

*NOTE: The resident 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

#### **Gray Heron**

*Ardea cinerea*

Seen at most wetland localities, with peak numbers of eight at the Chambal River.

#### **Purple Heron**

*Ardea purpurea*

This sleek heron was sighted at Bund Baretha, Chambal and Okhla.

*NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands A. p. bournei is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne's Heron.*

#### **Great (White) Egret**

*Ardea alba*

A common sight at all wetland areas.

*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 recognized by Clements.*

#### **Intermediate (Yellow-billed) Egret**

*Egretta intermedia*

First recorded en route to Bund Baretha, Chambal and at Bandhavgarh

*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 (the form we recorded). This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.*

#### **Little Egret**

*Egretta garzetta*

Encountered countrywide at all waterbodies.

*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.*

#### **Indian Pond Heron**

*Ardeola grayii*

A very common species that was encountered almost daily.

#### **Cattle Egret**

*Bubulcus ibis*

Commonly recorded throughout Northern India. Seen almost every day.

*NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret (E. coromanda). This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.*

#### **Striated (Green-backed) Heron**

*Butorides striatus*

A single bird was seen at Bund Baretha.

*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.*

#### **Black-crowned Night-Heron**

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

Two birds were seen en route to Keoladeo NP.

### Storks Ciconidae

#### **Asian Openbill**

*Anastomus oscitans*

We had excellent looks at three birds at Bund Baretha and a singleton at Bandhavgarh.

#### **Painted Stork**

*Mycteria leucocephala*

Dave spotted our first bird en route to Bharatpur, with a further six at Keoladeo NP and a further six at Okhla Island in Delhi.

#### **Woolly-necked Stork**

*Ciconia episcopus*

Dave spotted a single bird en route to Keoladeo NP. A further two birds were seen at our hotel in Khajuraho.

#### **Black-necked Stork**

*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

An elegant species of Stork. A singleton was seen at Keoladeo NP.

#### **Lesser Adjutant**

*Leptoptilos javanicus*

This scarce species was sighted at Bandhavgarh NP, a total of 4 birds were present over the days spent there.

### Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

#### **Black-headed Ibis**

*Threskiornis melanocephalus*

First seen at Keoladeo NP with further sightings Bund Baretha and at Okhla in Delhi.

#### **Red-naped Ibis**

*Pseudibis papillosa*

First sighted at the Chambal River there after seen in small numbers at Bandhavgarh.

#### **Eurasian Spoonbill**

*Platalea leucorodia*

Recorded at Bund Baretha and at the Yamuna River in Delhi.

### Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

#### **Greater Flamingo**

*Phoenicopus ruber*

Sixty birds were seen at Okhla in Delhi.

NOTE: The Greater Flamingo (*P. roseus*) and the Caribbean Flamingo (*P. ruber*) are now considered monotypic species according to Clements.

### Swans, Geese & Ducks Anatidae

#### **Lesser Whistling Duck**

*Dendrocygna javanica*

Recorded in good numbers at Bund Baretha and at Bandhavgarh.

#### **Greylag Goose**

*Anser anser*

Recorded in small numbers at Bund Baretha and at Bandhavgarh with our highest count of forty at Okhla.

#### **Bar-headed Goose**

*Anser indicus*

This attractive species was first seen at Bund Baretha with further sightings at Okhla and we had particularly good looks during our boat ride at the Chambal River.

#### **Ruddy Shelduck**

*Tadorna ferruginea*

Seen regularly at several wetland sites throughout the tour.

#### **Comb Duck**

*Sarkidiornis melanotos*

A single bird was seen in flight at Keoladeo NP.

#### **Cotton Pygmy-goose**

*Nettapus coromandelianus*

Thirty of these attractive small ducks were seen at Bund Baretha.

#### **Eurasian Wigeon**

*Anas penelope*

Small numbers were found at Bund Baretha and at Okhla.

