

INDIA – EAGLENEST 2009



Day 1 Sunday 3rd May

After our flight arrived in the early hours and following a lengthy wait at Customs we eventually made it out of the airport and were heading to our hotel for a few hours rest before driving to the Domestic Terminal for our flight to Guwahati in the Indian state of Assam. Along the way saw a couple of **Bank Mynas** and the first of many **Black Kites**. Our internal flight left a little late but after glimpses of the Himalayas through the clouds we soon touched down in Guwahati and were met by my good friend and our excellent guide for the tour, Peter Lobo.

On the edge of the city we stopped for fuel and picked up a **Greater Adjutant** soaring over, followed a minute or so later by a **Lesser Adjutant** and a **Black-winged Kite**. We drove across the plains of Assam noting a few birds en-route such as **White-throated** and **Lesser Pied Kingfishers**, various egrets, **Little Cormorant**, **Asian Openbill**, **Shikra**, **Bronze-winged Jacana**, **Asian Palm-swift**, **Black-billed Roller**, **Ashy Woodswallow**, **Long-tailed Shrike**, **Black-hooded Oriole** and **White-vented Myna**. About half way on the 5 hour drive we stopped at a petrol station and made the most of our time with **Yellow-footed Green-pigeon**, **Asian Koel**, **Crimson Sunbird** and a trio of **Blue-throated**, **Lineated** and **Coppersmith Barbets** giving our list a boost.

Eventually the welcoming lights of Nameri Eco-Camp greeted us through the trees and after some time to shower and change we descended on the dining room for some much needed cold refreshments. After a very nice meal we walked behind the spacious tents and listened to **Asian Barred Owlet**, **Brown Hawk-owl** and **Large-tailed Nightjar** calling from the surrounding area before retiring for the night.

Day 2 Monday 4th May

We awoke to the sound of raindrops hitting the thatched roofs of our tents and the shower continued throughout breakfast, but thankfully ended the moment we had finished. The **Oriental Hobbies** had evidently raised 2 now fully-fledged youngsters and we scoped one of them in the large tree beside



the entrance, with another one seen flying off a little later. Everyone was eager to get cracking and see some good birds after the long journey here, and we managed to see **Red-breasted Parakeet**, a pair of **Greater Flamebacks**, **Common Hill-myna** and a flyover **Wreathed Hornbill** that was so low we

could hear the wind rushing through its huge wings. So pretty soon we were off on the drive to the Arunachal Pradesh border post at Bhalukpong, passing many **Striated Grassbirds** and a few **Black-billed Rollers**, and made our only stop to look at least 3 **Dollarbirds** alongside the road. After a short drive we reached the border and whilst the drivers and Rafik were taking care of the formalities and permit issues we stretched our legs and took in the local sights.

Once across the border we drove along a road that took us ever upwards and through increasingly fantastic-looking habitat. Amongst a huge area of Bamboo in the Sessa Orchid Sanctuary we tried but failed to see a **Pale-headed Woodpecker**, even though it was calling for ages. Yet we still had **Black-crested** and **White-throated Bulbuls**, good views of **Yellow-bellied** and **Rufous-faced Warblers**, **White-bellied Erpornis**, and walking back down to the vehicles a superb **White-browed Piculet** showed for several minutes beside the road. Also, **White-browed Scimitar-babbler**, **Drongo Cuckoo** and more frustratingly, a **Green Cochoa** called from an inaccessible area below us.



As we drove higher, the front vehicle stopped abruptly when Peter heard a **Spotted Wren-babbler** singing and this turned out to be a major highlight of the day as it remained on a bare branch for a couple of minutes on the bank above us in plain view. Our next stop gave us **White-naped Yuhina**,

Golden-throated Barbet and a small flock of ground-hugging **Yellow-throated Fulvettas**. As we were due at our hotel in Dirang it was decided to drive straight through, stopping only to refuel and see our first **Beautiful Sibia**. However a singing **Indian Blue Robin** deserved to be looked at and everyone saw this little cracker well, and at the same spot a **Brownish-flanked Bush-warbler** also gave itself up easily.

After lunch at the hotel we birded the fabulous Sangti Valley and found one of our main target birds quite easily after a short search in the form of a **Long-billed Plover** on a shingle ridge beside the river, thanks to the sharp-eyed Rafik. We then spent the remainder of the late afternoon searching for **Black-tailed Crane**, which eventually was frustratingly only seen by some of the group before it was time to return to the hotel for dinner.

