



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Northern & Central India *Birds & Tigers II*

26th January - 12th February 2009



Bengal Tiger by Cuan Rush

Tour leaders: Markus Lilje & Cuan Rush

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader Cuan Rush

Top 10 Birds as voted by participants:

1. Cheer Pheasant
2. Sarus Crane
3. Ibisbill
4. Stork-billed Kingfisher
5. Tawny Fish Owl
6. White-crested Laughingthrush
7. Spotted Forktail
8. Indian Peafowl
9. Orange-headed Thrush
10. Bay-backed Shrike

Top 5 Mammals & Reptiles as voted for by participants:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. Tiger | 4. Nilgai |
| 2. Yellow-throated Marten | 5. Gharial |
| 3. Indian Elephant | |

Tour Summary

Steeped in history, culture and tradition, India is an irresistible world travel destination. Over and above the aforementioned, the incredible biodiversity of this nation exudes a powerful magnetic force which lures naturalists from all over the globe. Our Rockjumper tour of northern and central India, appropriately named “Birds and Tigers” certainly lived up to its top class reputation with highlights including unbeatable sightings of Cheer Pheasant, Ibisbill, Indian Skimmer, Black-bellied Tern, Tawny Fish Owl, White-naped Woodpecker and Wallcreeper, not to mention the numerous intimate encounters with the stunning Tiger!



Beginning within the city limits of the capital, New Delhi, we explored the Yamuna River on a gloriously, clear winters day. The river was teeming with waterfowl and other aquatic associated species. Our scanning produced Greylag and Bar-headed Geese, Ruddy Shelduck, Eurasian Wigeon, the stunning Indian Spot-billed Duck, Eurasian Teal, Common Pochard, Ferruginous and Tufted Ducks, Asian Openbill, distant Greater Flamingo, Black-headed Ibis, brief views of Streak-throated Swallow and many species of heron and egret. The riparian vegetation was also alive with birds and we notched up Northern and White-tailed Lapwings, Alexandrine Parakeet, Greater Coucal, the diminutive Spotted Owlet, the colourful Coppersmith Barbet, the elusive Yellow-bellied Prinia, 5 species of babbler (including Yellow-eyed, Common and Striated), the localised White-tailed Stonechat and Red Avadavat. In total, we recorded over 100 species on our first day; a fantastic start to the tour.

An overnight train journey placed us in the pristine surroundings of the Kosi River and its foothill forest; a stark contrast to the bustling, smoggy and noisy city of Delhi. Over the next few days our explorations of this exciting region yielded a plethora of specials. The Kosi River and associated riverine areas held Mountain Hawk-Eagle, Collared Falconet, the enigmatic Ibisbill, River Lapwing, Crested Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Grey Treepie, Black-chinned Babbler, White-crested Laughingthrush, Chestnut-bellied and Velvet-fronted Nuthatches, White-capped Redstart, Little and striking Spotted Forktails, Snowy-browed Flycatcher, 3 species of Leafbird (incl. Orange-bellied), Whistler’s Warbler, the scarce Long-billed Thrush, and Black-throated and Crimson Sunbirds. Our time spent here also included a visit to the stunning Corbett National Park. A vision of Jim Corbett, an ex Tiger hunter, this park comprises a mosaic of habitats and as a result a healthy array of birds. During our jeep safaris here we recorded Black Francolin, Kalij Pheasant, Pallas’s and Lesser Fish Eagles, Plum-headed Parakeet, a juvenile Lesser Coucal, both Brown and Tawny Fish Owls (at day roosts), Blue-throated Barbet, Streak-throated and Scaly-bellied Woodpeckers, Himalayan Goldenback, Scarlet Minivet, Maroon Oriole, the vivacious Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Black-crested Bulbul, the rare White-throated Bush Chat and Crested Bunting. On the mammal front we were fortunate to locate 20+ Indian



Elephant (including a sighting of a large 'tusker'), good numbers of Hog Deer and a few Golden Jackals.



Ascending to the higher altitude town of Nainital we passed through the Mongoli Valley where we added Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, a vociferous Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler, Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Red-billed Leothrix, Blue-capped Redstart and Yellow-breasted Rosefinch. Continuing on our journey, we reached the old hill station town of Nainital at dusk. From our base here we ventured out into the surrounding forests and foothills of the lofty Himalayas. The bird activity lessened as we experienced colder conditions and our searches were centred on sunlit patches of forest in the mornings, where mixed feeding flocks seemed to concentrate. Our efforts and patience were rewarded with some gems in the form of Brown-fronted and Himalayan Woodpeckers, Eurasian Jay, Spot-winged, Himalayan Black-lored and Yellow-browed Tits, Buff-barred and the masked Black-faced Warbler, Green Shrike-Babbler, Rufous Sibia, Whiskered Yuhina, Grey-winged Blackbird and brief views of Fire-breasted Flowerpecker. In addition to this, we also explored rocky hillsides and grassy slopes. Our top sighting in these areas was a pair of Cheer Pheasant which casually strolled up a recently-burnt slope feeding while we watched in awe for over an hour. This was a Rockjumper first for this tour and the bird was voted number 1 for the trip! Other noteworthy species were Grey-backed Shrike, Black-headed Jay, Green-backed Tit, Striated Prinia, White-throated and Striated Laughingthrush, Blue-fronted Redstart, Russet Sparrow, Altai, Rufous-breasted and Black-throated Accentors and the beautiful Pink-browed Rosefinch. Raptors were well represented and we found good numbers of Griffon Vulture, a single Besra, Steppe Eagle and Common Kestrel. Goral (a species of mountain goat) and the attractive Yellow-throated Marten were the top mammals for the Nainital area.

Not far from Nainital is the sleepy town of Sattal, which means seven lakes in Hindi. En route we birded some fields and scrubby patches that produced Mountain Bulbul, Tree Pipit and Dusky and Smoky Warblers. As our time in the area was short, we then headed for the forests and scrub that surrounds the highland lakes. Here we recorded coveys of Rufous-throated Partridge, the technicolor Great Barbet, the diminutive Speckled Piculet, a stunning male Small Niltava, Red-flanked Bluetail, flocks of gaudy Red-billed Leothrix, skulking Nepal and Scaly-breasted Wren-Babblers, stunning Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush, mesmerising, point-blank views of Scaly Thrush, Blue-winged Minla, small numbers of Bronzed Drongo, and Rufous-gorgeted and Slaty-blue Flycatchers. From Sattal we covered a vast distance by road, passing through countless vibrant towns and villages (oozing people, colour, animals and every method of transportation imaginable to humankind) to reach our next destination, Chambal Safari Lodge.

The lodge is located near to the National Chambal Sanctuary. This sanctuary was proclaimed in 1979 in order to provide refuge to a rich diversity of creatures that inhabit the River Chambal. These include the endangered Indian Skimmer, the scarce Black-bellied Tern, the bizarre Gharial and the Gangetic Dolphin. During our visit here, we managed to record all of these incredible creatures plus a host of other targets, namely: flocks of Red-crested Pochard, Red-naped Ibis, Long-legged Buzzard, Bonelli's Eagle, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Great Black-headed Gull, Great Stone-Curlew, Brown Hawk-Owl, Small Pratincole, Indian Bush, Crested and Sand Larks, Ashy-



crowned Sparrow-Lark, Rufous-fronted Prinia, Booted and Sykes's Warblers, Desert Wheatear and Blue Rock Thrush. Nocturnal activities in the area added Indian Flying Fox and a family of Asian Palm Civets. Leaving the semi-arid zone of Chambal, we drove to Agra and connected with an overnight train ride south to the famous Bandhavgarh NP.