<b>Gadwall</b>	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Recorded at Keoladeo NP, Bund Baretha and at Okhla.	
<b>Eurasian Teal</b>	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Commonly seen at all waterbodies throughout our tour.	
<b>Mallard</b>	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
A single bird was spotted by Dave at Okhla.	
<b>Spot-billed Duck</b>	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>
Seen in small numbers at Keoladeo NP and at Okhla.	
<b>Northern Pintail</b>	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Large numbers were encountered at Bund Baretha with further sightings at Chambal and at Okhla.	
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
A very common species recorded throughout the tour.	
<b>Red-crested Pochard</b>	<i>Netta rufina</i>
Up to 150 seen at Bund Baretha and a further 14 at the Chambal River.	
<b>Common Pochard</b>	<i>Aythya farina</i>
A pair at Bund Baretha was a trip exclusive.	
<b>Ferruginous Pochard</b>	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
A scarce species in India, we found a total of 4 birds at Bund Baretha.	
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Twenty birds seen at Bund Baretha.	

### Osprey Pandionidae

<b>Osprey</b>	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
A single bird at Keoladeo NP as well as along the Chambal River.	

### Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae

<b>Oriental Honey-Buzzard</b>	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
First recorded at Keoladeo NP and frequently recorded at all the sites on our tour.	
<b>Black-shouldered (-winged) Kite</b>	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Recorded almost daily at all our sites on the tour.	
<i>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.</i>	
<b>Black Kite</b>	<i>Milvus [migrans] lineatus</i>
Recorded on most days at most sites throughout the tour.	
<i>NOTE: This locally breeding form of the Black Kite M. migrans is considered by most authorities as a distinct species, M. parasitus.</i>	
<b>Egyptian Vulture</b>	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
A great looking vulture that was regularly seen at various locations throughout the country. Our highest count was of eighty birds en route to Chambal Safari Lodge.	
<b>White-rumped Vulture</b>	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>
Once a numerous species throughout the Indian Subcontinent the numbers have recently crashed throughout its range due to consumption of a drug used on domestic animals. Conservation efforts are under way to try and save this species. Three birds were seen at Bandhavgarh.	
<b>Long-billed Vulture</b>	<i>Gyps indicus</i>
This species has also suffered a major decline in numbers throughout the region. We had roughly 15-20 birds on each day spent in Bandhavgarh NP where the birds breed on the cliffs in the reserve. Three birds were also seen at their roost near Bund Baretha.	
<b>Red-headed Vulture</b>	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>

Small numbers were found in Bandhavgarh at our hotel in Khajuraho and at Panna Tiger Reserve.

**Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*

Singleton's at Keoladeo and en route to Khajuraho.

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

Single bird was seen at Keoladeo thereafter this species was seen again in Bandhavgarh.

**Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Four were found around Okhla Island in Delhi.

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius*

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

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Single birds at Bund Baretha and at Bandhavgarh.

**White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa*

A single bird was seen in Bandhavgarh.

**Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*

Four birds were seen in dry scrubby habitat on the boat cruise up the Chambal River.

**Indian Spotted Eagle** *Aquila hastata*

A singleton was scoped at Keoladeo NP.

*Note: Formerly treated as a race of A pomarina.*

**Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraaetus fasciatus*

Single birds were seen at Keoladeo, Chambal and Bandhavgarh NP.

**Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*

A singleton was seen at Keoladeo.

**Crested Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

Two birds were seen in woodland at Bandhavgarh NP.

*Note: Due to morphological differences the above species Spizaetus cirrhatus is regarded as a full species and occurs in the lowland areas. Changeable Hawk Eagle (Spizaetus cirrhatus limnaeetus) ranges from the foothills of the Himalayas*

### Falcons & Caracaras Falconidae

**Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Small numbers were observed in the Keoladeo, Chambal and Bandhavgarh.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*

A single bird was seen in flight at Keoladeo and we enjoyed excellent flight and perched views of three birds at the Bandhavgarh Fort.

*Note: The three birds at Bandhavgarh were of the race Falco peregrinus babylonicus Some authorities regard this as a full species Shaheen Falcon.*

### Pheasants & Partridges Phasianidae

**Gray Francolin** *Francolinus pondicerianus*

This species was common in Keoladeo NP with further sightings at Chambal and Khajuraho.

**Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*

This species was seen daily in Bandhavgarh where we had excellent looks.

**Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*

A truly magnificent species that was pleasingly recorded daily.

### Buttonquails Turnicidae

**Barred Buttonquail** *Turnix suscitator*

Three birds were seen at Chambal and a further three at Bandhavgarh.