Day 3 Tuesday 5th May

The Mandala Road is quickly growing a reputation as one of the 'classic' birding destinations in all Asia and this was our destination early this morning. So everyone was up for a 5am breakfast eager and ready to hit the ground running and we were not disappointed as within minutes of arriving at the start of the road (just a few kilometres from our hotel) we were watching an adult **Rufous-bellied Eagle** soaring over a ridge in the blue sky. It just doesn't get much better than that, although we at least equalled the quality of that sighting repeatedly throughout the course of the day. In fact, as on all our previous visits over the last few years, we had an absolutely fantastic day's birding when the action never stopped and not only did we see many excellent birds but had the most amazing close views of nearly everything. So we'd already been watching a huge flock of **Himalayan Swiftlets** over the hotel as well as enjoying the amazing views of the snow-clad Himalayas on the horizon before our first stop not only gave us the eagle, but also **Red-headed (Black-throated) Tit**, **Blue-capped Rock-thrush**, **Verditer Flycatcher**, **Grey-hooded Warbler** and **Green-backed Tit**.

Then we drove higher with our next stop adding **Large Hawk-cuckoo**, **Indian Cuckoo**, a pair of showy **Spotted Laughingthrushes**, **Grey-winged Blackbird** and **Dark-sided Flycatcher**. We followed this a few kilometres on with a flock of 4 **Brown Bullfinches**, who were joined in the same large moss-covered tree by a fine trio of **Chestnut-tailed**, **Blue-winged** and **Red-tailed**



Minlas, a male **White-browed Shrike-babbler**, **Whiskered Yuhina**, **Yellow-browed Tit**, and several brightly plumaged **Mrs Gould's** and **Green-tailed Sunbirds**. Continuing the theme of driving ever upwards, stopping to check out certain spots and for random sightings we followed this with a **Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush** perched on top of a dead tree in a large cleared hillside and as we got out to scope this we also saw a roving party of **Brown-throated Fulvettas**, and great views of a close

and confiding **Slender-billed Scimitar-babbler**. Next up was an even closer **Mrs Gould's Sunbird**, lots of **Russet Sparrows**, **Darjeeling Woodpecker**, male **White-collared Blackbird**, **Spotted Nutcracker**, and another **Slender-billed Scimitar-babbler**. We decided to walk along the road a little way after nailing the scimitar-babbler, as a **Large-billed Leaf-warbler** began calling which showed pretty well, although not as good as the **Grey-sided Bush-warbler** singing from on top of a small bush below us. You simply never see these birds out in the open and the views through the telescope were out of this world. There was also a brief **Whistler's Warbler**, the abundant **Beautiful Sibia** and another **Spotted Nutcracker**.

Everything was going very well so far, with the weather playing ball, beautiful scenery and excellent birds. We made a longer walk quite a way further up the road and things just got better as a female **Golden Bush-robins** sat out in the open, followed by a feeding flock right in front of us on



some low bushes with several **Whistler's** and **Lemon-rumped Warblers**, **Ashy-throated** and **Large-billed Leaf-warblers**, **Rufous-vented Yuhina**, **Brown-throated Fulvetta**, **Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher**, **Red-tailed Minla**, and Dave also had a **Black-faced Laughingthrush**. Nearby, a **Rufous-bellied Woodpecker** looked as gorgeous as ever, before we tried a spot for **Bar-winged**

Wren-babbler. But the bird responded from a long way off so it was time to go 'off road' and we walked down through the forest until dense bamboo stopped us. We never got the blighter, although a flock of **Grey-throated Minivets**, **White-browed Shortwing**, and a flock containing **Grey-crested**, **Rufous-fronted** and **Coal Tits** was some sort of compensation.