Established in 1968, Bandhavgarh National Park is one of the spear-heads of Project Tiger and is home to a thriving population of these incredibly beautiful cats. After an unsuccessful attempt to locate Tiger in Corbett, despite tracking them for several hours, we were all slightly apprehensive about the prospect of dipping out on these royal beasts. As it turned out, we did not require more than an hour in the park before a mahout (elephant handler) located tigers and shortly thereafter we plunged into the bush on elephant-back for our first

encounter. Within minutes we were held spell-bound by two of these massive striped cats as they lounged peacefully in a clearing surrounded by bamboo thicket, the soft morning light glowing on their rusty-orange coats...a memory never to be forgotten! Leaving the sighting was difficult: not knowing whether we would have more moments with this amazing creature or if it would be our last! Our fears were unfounded, and during the next few days, we were treated to many more excellent views of this mythical animal! Other mammals seen in Bandhavgarh were good numbers of Hanuman Langur, Wild Boar, Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer), Spotted Deer, Sambar, Dorcas Gazelle and Jungle Cat. Birding during the jeep drives through the forests, grasslands and bamboo thickets of the park was also fruitful and we notched-up many goodies that included a group of cooperative Jungle Bush Quail, the endemic Painted Spur-fowl, Lesser Adjutant, scarce White-rumped and Indian Vultures, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Malabar Pied Hornbill, White-bellied Drongo, Black-naped Monarch, the skulky Indian Scimitar Babbler, Orange-headed Thrush and White-rumped Shama. The dry woodlands outside Bandhavgarh hold several target species and our daily explorations yielded White-eyed Buzzard, the cryptically patterned Mottled Wood Owl, the highly sought-after White-naped Woodpecker, Bay-backed Shrike, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher and both Pale-billed and Thick-billed Flowerpeckers.

A lengthy train journey lead us back to Agra, one of the pivotal points in the "Golden Triangle", a well-known tourist route of North India. Upon arrival we transferred to the Red Fort, an impenetrable fortress with the city. The fort was designed and built by the Mughal ruler, Akbar, in the 1560's and was originally utilised as a military establishment but later transformed into an impressive palace. Whilst absorbing the excellence of the marble and red sandstone architecture we spotted Egyptian Vulture and a Booted Eagle overhead and later found Naked-rumped Tomb-Bats hiding in the crevices of the archways. Thereafter, as a prelude to our visit of the magnificent Taj Mahal, we witnessed the ancient and intricately detailed craftsmanship of marble inlay, a family tradition passed down from father to son over the centuries. This gave us some insight into the magnitude of the task that was faced when constructing the Taj Mahal. Our afternoon visit to this Mughal monument, the construction of which was inspired by the love of Shah Jahan for his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal, exceeded expectations and all were enthralled by its untouched beauty!





The final port-of-call was Keoladeo Ghana National Park, more commonly referred to as 'Bharatpur'. Our visit followed the best monsoon season in many years in India and this meant good water levels in the park. We enjoyed vast flocks of waterfowl including staggering numbers of Lesser Whistling Duck, Northern Pintail and Gadwall, not to mention the impressive breeding colony of elegant Painted Storks. However, we also encountered many specials in the mixed wetland/grassland/Acacia woodland maze of Bharatpur, namely: Cotton Pygmy Goose, the secretive Black Bittern, Black-necked Stork, Crested Honey Buzzard, the regal Sarus Crane, Brown Bush-hen, Yellow-wattled and White-tailed Lapwings, Dusky Eagle-Owl and roosting Large-tailed Nightjar. Outside the park we searched some fallow fields and were finally rewarded with a sighting of the splendid Indian Courser. Heading back to Delhi, we recorded our final bird for the list in the form of Greater Painted Snipe. After negotiating the chaotic traffic in the capital, we freshened up at our hotel before enjoying a final traditional Indian dinner followed by our departure flights back home!

Annotated List of Species

Gill, F. and Wright, M. 2006. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press (version 2.0). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org/>

BIRD SPECIES LIST

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae

- Black Francolin** *Francolinus francolinus*
The grasslands of Corbett NP produced several sightings of this attractive bird.
- Grey Francolin** *Francolinus pondicerianus*
This species was recorded regularly with peak numbers of 10+ at Chambal and Keoladeo NP.
- Jungle Bush Quail** *Perdicula asiatica*
A group of approx. 12 birds were seen well in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Rufous-throated Partridge** *Arborophila rufogularis*
This stunning partridge was observed on several occasions near Sattal.
- Painted Spurfowl (E)** *Galloperdix lunulata*
Small numbers of these shy birds were found in Bandhavgarh NP.
- Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*
This species was seen in Corbett and Bandhavgarh NP's.
- Kalij Pheasant** *Lophura leucomelanos*
We had sightings Nainital and Sattal areas, but our best views were of 5 birds in Corbett NP.
- Cheer Pheasant** *Catreus wallichi*
A pair was observed for an hour or so in the steep grasslands of the Himalayan foothills. This is an excellent record for the tour and it is a Rockjumper first for India!
- Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*
Widespread throughout India, it was seen at lower altitudes during the tour.

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

- Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica*
It was recorded in good numbers along Chambal River and in Bandhavgarh NP and many hundreds at Keoladeo NP.
- Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*
Flocks of 30+ were seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi, Chambal River and in Keoladeo NP.

Bar-headed Goose*Anser indicus*

The Yamuna River, Chambal River and Keoladeo NP produced good sightings of this species.

Knob-billed Duck*Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Small numbers were found along the Chambal River.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Comb Duck. However, IOC considers Comb Duck to be a separate species occurring in South America.

Ruddy Shelduck*Tadorna ferruginea*

It was seen at scattered wetlands with peak numbers of 50+ on the Ramganga River near Ramnagar.

Cotton Pygmy Goose*Nettapus coromandelianus*

A flock of 8 were found on our last morning in Keoladeo NP.

Gadwall*Anas strepera*

Keoladeo NP yielded the highest numbers of 100+ for this species.

Eurasian Wigeon*Anas penelope*

This species was seen in small numbers along the Yamuna River in Delhi and near Bharatpur.

Indian Spot-billed Duck*Anas poecilorhyncha*

This stunning bird was recorded in large numbers along the Yamuna River with other sightings en route to Chambal and at Keoladeo NP.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Spot-billed Duck. However, IOC splits Spot-billed Duck into two species, namely Indian Spot-billed Duck (an Indian species) and Eastern Spot-billed Duck (Anas zonorhyncha) occurring in China and South-east Asia.

Northern Shoveler*Anas clypeata*

Hundreds of these migrants were seen on the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Northern Pintail*Anas acuta*

First seen on the Yamuna River in Delhi, it was later recorded in Bandhavgarh NP and in huge numbers of 500+ in Keoladeo NP.

Garganey*Anas querquedula*

It was seen in small numbers at Keoladeo NP near Bharatpur.

Eurasian Teal*Anas crecca*

100+ birds were seen along the Yamuna in Delhi, with other views on the Chambal River and Keoladeo NP.

Red-crested Pochard*Netta rufina*

The Chambal River yielded sightings of 100+ of these magnificent waterfowl!

Common Pochard*Aythya farina*

Over 200 of these winter migrants to India were found along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Ferruginous Duck*Aythya nyroca*

A flock of 50+ were observed on the Yamuna River on the first day of the trip.

Tufted Duck*Aythya fuligula*

The Yamuna River produced sightings of 100+, while 1 male bird was seen on the Chambal River.

Grebes Podicipedidae**Little Grebe (Dabchick)***Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Small numbers seen at scattered wetlands sites, with 20+ in Keoladeo NP.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae**Greater Flamingo***Phoenicopterus roseus*

This attractive species was scoped at some distance along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Storks Ciconidae**Painted Stork***Mycteria leucocephala*

First seen along the Yamuna River, it was later observed on the Chambal River and in large numbers of 300+ in Keoladeo NP.

Asian Openbill*Anastomus oscitans*

20+ seen at a distance on the Yamuna and a further 6 at Keoladeo NP.

Black Stork*Ciconia nigra*

20 birds found along the Ramganga River in Corbett NP and 3 seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

Woolly-necked Stork*Ciconia episcopus*

This widespread species was seen in Corbett NP, along the Chambal River and in Bandhavgarh.