### Cranes Gruidae

#### **Sarus Crane**

*Grus antigone*

A couple of pairs were seen en route from Delhi to Keoladeo NP. One of the pairs had a youngster with them. Another pair was seen at Keoladeo.

### Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

#### **Brown Crake**

*Amaurornis akool*

We had excellent views of a single bird at the Chambal River.

#### **White-breasted Waterhen**

*Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Commonly seen at most wetland localities throughout the tour.

#### **Gray-headed Swamphen**

*Porphyrio [Porphyrio] poliocephalus*

Recorded en route to Keoladeo as well as at Bund Baretha. Good numbers were seen at Okhla where an estimated 100+ were counted.

*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 Swamphen (P. poliocephalus) Other forms to be recognised may include African Swamphen (P. madagascariensis), Philippine Swamphen (P. pulverulentus) and Eastern Swamphen (P. melanotus).*

#### **Common Moorhen**

*Gallinula chloropus*

A common bird, encountered at several wetland sites throughout the tour.

#### **Eurasian Coot**

*Fulica atra*

Recorded at major waterbodies with a high of 400+ at Bund Baretha.

### Jacanas Jacanidae

#### **Pheasant-tailed Jacana**

*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

Six birds in winter plumage (although still stunning) were at Bund Baretha.

#### **Bronze-winged Jacana**

*Metopidius indicus*

A stunning bird frequenting wetland habitats. Six at Bund Baretha and twelve at Gapoori Lake, Bandhavgarh.

### Painted Snipes Rostratulidae

#### **Greater Painted-snipe**

*Rostratula benghalensis*

Two males and two females were seen at Keoladeo.

### Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

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

*Himantopus himantopus*

A common species that was encountered at most wetland localities throughout the country.

#### **Pied Avocet**

*Recurvirostra avosetta*

Fifteen birds were seen en route from Keoladeo to Chambal.

### Thick-knees Burhinidae

#### **Eurasian Thick-knee**

*Burhinus oedinenus*

A singleton of these cryptically camouflaged birds were seen in Bandhavgarh.

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

*Escacus recurvirostris*

An impressive species that was encountered on the Chambal River.

**Courser & Pratincoles Glareolidae**

**Indian Courser** *Cursorius coromandelicus*  
Seven birds were found in a flat, dry area of Keoladeo, much to our relief.

**Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae**

**River Lapwing** *Vanellus duvaucelii*  
Seen on all big rivers throughout India, which include the Yamuna and Chambal Rivers.

**Yellow-wattled Lapwing (SE)** *Vanellus malabaricus*  
A bird of dry, open areas that was encountered in fields at Bund Baretha and at Chambal.

**Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus*  
A very common species that was encountered almost daily on tour.

**White-tailed Lapwing** *Vanellus leucurus*  
Small numbers were located at Keoladeo, Bund Baretha and at Okhla Island in Delhi.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*  
Two birds were seen en route to Keoladeo NP.

**Snowy (Kentish) Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
This species was observed at Keoladeo and at Chambal.

**Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae**

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*  
Small numbers were found at Keoladeo NP.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*  
Twenty at Bund Baretha and 30 at Okhla Island.

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*  
Two at Bund Baretha.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*  
Up to twenty birds were found at wetlands near and at Keoladeo NP.

**Common Redshank** *Tringa tetanus*  
Regularly encountered at most wetland sites throughout India.

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*  
Small numbers were located at Keoladeo NP.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
Small numbers were recorded at Keoladeo and at Chambal.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*  
A common bird in Northern India, we had sightings almost every day.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*  
Small numbers at Keoladeo and at Okhla.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*  
Another regularly encountered species at water bodies throughout India.

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*  
Small numbers were found at wetlands near Keoladeo NP.

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*  
More frequently recorded than the previous species with sightings at Keoladeo, Bund Baretha and Chambal River.

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*  
This species was only seen at Keoladeo and en route to Chambal.

**Gulls Laridae**

- Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*  
Ten birds were recorded at Okhla Island in Delhi.
- Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus*  
Two non-breeding adults were seen along the Chambal River.
- Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*  
Three hundred were recorded at Okhla.

**Terns Sternidae**

- River Tern** *Sterna aurantia*  
First seen at a small reservoir en route to Keoladeo NP with further sightings at Bund Baretha and at Chambal.
- Black-bellied Tern** *Sterna acuticauda*  
A singleton was found on our boat trip along the Chambal River.
- Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus*  
Six birds were seen at Okhla.