We then drove down lower and had our lunch beside the road, and had a **Black-faced Warbler** for company. Quite some time was spent here as birds kept appearing at regular intervals with **Ferruginous Flycatcher**, a pair of **Crimson-breasted Woodpeckers** making repeated visits to a nesting hole nearby, **Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler**, as well as plenty more sunbirds. Just a few hundred yards down the road and we were in to **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**, **Rufous-capped Babbler** and **Little Bunting** all appearing simultaneously. A **Grey-bellied Tesia** then called beside the road and didn't really show although another one further on gave repeated views below us. A pair of **Streak-throated Barwings** gave walk-away views, as did a pair of **Bhutan Laughingthrushes** that gave absolutely mind-blowing views. A **Brown-throated Treecreeper** did its 'thing' in a large tree beside the road, and was soon followed by a fine **Ultramarine Flycatcher**, **Striated** and **White-throated Laughingthrushes**, **White-tailed Nuthatch**, **Yellow-cheeked Tit**, and another **Grey-winged Blackbird** before we returned to the hotel for a well-deserved hot shower and cold beer!

Day 4 Wednesday 6th May

A very early start saw us heading out on the drive up to SeLa Pass and after a couple of hours drive we arrived at an abandoned house at 10,500 ft that overlooks a nice valley where we had our



breakfast. As well as steaming hot porridge and scrambled eggs we also had outstanding views of a **Chestnut-headed Tesia** singing and feeding just a few yards below us. Continuing further up the mountain, the mist cleared and we birded some sections a few kilometres below the pass. **Fire-tailed Myzornis** was our main target and we found singles at two different locations, the first was a bit distant but the second flew straight into a small Pine tree next to us before disappearing down the hill. Several **Fire-tailed Sunbirds** were displaying

and looked incredibly bright when perched below the road and as we watched a couple of these a **Blood Pheasant** called nearby, but despite our best efforts it never materialised out of the trees. But at the same spot there were a few **Brown-throated Fulvettas**, **Northern Goshawk**, **Black Eagle**, **Buff-barred Warbler**, **Large-billed** and **Blyth's Leaf-warblers**, nice views of **Black-faced Laughingthrush**, **Olive-backed Pipit** and a **Large-billed Crow** present before reaching the pass.

We arrived in sunshine and then set off on our mini-trek along a well worn track in search of 'chickens' as someone called them! We began with several **Rosy Pipits** and at a nice boulder-strewn corner had **Rufous-breasted** and **Alpine Accentors**, **Winter Wren**, **White-winged Grosbeak** and a **Plain-backed Thrush**. The track took us across a beautiful valley with dramatic cliffs and boulder slopes where we struggled to see anything due to the fog rolling in and obliterating the view. It was a little frustrating to begin with as a pair of **Snow Partridges** showed briefly as the fog lifted for a short while, and a **Himalayan Monal** was seen by some of the group flying across the mountain in front of us. Over the next couple of hours we heard and had further brief views of more monals and partridges before deciding to turn back as the weather began to deteriorate quite considerably. However, after reaching the top of the track the weather suddenly improved dramatically to the point we could scan the valley below us and no sooner had we begun

to do this than Barbara and Marion found a **Snow Partridge** beside the track. Of course it had disappeared by the time everyone arrived but hadn't gone far as it seemed to call from very close



by, so we waited patiently as the fog rolled in and out a few times, but our perseverance paid off as we had amazing views of a pair perched on a grassy slope in front of us. In fact there were 2 pairs present and they remained for about an hour as we soaked up the views of these superb birds. A random play on the ipod resulted in a **Himalayan Monal** calling back and after a frantic few minutes we saw it flying away showing off its magnificent iridescent plumage in the sunshine and landing on a steep grassy slope where we watched it

walking along and disappear into some low bushes. What an amazing bird!

Elated with this we returned to the vehicles and drove lower down for our lunch. A **Grey-sided** and **Hume's Bush-warbler** were seen, and David G found a pair of **Red-headed Bullfinches** feeding in a bush below our vantage point during the course of a fine picnic lunch. Leaving here we drove back to our hotel where we had plenty of time to make phone calls to home, eat Pakoras and drink tea before another good dinner.

Day 5 Thursday 7th May

This morning we drove to the **Mandala Road**, pausing to look at a fine **Grey-winged Blackbird** perched in a moss covered tree beside the road. As we watched it, a **Lesser Shortwing** called from the bamboo but a long way down the slope, and an **Ultramarine Flycatcher** flew in to a nearby tree. But we didn't hang around long and headed ever upwards,



much higher than on our previous visit and began walking along the road amidst ancient open montane forest. A **Lesser Cuckoo** was our constant companion over most of the morning, but it took several hours before we finally scoped one at the top of a Pine tree. Amongst the first set of Rhododendrons we spent some time scanning a clearing where male **Golden Bush-robins**, **Rusty-flanked Treecreeper**, **Whistler's Warbler** and **Spotted Nutcracker** showed. Across the road, Rafik spotted a **Plain Mountain-finch** perched unobtrusively in a tree and a flock of **Russet Sparrows** were present.