Black-necked Stork*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

A scarce and highly sought-after species in India, 1 bird was observed in the Keoladeo NP.

Lesser Adjutant*Leptoptilos javanicus*

Another scarce species, a handful of birds were sighted daily in Bandhavgarh NP.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**Black-headed Ibis***Threskiornis melanocephalus*

It was first seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi and later in the wetlands of Keoladeo NP.

Red-naped Ibis*Pseudibis papillosa*This sub-continental endemic was observed at scattered localities on with our best views at the roadside *en route* to Chambal.**Glossy Ibis***Plegadis falcinellus*

100+ birds were recorded during our visit to Keoladeo NP.

Eurasian Spoonbill*Platalea leucorodia*

A few were seen along the Yamuna and then 30+ recorded in Keoladeo NP.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae**Black Bittern***Dupetor flavicollis*

This secretive species was flushed from some dense cover and we enjoyed excellent views of the perched bird.

Black-crowned Night Heron*Nycticorax nycticorax*

This widespread species was seen at the Yamuna River, Chambal area and Keoladeo NP.

Striated Heron*Butorides striatus*

A single bird was seen on the travel day between Sattal and Fort Unchagaon.

*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.***Indian Pond Heron***Ardeola grayii*

This very common species was encountered regularly, with large numbers at Keoladeo NP.

Eastern Cattle Egret*Bubulcus coromandus*

It was commonly recorded throughout the tour except in the Nainital area.

*NOTE: Clements does not recognize this split as yet. He lumps Western Cattle Egret (Bubulcus ibis) with Eastern Cattle Egret (Bubulcus coromandus) as Cattle Egret.***Grey Heron***Ardea cinerea*

This species was seen at most wetland localities, with peak numbers of 20+ in Keoladeo NP.

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Good numbers of this attractive heron were observed at the Yamuna River and in Keoladeo NP.

Eastern Great Egret*Ardea modesta*

Small numbers were seen throughout the tour, except in Keoladeo, where 20+ were recorded.

*NOTE: This split is as yet not recognised by Clements. He lumps Western Great Egret (A. alba) with Eastern Great Egret (A. modesta), as Great Egret (A. alba).***Yellow-billed Egret***Egretta intermedia*

Fewer birds of this species were seen than Great Egret apart from our time spent in Keoladeo.

*NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Intermediate Egret. 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.***Little Egret***Egretta garzetta*

It was encountered at most wetland locations throughout the tour.

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.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

Small numbers were recorded at Keoladeo NP.

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

This species was found in the wetlands of Keoladeo NP.

Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae

Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*

This diminutive cormorant was seen regularly throughout the tour.

Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

A few were seen at a dam in Bandhavgarh NP and more in the wetlands at Keoladeo NP.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

By far the most common cormorant of the trip, we had peak numbers of 100+ in Corbett NP.

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

Anhinga & Darter Anhingidae

(Oriental) Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*

1 bird was seen at a dam in Bandhavgarh NP, followed by good numbers of 50+ at Keoladeo NP.

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.

Falcons & Caracaras Falconidae

Collared Falconet *Microhierax caerulescens*

This tiny falcon was recorded at Quality Inn and near Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Small numbers were observed in the Corbett National Park.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Eurasian Kestrel.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

A single bird was seen during the early morning in Keoladeo NP.

Ospreys Pandionidae

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

A few were spotted daily in Corbett NP.

NOTE: The IOC now recognizes the Osprey as 2 separate species, namely: Western Osprey (*P. haliaetus*) with a worldwide distribution except in Australasia and Sulawesi and Eastern Osprey (*P. cristatus*) occurring from Sulawesi to Australasia, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia. Clements does not yet recognise this split.

Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

An immature & adult were seen very well on our last morning near Bharatpur.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Oriental Honey-buzzard.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

This widespread raptor was regularly recorded in small numbers 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*

It was recorded on most days throughout the tour, with huge densities around urban areas.

Pallas's Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*

We observed this elegant raptor along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

- Lesser Fish Eagle** *Ichthyophaga humilis*
Corbett NP yielded incredible eye-level, flight views of this species.
- Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus*
It was seen at various low altitude locations throughout the country.
- White-rumped Vulture** *Gyps bengalensis*
A handful of birds of this once common vulture were seen well near Bandhavgarh NP.
- Indian Vulture** *Gyps indicus*
We had sightings of 20+ birds daily in Bandhavgarh NP where the birds breed on the cliffs in the reserve. This species has suffered a major decline in numbers throughout the region due to the drug diclofenac which is used to treat inflammation, fever and pain associated with disease and injury in domesticated ungulates.
- Himalayan Vulture** *Gyps himalayensis*
Two birds were seen in flight while in Corbett NP.
NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Himalayan Griffon.
- Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus*
This species was recorded in decent numbers in the Nainital area.
NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Eurasian Griffon.
- Red-headed Vulture** *Sarcogyps calvus*
Small numbers were seen in Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.
- Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*
A single bird was found in Corbett NP.
- Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*
The first bird was found along the Kosi River, followed by more sightings in Corbett & Bandhavgarh NP's.
- Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*
12 were found along the Yamuna River in Delhi & 20+ seen quartering the wetlands of Keoladeo.
- Shikra** *Accipiter badius*
The most common raptor of the tour, it was encountered in small numbers throughout the region.
- Besra** *Accipiter virgatus*
One was seen riding the morning thermals near Pangot in the Himalayan foothills.
- Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*
2 individual birds were observed on the tour; first along the Kosi River and then another on the Chambal River.
- White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa*
1 was seen inside Bandhavgarh NP, with excellent views of another near our lodge outside the park.
- Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*
6 birds were encountered on an excursion to the Chambal River.
- Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malayensis*
Single birds were spotted in Corbett NP and in the Nainital area.
- Indian Spotted Eagle** *Aquila hastata*
At least 8 birds were seen at Keoladeo NP near Bharatpur.
- Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga*
10+ of these large eagles were recorded at Keoladeo NP.
- Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*
It was regularly encountered in the Himalayan foothills around Nainital & Sattal and again in Keoladeo NP.
- Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraaetus fasciatus*
Chambal River and Keoladeo NP produced sightings of individual birds.
NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus, namely: Aquila.
- Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*
1 observed in flight over Agra Red Fort and another at Keoladeo NP.
NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus, namely: Aquila.
- Rufous-bellied Eagle** *Hieraaetus kienerii*

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae**Northern Lapwing***Vanellus vanellus*

2 birds were scoped during our excursion to the Yamuna River in Delhi.

River Lapwing*Vanellus duvaucelii*

This striking species was seen on most large rivers throughout the tour, including the Yamuna, Kosi, Ramganga and Chambal.

Yellow-wattled Lapwing (SE)*Vanellus malabaricus*

1 bird was scoped at a distance in Bandhavgarh NP and later we had excellent, close-up views of 30+ birds near Bharatpur.

Red-wattled Lapwing*Vanellus indicus*

By far the most common plover of the tour, it was encountered almost daily on tour.

White-tailed Lapwing*Vanellus leucurus*

3 were located along the Yamuna River and a further 12 at Keoladeo NP.

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius*

A few were observed along the shorelines of the Kosi, Ramganga and Chambal Rivers.

Kentish Plover*Charadrius alexandrinus*

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

*NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Snowy Plover, however, the IOC recognizes Snowy Plover (C. nivosus) as a full species occurring from central Canada to Panama, Peru to south-central Chile.***Painted Snipes Rostratulidae****Greater Painted Snipe***Rostratula benghalensis*

A total of about 4 birds were seen near Bharatpur on the last morning.

Jacanas Jacanidae**Pheasant-tailed Jacana***Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

Half-a-dozen non-breeding plumaged birds were seen in the wetlands of Keoladeo NP.

Bronze-winged Jacana*Metopidius indicus*

10+ were seen at a dam in Bandhavgarh NP, followed by 30+ birds in Keoladeo NP.