**Skimmers Rynchopidae**

- Indian Skimmer** *Rynchops albicollis*  
Four birds were found at Bund Baretha and a total of 22 birds were seen roosting on a sandbank on the Chambal River.

**Doves & Pigeons Columbidae**

- Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia*  
Common at every locality throughout the entire tour.
- Oriental Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*  
Small numbers were seen at Bandhavgarh NP.
- Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*  
This species is common and was encountered almost daily on the tour.
- Red Collared Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*  
This species was first seen at the Chambal River and later on near the Taj Mahal.
- Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*  
Very common at Bandhavgarh NP and on our drive to Khajuraho.
- Laughing (Palm) Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*  
Commonly encountered at many localities throughout India.
- Yellow-footed Pigeon** *Treron phoenicoptera*  
Commonly encountered at Bandhavgarh, this species was first encountered at the Taj Mahal.

**Parrots & Allies Psittacidae**

- Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria*  
Small flocks were found regularly at Bandhavgarh NP.
- Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*  
Encountered almost daily throughout Northern India.
- Plum-headed Parakeet (SE)** *Psittacula cyanocephala*  
First recorded at Chambal with further sightings at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Cuckoos & Coucals Cuculidae**

- Sirkeer Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii*  
Excellent close looks were had of a single bird at Bandhavgarh.
- Asian Koel** *Eudynamys scolopacea*  
This species was seen at Chambal Safari Lodge.
- Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis*  
Encountered in small numbers throughout the region.

**Typical Owls Strigidae**

- Indian Scops-Owl** *Otus indicus*  
Singleton's at Keoladeo NP and at Chambal.
- Dusky Eagle-Owl** *Bubo coromandus*  
A pair and two chicks were well seen at the nest site in Keoladeo NP.
- Brown Fish-Owl** *Ketupa zeylonensis*  
A single bird was observed during the day at Keoladeo NP.
- Mottled Wood-Owl** *Strix ocellata*  
A single bird was seen at a day roost near Bandhavgarh NP.
- Jungle Owlet** *Glaucidium radiatum*  
Three birds were found in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Spotted Owlet** *Athene brama*  
Five birds were recorded at Keoladeo NP including three en route to Bund Baretha.
- Brown Hawk-Owl** *Ninox scutulata*  
A single bird was located at a roost site in the nursery area of Keoladeo NP and another at Chambal Lodge.

**Nightjars Caprimulgidae**

- Grey Nightjar** *Caprimulgus jotaka*  
Two birds were scoped in the nursery at Keoladeo NP.

**Swifts Apodidae**

- Little Swift** *Apus affinis*  
Recorded at Bund Baretha, Fatepursikri Fort and at Khajuraho.

**Crested Treeswifts Hemiprocnidae**

- Crested Treeswift** *Hemiproctne coronata*  
Three birds were seen on the river at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Kingfishers Alcedinidae**

- Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*  
First recorded at Bund Baretha with further sightings at Bandhavgarh.
- White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*  
The regions most common Kingfisher, we recorded this species every day.
- Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*  
This, the world's most widespread kingfisher, was seen at Bund Baretha, Chambal and at Gapoori Lake.

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

A delightful species that was found in woodland around Bandhavgarh NP and at Khajuraho.

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

Seen every day of the tour and first recorded en route to Keoladeo NP.

**Hoopoes Upupidae****Common 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 recognized 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.

**Malabar Pied Hornbill***Anthracoceros coronatus*

A pair was seen by half the group in woodland in Bandhavgarh NP and Dave spotted another pair the next day at the fort.

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

First seen at Keoladeo NP with further sightings at Chambal and at Bandhavgarh.

**Coppersmith Barbet***Megalaima haemacephala*

We had excellent close looks at several birds at a fruiting tree at the entrance to Bandhavgarh NP.

**Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae****Eurasian Wryneck***Jynx torquilla*

Dave spotted our only bird of the tour en route to Bund Baretha.

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

A species of the lower lying areas that was seen in Keoladeo NP.

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

This large species was recorded at Keoladeo and Bandhavgarh.

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

Heard and then seen twice in flight at Bandhavgarh.

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

At least 20 birds were found in open fields on the drive between Keoladeo and Bund Baretha.