A **Green-crowned Warbler** then showed, and was followed by a cracking male **Gold-naped Finch** feeding in a small tree nearby, before Peter heard and then Dave J found a superb **Collared Grosbeak** feeding close by. In fact 2 males were present and their appreciative audience studied

them for a long time before a very welcome tea break, during which a **White-browed Shortwing** failed to respond to the tape.

Walking on we found **Short-billed Minivet**, **Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher**, **Large-billed Leaf Warbler**, **Red-headed Laughingthrush**, **Stripe-throated** and **Rufous-vented Yuhinas** and the first of 3 **Darjeeling Woodpeckers** to be seen today before driving higher. A **Yellow-billed Blue Magpie** failed to show to most of the group in a clearing, in total contrast to the extremely bold **Bar-winged Wren-babbler** we saw come to within 6 feet of us on to a tree stump before creeping up a tree trunk even closer allowing us to study every feather detail for several minutes. As we were calling this little beauty in a female **Crimson-browed Finch** put in an appearance and from here we drove even higher up through fantastic forest to our lunch stop. Just a few birds were noted during the course of lunch including **Lemon-rumped Warbler** and **Grey-crested Tit**. So from here it was all downhill, figuratively speaking as a flock of **Fulvous Parrotbills** were totally cosmic and a female **White-browed Bush-robin** also competed for our attention at the same time. A little later we also completed our set with a **Rufous-breasted Bush-robin** that was building a nest.

We followed this with a walk downhill through thick fog, noting several flocks of common species before driving much lower to see the **Crimson-breasted Woodpeckers** attending their nesting hole, and where Barbara found an **Ashy Woodpigeon** perched up. A final walk lower down resulted in decent views of **Golden-breasted Fulvetta**, **Red-headed Laughingthrush**, **Striated Bulbul**, **Large Hawk-cuckoo** and a singing **Russet Bush-warbler**.

Day 6 Friday 8th May

With the prospect of several good species still waiting for us at SeLa Pass, we set out at 3am for the 2.5 hour journey. Stopping the cars a few kilometres below the pass beside some Pine trees, several rosefinches flew up into the trees. First of all we had a female **Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch** perched up nicely and followed this with a fine male **Dark-rumped Rosefinch** also showing well on a mossy mound on the opposite side of the road. We then walked straight to the



spot that a **Blood Pheasant** had been calling a couple of days ago. Sure enough the same bird responded to the tape but it sounded quite distant and we turned our attention to the surrounding area and continued our 'finch-fest' with at least 4 female and a cracking male **Crimson-browed Finch**, followed by a flock of **Red-headed Bullfinches** and a few **Dark-breasted Rosefinches**. Just then a **Fire-tailed Myzornis** called and was found in a flowering Rhododendron bush before flying down to take a look at us and we watched in amazement

as it sang from a small tree right beside us! With such great views we thought things couldn't get any better, but they did as the **Blood Pheasant** called again and some of the group saw this magnificent beast on the wooded ridge across the gully. No sooner had this excitement died down than Chris F found a **White-browed Bush-robin** in the gully below us. Bird activity increased with delightful views of many **Fire-tailed Sunbirds** displaying in the early morning sunshine, a flock of **Asian House-martins** and **Pacific Swifts** flying over, a **Plain-backed Thrush** singing from the top of a dead tree, as well as the myzornis magically reappearing, remaining on view for quite a while allowing us to study every feather.

After a picnic breakfast we drove up to the next bend where we saw a pair of **Northern Goshawks** and a **Himalayan Buzzard** soaring across the valley. The view from here was stunning with tall craggy peaks all around, a clear blue sky and fluffy white clouds far below us. We were in for a fine day in more ways than one and continued on up to the pass (13,700 ft) and down through a beautiful valley on the road to Tawang for several kilometres. After passing a couple of Army



camps we scanned the stunning surroundings in search of our next target bird, **Grandala**. After a thorough search all we had to show for our efforts were the common **White-capped River-chat**, **Blue Rock Thrush** and a herd of **Yaks**. That was until we watched in stunned silence as a **Lammergeier** flew all the way down the valley towards us,

passing very close by and continuing all the way down until we lost it from view. Then we drove back up the road, slightly disappointed that we seemed to have dipped on **Grandala**. But as is often the case, just when you're resigned to defeat we pulled the Rabbit out of the hat when a small flock of stunning **Grandala's** magically appeared beside the road. We screeched to a halt and spent some time admiring this amazingly shiny species in full sunlight.