Snipes & Sandpipers Scolopacidae**Common Snipe***Gallinago gallinago*

First seen in Bandhavgarh NP, it was then observed in the wetlands of Keoladeo NP.

Black-tailed Godwit*Limosa limosa*

More than 30 birds were spotted during our time at Keoladeo NP.

Spotted Redshank*Tringa erythropus*

2 birds were seen in the wetlands of Keoladeo NP.

Common Redshank*Tringa totanus*

It was recorded at a number of wetland sites during the tour, with peak numbers of 6 at Keoladeo.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

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

Green Sandpiper*Tringa ochropus*

As per the aforementioned species, it was observed at most wetland sites on tour.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

1 was seen at a dam in Bandhavgarh NP and 6 encountered at Keoladeo NP.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

Small numbers were seen at most water bodies throughout the tour.

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 along the Yamuna in Delhi and at the Taj Mahal and along the Chambal River.

Courser & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Indian Courser

Cursorius coromandelicus

This attractive species was eventually found on our last morning near Bharatpur.

Small Pratincole

Glareola lactea

8 of these delightful little birds were seen on the Chambal River.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Pallas's Gull

Larus ichthyaetus

1 immature was seen on the Chambal River and a non-breeding bird on the Yamuna River in Agra.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Great Black-headed Gull.

Brown-headed Gull

Larus brunnicephalus

100+ birds were seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Black-headed Gull

Larus ridibundus

200+ of these widespread birds were recorded along the Yamuna River.

Gull-billed Tern

Sterna nilotica

This species was only seen on our excursion to the Yamuna River in Delhi.

River Tern

Sterna aurantia

Sightings of this elegant species were had on the Kosi, Ramganga and Chambal Rivers.

Black-bellied Tern

Sterna acuticauda

4 of these rare birds were seen during our boat ride on the Chambal River.

Indian Skimmer

Rynchops albicollis

One pair of these scarce birds was recorded on the Chambal River. This species is under serious threat due to human disturbance, exploitation and degradation of rivers.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse

Pterocles exustus

8 birds were seen along and over the Chambal River from our boat.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae

Common Pigeon

Columba livia

This widespread species was recorded almost daily.

Oriental Turtle-Dove

Streptopelia orientalis

Small numbers were seen in the Nainital area.

Eurasian Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto

This species was seen at lower altitudes during the tour.

Red Turtle Dove

Streptopelia tranquebarica

It was only seen on one afternoon at Chambal.

Spotted Dove

Streptopelia chinensis

This attractive dove was seen at scattered localities, with peak numbers of 12 birds at Corbett NP.

Laughing Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

Small numbers were seen at various sites including Delhi, Chambal and Agra.

Yellow-footed Green Pigeon

Treron phoenicopterus

This pretty bird was seen daily at Bandhavgarh NP and later at Keoladeo NP.

Parrots & Cockatoos Psittacidae

Alexandrine Parakeet

Psittacula eupatria

We had outstanding views of this bird in the riverine trees along the Yamuna River. Further sightings were had near the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and in Bandhavgarh NP.

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

Good numbers were had on the tour, with peak numbers of 100+ around Delhi.

Slaty-headed Parakeet*Psittacula himalayana*

First seen in Corbett NP, this species was then recorded in large numbers of 100+ near Sattal.

Plum-headed Parakeet (SE)*Psittacula cyanocephala*

Excellent views were had of this bird feeding in the grasslands of Corbett NP and it was common in Bandhavgarh NP.

Red-breasted Parakeet*Psittacula alexandri*

This species was first seen near Quality Inn and then encountered daily in Corbett NP.

Cuckoos Cuculidae**Greater Coucal***Centropus sinensis*

First recorded along the Yamuna in Delhi, it was then observed daily in low lying areas after leaving Sattal.

Lesser Coucal*Centropus bengalensis*

An immature bird was found in the grasslands of the fabulous Corbett NP.

Sirkeer Malkoha

This secretive species was seen extremely well on a pre-tour morning visit to Tughlaquabad.

NOTE: The Clements scientific name for this species is Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii.

Common Hawk-Cuckoo*Hierococcyx varius*

3 individual birds were counted while visiting Corbett NP.

NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus to the IOC, namely: Cuculus.

Typical Owls Strigidae**Indian Scops Owl***Otus bakkamoena*

3 birds were found in the grounds of a hotel in Delhi and a single bird seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

Dusky Eagle-Owl*Bubo coromandus*

2 birds were seen at some distance at a day roost in Keoladeo NP.

Brown Fish Owl*Ketupa zeylonensis*

Corbett NP yielded sightings of 3 birds, 1 was observed along a tributary of the Kosi River and 2 more were found in Bandhavgarh NP.

Tawny Fish Owl*Ketupa flavipes*

Arguably the most stunning of the owls seen on the tour, we had amazing views of this species in Corbett NP and along the Kosi River. All the sightings were during daylight hours.

Mottled Wood Owl*Strix ocellata*

Another stunning owl species, we had 3 birds at a day roost near Bandhavgarh NP.

Asian Barred Owlet*Glaucidium cuculoides*

A single bird was seen by some participants during a game drive in Corbett NP.

Jungle Owlet*Glaucidium radiatum*

This was the most common owl of the tour. It was recorded along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP, near Ramnagar and in Bandhavgarh NP.

Spotted Owlet*Athene brama*

Another diminutive owl, it was seen in the riverine trees along the Yamuna River in Delhi, later en route to Chambal, again in Bandhavgarh and lastly in Keoladeo NP.

Brown Hawk-Owl*Ninox scutulata*

A single bird was located at a roost site in our lodge grounds in Chambal.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae**Indian Jungle Nightjar***Caprimulgus indicus*

1 of these endemic nightjars was observed on a day roost in Keoladeo NP.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Gray Nightjar.

Large-tailed Nightjar*Caprimulgus macrurus*

Keoladeo NP produced an amazing sighting of a single bird on a day roost.

Treeswifts Hemiprocnidae

Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata*
 Good numbers of these elegant birds were seen in Corbett NP.

Swifts Apodidae

White-rumped Spinetail *Zoonavena sylvatica*
 Only 2 birds were spotted flying overhead with Crested Treeswifts in Corbett NP.
NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is White-rumped Needletail.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*
 2 of these large swifts were seen at some distance in the Pangot area.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*
 This small swift was seen at scattered localities during the tour with peak numbers of 20+ in Agra.

Rollers Coraciidae

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*
 After leaving Sattal, it was seen daily in low lying areas with our best views in Bandhavgarh NP.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Stork-billed Kingfisher *Halcyon capensis*
 1 bird was spotted along a watercourse in Bandhavgarh NP.

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
 The region's most common Kingfisher, we recorded this species on almost every day.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
 Fewer numbers of this species were observed at most water bodies during the tour.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*
 The Kosi and Ramganga Rivers produced brilliant sightings of this very impressive species which is confined to large, fast flowing rivers at higher altitudes.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*
 Also seen along the Kosi and Ramganga Rivers, it was later recorded on the Chambal River and in Keoladeo NP.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*
 Peak numbers of 20+ of these stunning birds were seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Hoopoes Upupidae

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
 It was encountered at various localities on the tour, including a bird visiting a nest hole at the entrance to Bandhavgarh NP.

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, namely: Madagascar, Eurasian and African. The IOC accepts this splitting.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Indian Gray Hornbill (SE) *Tockus birostris*
 First seen in the Delhi area, it was then observed daily after departing Sattal and returning to lower altitudes.

Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus*

After much searching, all guests managed to obtain good views of this beautiful bird in Bandhavgarh NP.

Great Hornbill*Buceros bicornis*

Unfortunately, this amazing species was only heard during our visit to Corbett NP.

Barbets Capitonidae**Great Barbet***Megalaima virens*

The Nainital and Sattal areas yielded several sightings of this large barbet, including absolutely amazing views of a pair near on a forest trail.