**Rufous-tailed Lark***Ammomanes phoenicurus*

A pair was watched near the fort at Bund Baretha.

**Sand Lark***Calandrella raytal*

Six birds were observed feeding in a flat, arid area along the Chambal River.

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*

First recorded en route to Bund Baretha with further sightings at Chambal and Okhla.

### Swallows Hirundinidae

**Plain (Brown-throated) Martin** *Riparia paludicola*

Large numbers were found in the skies above Keoladeo, Bund Baretha and at Chambal.

**Dusky Crag Martin** *Hirundo concolor*

Recorded in rocky habitat at Bund Baretha, Bandhavgarh and Khajuraho.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

This species was encountered at several 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*

A bird of rivers and marshes seen en route to Keoladeo, at Bandhavgarh and lastly at our hotel at Khajuraho.

*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*

Four birds were seen at Gapoori Lake, Bandhavgarh NP.

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

Up to 100+ birds were seen at a river crossing between Bandhavgarh and Khajuraho.

### Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

India's most common Wagtail, we found this species nearly every day on the tour.

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

Small numbers were found at Keoladeo, Bund Baretha, Chambal and at Okhla.

**Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*

100+ recorded at Keoladeo and smaller numbers at Bund Baretha.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

A single bird was seen at Keoladeo and a further three at a wetland en route to Chambal

**Gray Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Seen in small numbers at most localities on tour.

**Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus*

Recorded in grassland at Keoladeo, Bund Baretha and at our hotel grounds in Khajuraho.

**Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris*

Singleton's at Keoladeo and at Chambal.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Ten birds were recorded at Chambal Lodge.

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

Recorded daily at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Rosy Pipit** *Anthus roseatus*

A single bird was wintering at Keoladeo NP.

### Cuckoo-shrikes Campephagidae

**Large Cuckooshrike***Coracina macei*

This species was regularly seen in the tall woodland found at Chambal and Bandhavgarh.

**Small Minivet***Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*

This stunning species was found to be fairly common in Bandhavgarh.

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

Our first minivets were a flock of this species found at Keoladeo.NP

**Scarlet Minivet***Pericrocotus flammeus*

Small numbers of these stunners at Bandhavgarh.

**Bulbuls Pycnonotidae****White-eared Bulbul***Pycnonotus leucotis*

Three birds at Keoladeo.

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

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

**Leafbirds Chloropseidae****Golden-fronted Leafbird***Chloropsis aurifrons*

A single bird was seen in woodland at Gapoori Lake.

**Ioras Aegithinidae****Common Iora***Aegithina tiphia*

Recorded at our lodge at Bandhavgarh.

**Thrushes & Allies Turdidae****Blue Rock-Thrush***Monticola solitarius*

Our only sighting was of a male at our hotel in Khajuraho.

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

A gorgeous bird that was seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Scaly Thrush***Zoothera dauma*

Excellent views were had of a single bird at Keoladeo and a further two at Bandhavgarh.

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

This species was found in dry riverbeds at Bandhavgarh.

**Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae****Zitting (Fan-tailed) Cisticola***Cisticola juncidis*

Seen each day in Bandhavgarh and a pair at Okhla.

**Graceful Prinia***Prinia gracilis*

A single bird was seen at a marsh en route to Keoladeo NP. A pair was seen in dry scrub on Okhla Island.

**Grey-breasted Prinia***Prinia hodgsonii*

Six birds were seen in dry reeds at Bandhavgarh.

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

Six birds were seen in scrubby bush at Bund Baretha.

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

A good-looking species that was recorded in Keoladeo, Chambal and Okhla.

**Plain Prinia***Prinia inornata*

A very common species that was encountered on nearly every day of the tour.

### Old World Warblers Sylviidae

- Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum*  
This skulking species was heard and seen after much effort at our lodge in Bandhavgarh.
- Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius*  
An extremely common species that was sighted on almost every day of the tour.
- Common (Siberian) Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*  
A common species that was seen at most localities on tour.
- Sulphur-bellied Warbler** *Phylloscopus griseolus*  
Good views were had of 2 birds in woodland habitat in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Brook's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus subviridis*  
After a bit of searching we managed to locate a single bird at our hotel near Keoladeo NP.
- Inornate (Hume's) Warbler** *Phylloscopus [inornatus] humei*  
Recorded at most localities on our tour.
- Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*  
A single bird at Keoladeo and several at Bandhavgarh.
- Orphean (Eastern) Warbler** *Sylvia hortensis*  
A single bird was seen well at Keoladeo NP.
- Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*  
This species was a common sight at nearly every locality visited on the tour.

### Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

- Asian Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa dauurica*  
A single bird was seen at Bandhavgarh NP.
- Rusty-tailed Flycatcher** *Muscicpa ruficauda*  
A singleton was recorded in woodland near Bund Baretha.
- Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*  
This species was commonly recorded throughout our tour'  
*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*  
Our only sighting was of a male bird at Bandhavgarh NP.
- Verditer Flycatcher** *Eumyias thalassina*  
This attractive species was found in our hotel grounds at Khajuraho.
- Tickell's Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis tickelliae*  
A few were seen daily in Bandhavgarh and at our hotel grounds in Khajuraho.
- Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*  
Fair numbers were found Keoladeo, Chambal and Bandhavgarh.
- Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*  
Seven at Bund Baretha and three at Okhla.
- Oriental Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis*  
A common species that was seen at most localities on the tour.
- Indian Robin (SE)** *Saxicoloides fulicata*  
Seen almost daily throughout our tour.
- Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*  
A common species that was seen at most localities on the tour.

**Siberian Stonechat***Saxicola maura*

A common species that was seen on several days of the tour.

**White-tailed Stonechat***Saxicola leucera*

A total of four birds were found in the area around Okhla Island in Delhi.

**Pied Bushchat***Saxicola caprata*

This species was recorded at most sites on the tour.

**Gray Bushchat***Saxicola ferrea*

A single bird was found at Bandhavgarh. A winter visitor from the foothills of the Himalayas.

**Desert Wheatear***Oenanthe deserti*

A single bird was located in a dry, open area at the Chambal River.

**Isabelline Wheatear***Oenanthe isabellina*

A single bird was located at the Chambal River.

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

Birds were located at Bund Baretha, and on historical sites at Fatepursikri and at Khajuraho.

**Fantails Rhipiduridae****White-browed Fantail***Rhipidura aureola*

Found commonly in woodland at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Monarch Flycatchers Monarchidae****Black-naped Monarch***Hypothymis azurea*

A good looker that was well seen in the more forested areas of Bandhavgarh.

**Babblers Timaliidae****Tawny-bellied Babbler***Dumetia hyperythra*

Good looks were had at our lodge in Bandhavgarh with further sighting in the gardens at Khajuraho.

**Yellow-eyed Babbler***Chrysomma sinense*

Good looks were had at our lodge in Bandhavgarh with further sighting in the gardens at Khajuraho.

**Common Babbler***Turdoides caudatus*

First recorded en route to Bund Baretha with further sightings at Chambal and Okhla.

**Striated Babbler***Turdoides earlei*

Our only sighting was of ten birds found in the reedbeds on Okhla Island.

**Large Gray Babbler (SE)***Turdoides malcolmi*

Reasonably common around Bund Baretha and Keoladeo NP.

**Jungle Babbler (SE)***Turdoides striatus*

A very common species that was encountered on every day of the tour.

**Indian Scimitar Babbler***Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*

We had a good sighting of three birds in Bandhavgarh.

**Tits Paridae****Great Tit***Parus major*

Three birds were recorded in open woodland, Bandhavgarh.

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

This species was found in a mixed bird flock in dense woodland, Bandhavgarh.

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

Recorded almost daily throughout the tour.

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

Three birds were recorded at Bandhavgarh.

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

A single bird found was found near our lodge at Bandhavgarh.

**White-eyes Zosteropidae****Oriental White-eye***Zosterops palpebrosus*

A common species that was regularly sighted at most localities on tour.

**Old World Orioles Oriolidae****Black-hooded Oriole***Oriolus xanthornus*

This species was located in small numbers at Bandhavgarh NP.

**Shrikes Laniidae****Brown Shrike***Lanius cristatus*

Single birds daily in Bandhavgarh NP.

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

Two daily at Keoladeo and a singleton en route to Chambal.

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

A common species that was seen almost daily at every locality.

**Southern Gray Shrike***Lanius meridionalis*

Singles were found daily at Keoladeo NP.