Afterwards we walked to a viewpoint and scanned for monals without any joy, but found **Alpine** and **Rufous-breasted Accentors**, **White-winged Grosbeak**, heard **Snow Partridge** and had even better views of a pair of **Grandala** before driving back down. As we called in to 'our' site from earlier today a **Blood Pheasant** called from above us and suddenly we were watching this vision walking across the hillside, flying across a gully and continuing through the bushes until it disappeared. Amazing! Obviously, everyone was overjoyed to have nailed good views so we headed to lunch on a high, enjoying another fine meal in the glorious sunshine.

A few **Black-faced Laughingthrushes** skulked in the shadows below us, and lots of previously seen birds were singing before we headed back to the hotel where we arrived at 3.30pm for a well earned rest. A few hardy people walked out from the hotel and along a steep trail and between them found a flock of **Himalayan Greenfinches**, as well as **Black-throated Prinia**, and **Asian Emerald Cuckoo** amongst others.

Day 7 Saturday 9th May

After a later start we drove the short distance to the Sangti Valley, stopping to check out the fast-flowing river where **Crested Kingfisher** and **Brown Dipper** were seen. Below our vantage point, a flock of **Himalayan (Yellow-breasted) Greenfinches** appeared, whilst a **Crested Bunting** was scoped on the hillside behind us. Our main target of **Black-tailed Crane** showed really well further down the valley with at least 2 birds present, and we were also treated to a **Slaty-breasted Rail** feeding out in the open as well. A couple of **Slender-billed Orioles** were scoped as well after we had walked up onto the forest cloaked hill before driving to a new site that has never been visited by birders.

It was quite a long drive but at a cleared area we found several pairs of **Oriental Skylarks** present and they seemed to be taking food back to their nests somewhere nearby. We drove up through secondary scrub and eventually reached 2900m where we stopped for a tea break beside a patch of forest. The general area was degraded with many cleared areas, although from where we started walking the habitat improved dramatically and we eventually reached very good mixed forest, although decided not to take the very rough and steep track any higher. So we walked around the edge, admiring the view across to SeLa Pass and surrounding mountains seeing lots of common species and also **Spotted Nutcracker**, **Mrs Gould's Sunbird**, **Spotted Laughingthrush**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Grey-backed Shrike**, our first **Himalayan Griffon Vulture** soaring overhead and a nice **Yellow-billed Blue Magpie**.

After lunch we drove down the mountain several hundred metres and birded around an area of secondary growth where Barbara found us a small party of **White-throated Laughingthrushes** which we watched moving across the edge of an overgrown clearing, and also had a **Red-billed Leiothrix**. At the same spot a few of us saw a **White-tailed Robin** and a brief **Rufous-bellied Niltava**. Further down the road we struggled to see a group of **Grey-sided Laughingthrushes** in a dense patch of woodland beside the road, and there was a **Spotted Forktail**, more leiothrix, **Ultramarine Flycatcher**, **Black-winged Cuckooshrike**, and a calling **Russet Bush-warbler**. Driving back to the hotel a couple of our vehicles made what was probably the most significant sighting of the tour when a **Rain Quail** appeared beside the road and at around 2000 metres is probably the highest this species has ever been recorded!

Day 8 Sunday 10th May

A quick walk below our hotel resulted in sightings of **White-tailed Robin** for David T, **Rufous-winged Fulvetta**, **Blue-capped Rock-thrush** and **Grey Treepie** for Nigel and 2 **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeons** were also seen by a few people. But we didn't hang around for long this morning as after breakfast it was time to pack up and head off on the drive to Lama Camp at Eaglenest. A few stops were made along the road and at the first site between some large rounded hills we found a



few good birds including **Square-tailed Drongo Cuckoo** and **Barred Cuckoo-dove**, with a mixed flock of **Silver-eared Mesia** and **Red-billed Leiothrix** moving across the hillside below us, and Chris F found us our first **Black-throated Sunbird** of the tour here as well. We drove just around the corner and checked out some fields above a small settlement where **Black-throated Prinia**, a very close **Black Eagle**, **Grey-sided Laughingthrush**, **Russet Bush-warbler** and a perched **Plaintive Cuckoo** all made the stop quite worthwhile.