Brown-headed Barbet (SE)*Megalaima zeylanica*

First seen in the Delhi area, it was later recorded around Chambal Safari Lodge.

Lineated Barbet*Megalaima lineata*

This species was well seen daily in the forest of Corbett National Park.

Blue-throated Barbet*Megalaima asiatica*

Great views were had of this striking species in Corbett NP and then again in the Sattal area.

Coppersmith Barbet*Megalaima haemacephala*

Another attractive barbet, it was observed at close quarters in the riverine trees along the Yamuna in Delhi and in Bandhavgarh & Keoladeo NP's.

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

1 was seen in the scrub along the Kosi River and another in similar habitat near the Chambal River.

Speckled Piculet*Picumnus innominatus*

Corbett NP produced the first sighting of this diminutive species, with better views near our lodge in Sattal.

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

A pair was spotted outside Nature Heritage lodge near Bandhavgarh NP.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker*Dendrocopos canicapillus*

This high altitude forest species was recorded daily along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Gray-capped Woodpecker.

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos macei*

It was observed daily in Corbett NP and also seen at the Corbett Waterfall.

Brown-fronted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos auriceps*

Initially recorded in Corbett NP, it was later seen in the Nainital and Sattal forests.

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker*Dendrocopos mahrattensis*

While birding near Bandhavgarh NP, we encountered a pair foraging in some sparse woodland.

Himalayan Woodpecker*Dendrocopos himalayensis*

This striking pied species was found in the forests of the Himalayan foothills.

Lesser Yellownape*Picus chlorolophus*

Corbett NP and Sattal area yielded sightings of this beautiful species.

Greater Yellownape*Picus flavinucha*

As per the above species, it was fairly common in Corbett NP and again around Sattal.

Streak-throated Woodpecker*Picus xanthopygaeus*

1 bird was seen pecking intently at a tree stump and another scoped near the town of Nainital.

Scaly-bellied Woodpecker*Picus squamatus*

2 sightings were had of this species: 1 in Corbett NP and the second in the forests beyond Nainital.

Grey-headed Woodpecker*Picus canus*

Vying for position as the most common woodpecker of the trip, it was recorded at higher altitude woodland sites.

Himalayan Goldenback*Dinopium shorii*

2 individual birds were found in the forests of Corbett NP.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Himalayan Flameback.

Lesser Goldenback*Dinopium benghalense*

Close runner-up as the most numerous woodpecker of the tour, it was seen at scattered woodland/forest sites.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Black-rumped Flameback.

Greater Goldenback*Chrysocolaptes lucidus*

6 birds were found in the tall forests of the stunning Corbett NP.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Greater Flameback.

White-naped Woodpecker*Chrysocolaptes festivus*

This uncommon Woodpecker was first seen in Bandhavgarh NP and then later the same day, 3 were recorded near our lodge outside the NP.

Family Uncertain Incertae sedis**Large Woodshrike***Tephrodornis gularis*

8 were seen in the hill forest outside Corbett NP and a further 12 in Bandhavgarh NP and surrounds.

Common Woodshrike*Tephrodornis pondicerianus*

This species was seen along Kosi River, in Corbett NP, along the Chambal River and in Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

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

This bird was found along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP, in the Sattal area and in Bandhavgarh NP.

Cuckoo-shrikes Campephagidae**Large Cuckooshrike***Coracina macei*

We recorded this species in Corbett and Bandhavgarh NP's.

Small Minivet*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*

First seen in Corbett NP, it was later observed in peak numbers of 25+ in Bandhavgarh NP.

Long-tailed Minivet*Pericrocotus ethologus*

Corbett NP and the Nainital area yielded sightings of this stunning species.

Scarlet Minivet*Pericrocotus flammeus*

A few encountered along the Kosi River, in Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike*Hemipus picatus*

This species was seen daily along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP and later near at Sattal.

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

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

Bay-backed Shrike*Lanius vittatus*

The woodland outside Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP produced sightings of this attractive bird.

Long-tailed Shrike*Lanius schach*

Small numbers of this species were recorded on most days of the tour.

Grey-backed Shrike*Lanius tephronotus*

1 bird was found near Pangot in the foothills of the Himalayas.

Southern Grey Shrike*Lanius meridionalis*

A single bird was seen well along the Kosi River and 1 more was observed in Keoladeo NP.

Orioles Oriolidae**Indian Golden Oriole***Oriolus kundoo*

On our last morning in Keoladeo NP we recorded 2 of these beautiful birds.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Eurasian Golden Oriole (*O. oriolus*).

Black-hooded Oriole*Oriolus xanthornus*

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

Maroon Oriole*Oriolus traillii*

We had good views of 1 female bird on consecutive days whilst in Corbett NP.

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

This common and widespread species in India was seen on most days of the tour.

Ashy Drongo*Dicrurus leucophaeus*

20+ birds were seen in a flock over the Kosi River and 2 were spotted in Keoladeo NP.

White-bellied Drongo (SE)*Dicrurus caerulescens*

10+ of these birds were recorded in Bandhavgarh NP.

Bronzed Drongo*Dicrurus aeneus*

The forests of Sattal produced numerous sightings of this species.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo*Dicrurus paradiseus*

Small numbers of this flashy bird were found in Corbett and Bandhavgarh NP's.

Fantails Rhipiduridae**Yellow-bellied Fantail***Rhipidura hypoxantha*

We recorded this stunning little bird in forest along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and around Sattal.

White-throated Fantail*Rhipidura albicollis*

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

White-browed Fantail*Rhipidura aureola*

Replacing the previous species at lower altitude, it was common at Bandhavgarh NP.

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

We had decent looks of this cracking bird in Bandhavgarh NP.

Jays, Magpies & Crows Corvidae**Eurasian Jay***Garrulus glandarius*

We found this species in the forests above Nainital.

Black-headed Jay*Garrulus lanceolatus*

The forested areas above Nainital and in the Sattal area yielded excellent sightings of this range-restricted species.

Red-billed Blue Magpie*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

This striking species was seen near Quality Inn, in Corbett NP and around Sattal.

Rufous Treepie*Dendrocitta vagabunda*

The woodlands of the lower lying sites on tour produced sightings of this species.

Grey Treepie*Dendrocitta formosae*

An uncommon species on the route, it was seen very well along the Kosi River.

House Crow*Corvus splendens*

This species was abundant around urban areas throughout the country's lower-lying areas.

Indian Jungle Crow*Corvus culminatus*

We recorded this species on almost every day of the tour.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with Eastern Jungle Crow C. levaillantii of East India and SE Asia and Large-billed Crow C. macrorhynchos, widespread in Eurasia, all under Large-billed Crow C. macrorhynchos.

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

Nainital and Sattal areas produced good sightings of this attractive species.

Great Tit*Parus major*

Good numbers seen in the forested hills/mountain areas along the Kosi River, Corbett NP, Sattal and Bandhavgarh NP.

Green-backed Tit*Parus monticolus*

Birding around the Nainital and Sattal areas yielded good numbers of this beautiful bird.

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

This good-looking species was seen in Corbett NP and daily in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

NOTE: Clements does not consider the above a full species and it is lumped together with Indian Black-lored Tit P. aplonotus under Black-lored Tit P. xanthogenys.

Yellow-browed Tit*Sylviparus modestus*

4 of these birds were recorded at the forest edge north of Nainital.

Martins & Swallows Hirundinidae**Brown-throated Martin***Riparia paludicola*

Peak numbers of 50+ were observed along the Yamuna River.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Plain Martin.

Sand Martin*Riparia raparia*

Small numbers were recorded overhead whilst birding along the Kosi River.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Bank Swallow.

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica*

This species was encountered at most sites throughout with the exception of Bandhavgarh & Keoladeo.