**Woodshrikes and Allies Prionopidae****Common Woodshrike***Tephrodornis pondicerianus*

Dave and Lorraine spotted a bird at our lodge at Chambal, a further two sightings at Bandhavgarh.

**Drongos Dicruridae****Black Drongo***Dicrurus macrocercus*

The most common drongo in India that was seen daily in all areas.

**Ashy Drongo***Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Far less frequently recorded than its predecessor. Recorded at Keoladeo, Chambal and Bandhavgarh.

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

First recorded at Keoladeo with further sightings at Bandhavgarh NP.

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

This species was found in the tall woodland within Bandhavgarh NP.

**Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae****Rufous Treepie***Dendrocitta vagabunda*

A common and beautiful species that was seen at every locality almost daily.

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens*

A very common species throughout the country.

**Large-billed Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchus*

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

### Starlings Sturnidae

**Common Starling** *Sturnis vulgaris*

A single bird was recorded at Okhla Barrage in Delhi.

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

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

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

Common in and around urban centres throughout the country.

**Asian Pied Starling** *Gracupica contra*

A common species that is more often seen around urban centres. First recorded at Keoladeo NP.

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

A single bird was observed in a fruiting tree at the entrance to Bandhavgarh.

**Brahminy Starling** *Temenuchus pagodarum*

A good looker that was encountered at most sites throughout the tour. First recorded at Keoladeo NP.

### Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

**Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philipinnus*

Ten+ birds were seen en route to Bund Baretha.

**Bengal (Black-breasted) Weaver (SE)** *Ploceus benghalensis*

We recorded 10+ birds in reedbeds at Bund Baretha.

### Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

**Red Avadavat** *Amandava amandava*

A small flock of mainly non-breeding plumaged birds were seen at Okhla.

**Indian Silverbill** *Lonchura malabarica*

Regularly encountered around Keoladeo, Khajuraho and at Okhla.

### Siskins, Crossbills & Allies Fringillidae

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Five birds were seen in flight above a reedbed in Bandhavgarh.

### Buntings Emberizidae

**Crested Bunting** *Melophus lathami*

A good-looking species, was found en route to Bund Baretha.

**Chestnut-breasted (White-capped) Bunting** *Emberiza stewarti*

A pair was found at Bund Baretha.

### Old World Sparrows Passeridae

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Widespread and common in urban areas throughout India.

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

First recorded at Keoladeo with further sightings at Bandhavgarh in gum trees at our hotel in Khajuraho.

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

A roost of least 100 strong was found at Keoladeo and fifty at Chambal.

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

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

**Hanuman Langur***Semnopithecus entellus*

First recorded at Bund Baretha and common at Bandhavgarh.

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

Singleton's at Keoladeo, Chambal and Bandhavgarh.

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

Common and regularly encountered at most localities.

**Mongoose Herpestidae****Small Indian Mongoose***Herpestes javanicus*

A single was sighted near the temple in Khajuraho.

**Civets Viverridae****Indian Palm Civet***Parguma larvata*

A single was observed at night in Chambal Safari Lodge.

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

Ten in Keoladeo NP and three on two days at Bandhavgarh.

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

The essence of India. We were treated to breath-taking views of this great cat. A male, Lady Killer 2, was watched at length lying next to the road for several hours and two days later we watched him fighting with an older male, Boka from the safety of our elephant in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Jungle Cat***Felis chaus*

Singleton's were observed twice in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Pigs Suidae**

**Wild Boar**

*Sus scrofa*

Good views were had in Bandhavgarh NP where it was seen daily.

**Deer Cervidae**

**Barking Deer (Indian Muntjac)**

*Muntiacus muntjak*

This tiny species was observed in Bandhavgarh NP.

**Spotted Deer (Chital)**

*Cervus axis*

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

**Sambar**

*Cervus unicolor*

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

**Bovids Bovidae**

**Nilgai**

*Bosephalus tragocamelus*

This massive species was seen at Keoladeo NP and near Chambal Safari Lodge.

**Reptiles**

**Mugger Crocodile**

*Crocodylus paluster*

Ten were seen at the Chambal River.

**Gharial**

*Gavialis gangeticus*

We counted fourteen of these prehistoric like creatures at the Chambal River

**Indian Rock Python**

*Python molurus*

Two large individuals were seen at there nest holes in Keoladeo NP much to the delight of Sara.

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