We reached Lama Camp at midday after picking up essential supplies in Tenga and as is so often the case here arrived with low cloud covering the nearby hillsides. But it didn't take long for everyone to get settled into their tents and consume a great lunch and it was apparent we were all eager to get out birding. So the afternoon session began with a fine pair of **Sapphire Flycatchers** just below the camp and a short walk down the Jeep Track resulted in great views of a flock of **Himalayan Cutia** right beside us. They really are stunning birds and came incredibly close as they fed on the moss-encrusted trees. After these beauties had melted back into the surrounding forest, a **Black-headed Shrike-babbler** began calling and was scoped in a large tree below us.

Continuing ever downwards we found **Black-winged Cuckooshrike**, **Rufous-capped Babbler**, **Yellow-cheeked Tit**, **Pygmy Wren-babbler**, **White-tailed Nuthatch** and several **Dark-sided**



Flycatchers before reaching some usually productive gullies. Along the way Chris F was extremely fortunate to catch a glimpse of a **Yellow-rumped Honeyguide**, but it only remained on its perch for a short while before dropping down into deep cover. And finally a **Bugun Liocichla** showed extremely briefly, but with 5 other calling birds our hopes were high for the following day as the mist descended and we returned to camp for an early finish.

Day 9 Monday 11th May

Can you believe we nailed **Bugun Liocichla** before 5am? Well we could barely believe it ourselves! In fact everyone felt extremely privileged to have such amazing views of a pair feeding in a small bush below us for over an hour and we spent ages soaking up the views and even observed one singing from an exposed perch. So job done and we only had to walk 50 metres uphill to where our ground crew had laid out tables and chairs for our breakfast. In all this early morning excitement we'd almost forgotten that there had been **Himalayan Cutia**, a flock of **Scarlet Finches**, **Rusty-fronted Barwing**, **Grey-cheeked Warbler**, **Great Barbet** and a male **Sapphire Flycatcher** all seen even before the liocichla!

After all the porridge, toast and fruit had been devoured we began walking back up the track and had nice scope views of a **Himalayan Cuckoo** perched at the top of a tall tree. A group of **Blue-winged Laughingthrushes** skulked on the slope above us and only gave us the briefest of views, and a **Lesser Shortwing** did what it does best and called from the middle of a dense bush showing itself now and again and you had to put the pieces together rather like a jigsaw puzzle if you wanted to tick it!

Just below camp we could look down on a big tree and watched a cracking male **Ultramarine Flycatcher** perch next to a singing **Blyths Leaf-warbler**. Whilst watching these, a couple of **Yellow-browed Tits** and a few **Black-faced Warblers** also flew into the same tree and gave us extended views all at eye level. Just a short distance further and our first **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler** was called in quite close in its favourite dark gulley and we finished the morning with a **Crested Goshawk** flying over.



After lunch we decided to pack all our gear and move on to the next camp at Bompu, as our success with the liocichla meant there wasn't really

much new here for us in this area. So we headed up to Eaglenest Pass, driving through dense mist and heavy rain which totally obliterated the view, although one of our vehicles was extremely fortunate to observe a couple of **Dark-rumped Swifts** flying close by!

We made a short walk along the way but it never stopped raining so we continued on to Bompu Camp where a nice hot cup of tea was waiting for us. After everyone had sorted themselves out the weather began to clear up so some of us worked the nearby area which actually held lots of activity. We began with another brief **Lesser Shortwing**, followed by **Slaty-bellied Tesia**, **Tickell's Warbler**, **Golden-fronted Leafbird** and **Mountain Imperial-pigeon**. David T had a group of **Black-throated Parrotbills**, whilst the ever increasing late afternoon chorus was joined by the distinctive songs of **Mountain Tailorbird**, **Broad-billed Warbler** and **Indian Cuckoo**. The final bird of the day was another confiding **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler**, after which we returned to camp for a hot shower and another excellent meal.