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*

We found small numbers of this stunning swallow on the Chambal River, in Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Eurasian Crag Martin*Hirundo rupestris*

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

Dusky Crag Martin*Hirundo concolor*

20+ birds were observed near Ramnagar and more were seen at Bandhavgarh NP.

Nepal House Martin*Delichon nipalensis*

1 was seen over the Kosi River and 2 more spotted over the Ramganga River near Ramnagar.

Red-rumped Swallow*Hirundo daurica*

Small numbers were seen at scattered sites during the tour.

Streak-throated Swallow*Hirundo fluvicola*

2 birds were seen by some guests flying swiftly over the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Bushtits Aegithalidae**Black-throated Bushtit***Aegithalos concinnus*

First recorded in Corbett NP, it was later observed in peak numbers of 40+ around Nainital.

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

2 birds were found near the Chambal River.

Sand Lark*Calandrella raytal*

During our boat excursion on the Chambal River we spotted 2 birds.

Crested Lark*Galerida cristata*

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

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark (SE)*Eremopterix grisea*

Half-a-dozen were recorded near the Chambal River and 30+ in fields near Bharatpur.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae**Zitting Cisticola***Cisticola juncidis*

2 birds were seen in Corbett NP.

Golden-headed Cisticola

Cisticola exilis

The grasslands of Corbett NP produced sightings of 2 non-breeding birds.

Striated Prinia

Prinia criniger

First observed in the Mongoli Valley, it was then recorded in the Nainital area.

Rufous-fronted Prinia

Prinia buchanani

4 birds were seen in the dry scrub near the Chambal River.

Grey-breasted Prinia

Prinia hodgsonii

This species was common along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP, with further sightings in Sattal area and Bandhavgarh NP.

Yellow-bellied Prinia

Prinia flaviventris

3 were found in the dense reedbeds along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Ashy Prinia (SE)

Prinia socialis

20+ of these attractive Prinias were seen along the Yamuna River in Delhi with scattered sightings thereafter.

Plain Prinia

Prinia inornata

Small numbers of this common species were encountered at many locations on the tour.

Family Uncertain Incertae sedis

Common Tailorbird

Orthotomus sutorius

6 birds were seen in the vegetation flanking the Yamuna River in Delhi, followed by numerous views of this bird in the lower-lying areas of the tour.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Black-crested Bulbul

Pycnonotus flaviventris

Corbett NP and the Sattal area produced sightings of this beautiful bulbul.

NOTE: The IOC splits Black-crested Bulbul P. melanicterus into 5 full species which includes the one we observed. Clements does not yet accept these splits.

Red-whiskered Bulbul

Pycnonotus jocosus

First seen at the Yamuna in Delhi, it was then found along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP.

Himalayan Bulbul

Pycnonotus leucogenys

We recorded this common highland bird in good numbers from the Kosi River until leaving Sattal.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is White-cheeked Bulbul.

White-eared Bulbul

Pycnonotus leucotis

A bulbul that is fond of dry habitats, 6 birds seen in the scrub along the Chambal River.

Red-vented Bulbul

Pycnonotus cafer

Common and widespread, it was seen on almost every day of the trip.

Mountain Bulbul

Hypsipetes mcclllandii

This species was only found in the Sattal area during the tour.

Black Bulbul

Hypsipetes leucocephalus

A good number of these birds were encountered around Nainital and Pangot areas.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae

Paddyfield Warbler

Acrocephalus agricola

1 of these warblers was seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

Blyth's Reed Warbler

Acrocephalus dumetorum

We recorded this species in the lodge grounds near Bandhavgarh NP.

Booted Warbler

Hippolais caligata

2 birds were seen in the Acacia woodland along the Chambal River.

Sykes's Warbler

Hippolais rama

3 were found in the Acacia woodland near the Chambal River.

Common Chiffchaff

Phylloscopus collybita

Peak numbers of 20+ along the Yamuna Delhi, followed by numerous scattered sightings.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

1 bird was seen well in the scrubby areas near the town of Sattal.

Smoky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuligiventer*

We had sightings of 2 birds of this scarce species not far from Sattal.

Sulphur-bellied Warbler *Phylloscopus griseolus*

1 was seen near Sattal and another bird observed near the Chambal River.

Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*

Small numbers were seen in the forests of Nainital and Sattal areas.

Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis*

A single bird was found in the forests of Corbett NP.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

First seen in Corbett NP, we later had several outstanding views of this little gem in the Sattal area.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Pale-rumped Warbler.

Brooks's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus subviridis*

The Acacia woodland near the Chambal River produced sightings of 3 birds.

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*

1 was seen in the riverine trees along the Yamuna River in Delhi and 2 more near the Kosi River.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Mostly heard on the tour, we had small numbers of this species at scattered localities.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*

The Nainital area produced several sightings of this species.

Grey-hooded Warbler *Phylloscopus xanthoschistos*

This pretty *Phylloscopus* was the most common warbler on tour. 1 day in the Nainital area yielded sightings of 20+ birds.

NOTE: Clements places this warbler in a different genus, namely: Seicercus.

Whistler's Warbler *Seicercus whistleri*

This attractive species was located in forested areas along the Kosi River and near the Sattal Lakes.

Black-faced Warbler *Abroxopus schisiceps*

The steep forested slopes north of Nainital produced excellent views of this difficult-to-locate bird.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Small numbers of this migrant species were observed at scattered sites on tour.

Eastern Orphean Warbler *Sylvia crassirostris*

The dry, Acacia woodland near the Chambal River yielded sightings of this bird.

Babblers & Parrotbills Timaliidae

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*

We had incredible views of a calling bird in the Mongoli Valley. It was also seen in Corbett NP and in the Sattal area.

Indian Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*

A flock of 8 birds were seen very well in the dense scrub of Bandhavgarh NP by some guests.

Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga albiventer*

2 birds were recorded by some participants in dense undergrowth in the lake area of Sattal.

Nepal Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga immaculate*

A single bird was spotted in the lake district of Nainital exhibiting uncharacteristic wren-babbler behaviour of flitting around in open-sight.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Immaculate Wren-Babbler.

Black-chinned Babbler (SE) *Stachyris pyrrhops*

This delightful little bird was recorded along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and in the Nainital area.

Tawny-bellied Babbler *Dumetia hyperythra*

Bandhavgarh NP and our lodge near the park yielded good sightings of this species.

Yellow-eyed Babbler *Chrysomma sinense*

This richly-coloured species was only seen on one occasion: along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Common Babbler*Turdoides caudatus*

We had views of this species along the Yamuna River in Delhi and along the Chambal.

Striated Babbler*Turdoides earlei*

The dense reedbeds along the Yamuna River afforded us sightings of at least 12 birds.

Large Gray Babbler (SE)*Turdoides malcolmi*

First seen along the Yamuna in Delhi, we later had peak numbers of 200+ en route from Fort Unchagaon to the Chambal River.

Jungle Babbler (SE)*Turdoides striatus*

Good numbers of this common species were encountered on most days of the tour.

White-throated Laughingthrush*Garrulax albogularis*

We bumped into large flocks of 50+ birds in the Pangot and Sattal areas.

White-crested Laughingthrush*Garrulax leucolophus*

This fabulous bird was seen in the hill forests along the Kosi River and near the Sattal Lakes.

Striated Laughingthrush*Garrulax striatus*

A flock of 10 birds were seen superbly well near Pangot in the Nainital region.

Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush*Garrulax rufogularis*

Our time spent in the lake area of Sattal yielded good views of this impressive bird.

Streaked Laughingthrush*Garrulax lineatus*

Good numbers of this common species were seen in the scrubby areas around Nainital and Sattal.

Red-billed Leiothrix*Leiothrix lutea*

First seen in the Mongoli Valley, it was later observed at close quarters and in good numbers (20+ daily) around the lakes in the Sattal area.

Green Shrike-Babbler*Pteruthius xanthochlorus*

1 of these uncommon birds was seen very well in a mixed feeding flock north of Nainital.