After dinner we did try for the **Mountain Scops-owl** that was to be our constant night-time companion throughout our stay here, but needless to say never succeeded in getting a view despite being extremely close on a number of occasions.

Day 10 Tuesday 12th May

We drove up the hill this morning, making a few quick stops at some favoured sites, the first of which produced a heard only **Purple Cochoa** uttering its distinctive call note from some distance away. Next, we had fantastic views of a male **Ward's Trogon** that was called in to a nearby moss-encrusted tree where it paused to look at us long enough for a quick photo, and was followed a minute or so later by an equally attractive female.



From here we began walking back down towards camp and found this particular section to be very good, beginning with several very showy **Broad-billed Warblers**, followed by **Rufous-bellied Niltava**, **Ultramarine Flycatcher** and we also spent quite a while watching a big mixed feeding flock of common species. Just then a **Blyth's Tragopan** called from close by, but unfortunately was in a particularly inaccessible and densely vegetated area. Also unresponsive, it seemed to be working its way up the hill so we ran back uphill to try and head it off but totally lost the bird. However, in doing this we had cosmic views of a cracking male **Black-headed Shrike-babbler** that we watched feeding and then singing from a large tree. A pair of **White-browed Shrike-babblers** then flew in to the same tree as well, providing an interesting comparison.

Continuing further downhill we had a close flock of **Black-throated Parrotbills** that actually lingered for ages in the trackside Bamboo, quickly followed by **Yellow-throated Fulvetta**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker**, and a calling **Blue-fronted Robin**. As the mist began to descend another flock could be heard nearby and after a short wait we feasted our eyes on **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**, **Golden-breasted Fulvetta**, **Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler**, and several **Black-throated Tits**. But with the lure of our lunch we carried on walking, with the increasingly common sound of **Grey-bellied Tesias** ringing in our ears.

During lunch we were just finishing off a delicious soup when some movement in a large tree above us caused several pairs of binoculars to be raised simultaneously. When the shout of “Cochoa” went up even more optics were raised and with good reason as there were at least 2 **Purple** and 2 **Green Cochoas** feeding in what turned out to be a fruiting tree. So between mouthfuls we watched the activity unfold above us and literally spent a couple of hours trying to obtain better and better views.

After a while the cochoas must have had their fill as they seemed to disappear, so we carried on walking down for the remainder of the afternoon seeing a flock of **Rusty-fronted Barwings**, yet



more **Cutia** and a calling **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler**. We were surprised when a **Long-billed Wren-babbler** called from some dense vegetation and with a bit of imaginative tape play were treated to mind-boggling, prolonged close views of an individual which followed us along the track. Then an unresponsive **Scaly Laughingthrush** delayed us further, and just when we thought we’d get back to camp for an early cup of tea

a **Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler** called from nearby. This bird too was exceptionally confiding and perched up right in front of us for several minutes, and at the exact moment that a **Slaty-bellied Tesia** began displaying right out in the open just a couple of metres away from us.

Day 11 Wednesday 13th May

Drove up to the cochoa site where we had breakfast and this time had a female **Purple Cochoa** fly in to the fruiting tree, where she was joined by a group of **Striated Bulbuls** and **Grey-chinned Minivet**. Meanwhile, a **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler** gave a grandstand performance nearby and a singing **Grey-bellied Tesia** was seen by a few people. Then it was time for a quick stop back at camp where a flock of **White-throated Needletails** and **Himalayan Swiftlets** flew low overhead, before we drove down towards Sessni. Our arrival coincided with a heavy shower, during which a male **Rufous-necked Hornbill** flew across the track in front of us and landed above our heads.

So we decided to keep on driving lower, seeing **Kalij Pheasant** and **Emerald Dove**, and fortunately we escaped the low cloud and rain and actually birded without the aid of umbrellas! Just above Khellong a good mixed species flock was encountered with 6+ **Golden Babblers**, **Mountain Tailorbird**, **Rufous-capped Babbler**, and a single **Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill**. Then a **Pale Blue Flycatcher** began calling above us and provided good views in the scope, and was followed by a close **Sultan Tit** and a showy **Indian White-hooded Babbler** came out of the Bamboo and began feeding beside the Jeep Track.