Blue-winged Minla*Minla cyanouroptera*

This Himalayan forest species was found daily around the Sattal area.

Rufous Sibia*Heterophasia capistrata*

Small numbers of this striking bird were encountered in forest north of Nainital.

Whiskered Yuhina*Yuhina flavicollis*

2 birds were seen well by some guests on an afternoon walk in the Sattal Lake area.

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

This pretty, gregarious species was seen regularly at most localities on tour.

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

This cracking bird was observed in forest along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and in the Sattal area.

NOTE: The IOC splits Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch S. castanea into 3 full species, namely: Indian Nuthatch S. castanea (N, C and SW India), Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch S. cinnamoventris (N Pakistan to N Southeast Asia) and Burmese Nuthatch S. neglecta (Burma to S Vietnam). Clements does not yet recognise these splits.

Indian Nuthatch*Sitta castanea*

We found 1 individual in the woodlands of Bandhavgarh NP.

NOTE: See Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch.

White-tailed Nuthatch*Sitta himalayensis*

This species was commonly sighted at higher elevations during the tour.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch*Sitta frontalis*

Small numbers observed along the Kosi River and the forests in Corbett NP, as well as around Sattal.

Wallcreeper Tichidromidae**Wallcreeper***Tichodroma muraria*

This is a highly sought-after monotypic family. We had amazing, extended views of 1 bird in the stony riverbed of the Kosi River.

Treecreepers Certhiidae

Bar-tailed Treecreeper

Certhia himalayana

The Nainital and Sattal regions yielded good sightings of this diminutive species.

Starlings Sturnidae

Bank Myna (SE)

Acridotheres ginginianus

We encountered this species in urban areas during the tour with peak numbers of 100+ en route from Fort Unchagaon to Chambal.

Common Myna

Acridotheres tristis

This bird was seen on every day of the tour.

Pied Myna

Sturnus contra

A striking, but common species, observed mostly around urban areas and near aquatic habitats.

Brahminy Starling

Temenuchus pagodarum

This gorgeous starling was seen daily in Bandhavgarh NP and again in Keoladeo NP.

Common Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

8 birds were seen during our day spent along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

Blue Whistling Thrush

Myophonus caeruleus

The forests of the Himalayan foothills yielded many sightings of this good-looking bird.

Orange-headed Thrush

Zoothera citrina

This gorgeous species was recorded at Chambal River Lodge and several times in Bandhavgarh NP.

Scaly Thrush

Zoothera dauma

First recorded in the foothill forest along the Kosi River, we later had crippling views of a very confiding individual near the Sattal lakes and a further 2 birds were seen in Bandhavgarh NP.

Long-billed Thrush

Zoothera monticola

We had great views of this species in the riverine vegetation along a tributary of the Kosi River.

Tickell's Thrush

Turdus unicolor

2 birds seen near Pangot and good numbers observed in the forests of Bandhavgarh NP.

Grey-winged Blackbird

Turdus boulboul

A total of 4 birds were found in the forests north of Nainital where the group was actively feeding.

Black-throated Thrush

Turdus atrogularis

7+ birds were seen in the high elevation forests near the village of Pangot.

NOTE: The IOC splits Dark-throated Thrush T. ruficollis into two full species, namely: Black-throated Thrush T. atrogularis and Red-throated Thrush T. ruficollis. Clements does not yet recognise these splits.

Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

Bluethroat

Luscinia svecica

We recorded this species along the Yamuna River in Delhi, in Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

White-tailed Rubythroat

Luscinia pectoralis

A few guests had views of a single bird in Bandhavgarh NP.

Red-flanked Bluetail

Tarsiger cyanurus

A female bird was recorded by some guests in the Sattal area.

Oriental Magpie-Robin

Copsychus saularis

First seen in the riverside vegetation on the Yamuna, it was later common in Bandhavgarh & Keoladeo NP's.

White-rumped Shama

Copsychus malabaricus

A single bird was seen on our first game drive in Bandhavgarh NP.

Indian Robin (SE)

Saxicoloides fulicata

We recorded this common, yet attractive species at most low-lying sites on the tour.

Blue-capped Redstart *Phoenicurus caeruleocephalus*

This bird was sighted regularly in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A pair was first seen along the Yamuna River, followed by sightings at Chambal, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*

A male bird was seen very well at Pangot and 2 more birds near Sattal.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosa*

A species that is closely associated with water, it was seen in Corbett NP, along the Kosi River and in the Sattal area.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Plumbeous Redstart.

White-capped Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

This very striking bird was recorded at the same sites as the above species and in some cases side-by-side.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*

This diminutive species showed very well in rapids along the Kosi River.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*

The Corbett Falls produced a sighting of this strikingly-patterned bird.

Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculates*

We had amazing sightings of 3 separate individual birds on the Kosi River and its tributaries.

White-throated Bush Chat *Saxicola insignis*

Our search of the grasslands in Corbett NP finally yielded sightings of a pair of these scarce, range-restricted species.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*

It was seen along the Kosi River, in Corbett NP and in the Nainital area.

White-tailed Stonechat *Saxicola leucera*

2 pairs of these striking birds were seen in the rank reedbeds along the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata*

Small numbers were seen on first few days of the tour, followed by a handful more in Keoladeo NP.

Grey Bush Chat *Saxicola ferrea*

This species was regularly encountered on tour, especially at the higher altitude sites.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*

1 male bird was seen on the desert-like plain near the Chambal River.

Brown Rock Chat (SE) *Cercomela fusca*

Birds were located on travel days in various urban areas, usually perched on the walls of buildings.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Indian Chat.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

2 male birds were seen well from the boat, along the Chambal River.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*

We recorded this attractive species in the Mongoli Valley, near Pangot and in the Sattal area.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophciata*

Individual birds were seen in forests along the Kosi River, Mongoli Valley and in the Sattal area.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

First seen near the Yamuna River, it was then located numerous times in Bandhavgarh & Keoladeo NP's.

NOTE: The IOC and Clements consider Red-throated Flycatcher (F. albicilla) to be a subspecies of Red-breasted Flycatcher (F. parva) and does not recognise the split that some authorities claim.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*

A male bird was seen well in the forest understory along a tributary of the Kosi River.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*

1 bird recorded at Quality Inn near Corbett and a further 3 observed in the Sattal area. We had particularly good views of a male bird near one of the Sattal lakes.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher*Cyornis tickelliae*

A few were seen daily in Bandhavgarh NP and at Nature Heritage Lodge.

Rufous-bellied Niltava*Niltava sundara*

The Mongoli Valley & Sattal produced a sighting of 1 male and 1 female bird respectively.

Small Niltava*Niltava macgregoriae*

A pair was seen by some guests in Corbett NP and later all had outstanding views of a beautiful male near Sattal.

Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher*Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Another good-looking species, it was found daily along the Kosi River and in Corbett NP and then also seen in Bandhavgarh & Keoladeo NP's.

Leafbirds Chloropseidae**Jerdon's Leafbird***Chloropsis jerdoni*

This species was recorded in the woodland of Bandhavgarh NP and surrounds.

NOTE: The IOC splits Jerdon's Leafbird off as C. jerdoni and Bornean Leafbird off as C. kinabaluensis from the nominate Blue-winged Leafbird C. cochinchinensis. Clement's does not yet recognize this split.

Golden-fronted Leafbird*Chloropsis aurifrons*

Several birds were recorded feeding in the flowering trees of our lodge along the Kosi River and 1 more near Bandhavgarh NP.

Orange-bellied Leafbird*Chloropsis hardwickii*

This gorgeous bird was found in the grounds of our lodge near Corbett NP.

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

A handful of these birds were seen daily outside Bandhavgarh NP in the adjacent woodlands.

Pale-billed Flowerpecker*Dicaeum erythrorhynchus*

As for the above species, it was also recorded daily near Bandhavgarh NP.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker*Dicaeum erythrorhynchus*

A single male bird was seen briefly by some guests near Nainital.

Sunbirds Nectariniidae**Purple Sunbird***Cinnyris asiatica*

This species was common at all low-lying sites on the tour.

Green-tailed Sunbird*Aethopyga nipalensis*

1 female seen along the Kosi River and a male found in the Sattal area.

Black-throated Sunbird*Aethopyga saturata*

3 of these stunning birds were seen in the grounds of Quality Inn.

Crimson Sunbird*Aethopyga siparaja*

A total of 4 birds were observed at Quality Inn, including crippling views of a breeding plumaged male bird at point blank range.

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

This species was widespread and common in urban areas throughout India.

Russet Sparrow*Passer rutilans*

The higher altitude areas of Nainital and Sattal produced sightings of this species.

Yellow-throated Sparrow*Gymnoris xanthocollis*

Good numbers were seen in the Chambal area and the woodland in & around Bandhavgarh NP.

NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus, namely Petronia and the common name is Chestnut-shouldered Petronia.

Weavers & Widowbirds Ploceidae

Baya Weaver (SE)*Ploceus philippinus*

6 birds were recorded during our time spent in Agra.

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

20+ seen in the grasslands/reedbeds along the Yamuna River in Delhi and a few more in Corbett.

Indian Silverbill*Lonchura malabarica*

Peak numbers of 30+ recorded along the Yamuna River with scattered sightings in drier habitat thereafter.

White-rumped Munia*Lonchura striata*

6 birds were observed in a patch of grassland near Bandhavgarh NP.

Accentors Prunellidae**Altai Accentor***Prunella himalayana*

A large flock of 50+ was seen north of Pangot.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Himalayan Accentor.

Rufous-breasted Accentor*Prunella strophiata*

This striking species was seen well in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

Black-throated Accentor*Prunella atrogularis*

Small numbers were seen in the Nainital and Pangot areas.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae**Western Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava*

100+ were seen during our day visit to the Yamuna River in Delhi.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Yellow Wagtail.

Citrine Wagtail*Motacilla citreola*

Our only sightings of this species were at the Yamuna River in Delhi.

Grey Wagtail*Motacilla cinerea*

Individuals and pairs were recorded along streams and rivers during the tour.

White Wagtail*Motacilla alba*

Another species that favours aquatic habitats, it was seen at most wetland/river sites on tour.

White-browed Wagtail (SE)*Motacilla madaraspatensis*

We found this species along the Yamuna, Kosi, Ramganga and Chambal Rivers.

Paddyfield Pipit*Anthus rufulus*

6 were seen along the Kosi River and a few more in Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Tawny Pipit*Anthus campestris*

It was seen at scattered localities during the tour with peak numbers of 6 near the Chambal River.

Long-billed Pipit*Anthus similis*

A few birds were seen in suitable habitat during the tour.

Tree Pipit*Anthus trivialis*

Individual birds were encountered in Corbett NP, Sattal area and in Bandhavgarh NP.

Olive-backed Pipit*Anthus hodgsoni*

The Mongoli Valley, Sattal area and Bandhavgarh NP yielded sightings of this bird.

Rosy Pipit*Anthus roseatus*

2 birds were spotted along the Kosi River.

Finches Fringillidae**Yellow-breasted Greenfinch***Carduelis spinoides*

Small numbers were seen in the Nainital and Sattal areas.

Common Rosefinch*Carpodacus erythrinus*

This species was recorded in Corbett NP, Mongoli Valley, Sattal and near Bandhavgarh NP.

Pink-browed Rosefinch*Carpodacus rhodochrous*

We had good looks at both female and male birds on consecutive days north of Nainital.

Buntings & Allies Emberizidae

Crested Bunting *Melophus lathami*

We found this species in the grasslands of Corbett NP.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

10+ birds were seen near the town of Nainital and around Highfields.

White-capped Bunting *Emberiza stewarti*

2 male birds were observed in some fields near the town of Sattal.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Chestnut-breasted Bunting.

MAMMAL SPECIES LIST

Old World Fruit Bats Pteropodidae

Indian Flying Fox *Pteropus giganteus*

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

Sheath-tailed Bats Emballonuridae

Naked-rumped Tomb-Bat *Taphozous nudiventris*

20+ were recorded at their roosts in cracks of the Red Fort, Agra.

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta*

It was very common, especially along the roads while travelling. 500+ were seen en route from Fort Unchagaon to Chambal.

Hanuman Langur *Semnopithecus entellus*

Regularly encountered at woodland/forested sites during the tour.

Hares & Rabbits Leporidae

Indian (Black-naped) Hare *Lepus nigricollis*

We had sightings in Corbett NP and near Bharatpur.

Squirrels Sciuridae

Northern Palm Squirrel *Funambulus pennantii*

It was common and regularly encountered at most lowland sites.

Rats & Mice Muridae

Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*

Many of these animals were seen at the train stations during the tour.

House Mouse *Mus domesticus*

Individual animals were seen on the train rides between Agra and Umaria.

Otters & Allies Mustelidae

Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula*

2 of these stunning mammals were seen in the forests north of Nainital and another recorded hunting in the trees near the Sattal lakes.

Mongoose Herpestidae

Small Indian Mongoose *Herpestes javanicus*

1 was seen en route from Chambal to Agra and a second in Bandhavgarh NP.

Civets and allies Viverridae**Asian Palm Civet***Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*

A family group of 5 were seen in the evening at Chambal Safari Lodge.

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

A total of around 15 were seen in Corbett NP, near Chambal, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Cats Felidae**Tiger***Panthera tigris*

We were treated to mind-blowing views of these stunning beasts in Bandhavgarh NP. The sightings of these cats were by far the number 1 mammal highlight of the tour!

Jungle Cat*Felis chaus*

This feline was seen twice in Bandhavgarh NP and once in Keoladeo NP.

Elephants Proboscidae**Indian Elephant***Elephas maximus*

A total of 21 elephants were seen during our time spent in Corbett NP.

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

We recorded this species daily in Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

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

This forest-dweller was observed in Corbett NP, near the lakes of Sattal and in Bandhavgarh NP.

Spotted Deer (Chital)*Cervus axis*

This elegant deer was very common in Corbett, Bandhavgarh and Keoladeo NP's.

Sambar*Cervus unicolor*

Corbett NP, Sattal, Bandhavgarh NP and Keoladeo NP yielded sightings of this large deer species.

Hog Deer*Axis porcinus*

This localized deer was seen in the grasslands around Dikhala camp in Corbett NP.

Bovids Bovidae**Nilgai (Blue Bull)***Bosephalus tragocamelus*

This hulk of an antelope was seen near Mathura, along the Chambal River and 40+ in Keoladeo NP.

Dorcas (Indian) Gazelle*Gazella dorcas*

1 of these dainty animals was found in dry, open woodland outside Bandhavgarh NP.

Goral*Naemorhedus goral*

We were fortunate to observe 6 of these highland mammals north of Nainital.

Whales and Dolphins Delphinidae**Gangetic Dolphin****REPTILES****Gharial***Gavialis gangeticus*

10+ were seen basking on the rocky banks of the Ramganga River in Corbett NP and a further 20 or so were observed at close quarters during our boat cruise on the Chambal River.

Marsh Crocodile (Mugger)*Crocodylus palustris*

A few were found in Corbett NP and 6 recorded in the Chambal River.

Flap-shelled Turtle

Lissemys punctata

Several of these large turtles were seen on the Ramganga and Chambal Rivers.

Indian Tent Turtle

Kachuga tentoria

Small numbers of this reptile was seen during our boat trip on the Chambal River.

Common Garden Lizard

Calotes versicolor

1 was found in the woodland near the Chambal River.

Land Monitor

Varanus bengalensis

We had 1 sighting of this creature in Keoladeo NP.

Photo credits: White-tailed Stonechat, Ibisbill, Scaly Thrush and Indian Skimmer by M. Lilje, Tigers, Mottled Wood Owl and Taj Mahal by C. Rush.

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