Further down beside the river we found **Red Junglefowl**, **Streaked Spiderhunter** and **Brown Dipper**. Whilst scanning the river we were extremely fortunate to observe a **Himalayan Palm Civet** walking out of the forest and making several attempts to cross, but our main goal just wasn’t playing ball. So we walked further down and whilst watching a pair of **Slaty-backed Forktails**, a **Blyth’s Kingfisher** suddenly appeared and flew right by us and away upriver. Wow!

During lunch, both **Wreathed** and **Great Hornbills** flew over, and scanning of the surrounding hills resulted in a veritable raptor-fest with **Oriental Honey Buzzard**, **Crested Serpent-eagle**, 2



Changeable Hawk-eagles and a **Black Eagle** all soaring in the hot afternoon sunshine. We then walked down to Doi Mara Bridge seeing **Asian Fairy Bluebird**, **Orange-bellied Leafbird**, **Greater Yellownape**, **White-throated Bulbul**, **Black-naped Monarch**, **Grey Treepie** and a **Rufous-fronted Babbler** along the way. A trio of **Silver-backed Needletails** was also very nice, but on arrival at the bridge it began to rain heavily once more. So we didn't stay long and walked back up to the vehicles seeing a **Lesser Yellownape** and hearing a distant **Bay Woodpecker** along the way.

Several perched **Pin-tailed Green-pigeons**, **Orange-headed Thrush** and an **Indian Muntjac** were seen on the way back up, before we stopped in the Bamboo zone and waited patiently for the sun to set. At the appointed time Peter played the tape of **Hodgson's Frogmouth** but there was no response. We later learnt that some groups had been playing the call excessively during the last few weeks and this probably meant the birds had moved on or were taped-out! Every year we hear of this same scenario from people who should just know better and it is becoming apparent that excessive tape-playing is going to spoil birding opportunities in this pristine environment for all birders.

Day 12 Thursday 14th May

We spent the whole morning searching for **Beautiful Nuthatch** but mysteriously they seemed to have disappeared totally. We possibly heard a distant bird but that was all, so had to content ourselves with all the other 'usual' Eastern Himalayan specialties already recorded on the tour so far! Notable sighting included some close **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeons**, Barbara found a **Red-headed Trogon** and, in what is turning to be their best year ever, another in-your-face showing from a **Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler**.

So we spent the rest of the day trying different elevations and actually did a lot of walking in search of the nuthatch, apart from a short rest over the lunchtime period back at camp. Other goodies seen this afternoon included **Golden-throated Barbet**, 2 **Brown Wood-owls** mobbed by **Striated Laughingthrushes**, **Coral-billed Scimitar-babbler**, 4 **Himalayan Cutia**, **Grey-throated Babbler**, **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**, **Sultan Tit** and a **Grey Treepie**. Late in the day we found yet another very confiding **Wedge-billed Wren-babbler**!

And we spent another night listening to the **Mountain Scops-owl**.

Day 13 Friday 15th May

We began the day several kilometres below Bompu with a pair of **Coral-billed Scimitar-babblers** on the slope above us. Walking down the hill, a **Chestnut-breasted Hill-partridge** called close by so we huddled at the edge of the track and tried to lure it in. As we were trying a **Bay Woodpecker** called as well and most of us were treated to decent views of this often tricky species and at the same time the partridges flew across the track in front of us and a **Grey-cheeked Warbler** also appeared. Further on a beautiful **White-gorgeted Flycatcher** sang from an exposed branch at eye-level, a **Small Niltava** sang, 4 **Himalayan Cutias** gave great close views and **Olive-backed Pipit** was also seen. From a scenic spot overlooking the densely forested valley below we watched a few



White-throated Needletails flying effortlessly by, with a small flock of **White-naped Yuhina** and **Silver-eared Mesia** appearing nearby. But best of all was when Marcus spotted a **Rufous-necked Hornbill** flying across the valley below us. It proceeded from tree to tree until reaching a nest hole where a female had been walled in and we watched as he fed her regurgitated fruit. It was incredibly interesting to watch this behaviour and we spent nearly an hour soaking up the views!

By mid morning we drove lower and fortunately stopped at a place where we were indeed lucky to find a pair of

gorgeous looking **Long-tailed Broadbills** building a nest opposite our stationary vehicles. At the same spot **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** and **Black-chinned Yuhina** were seen. After watching the broadbills for ages we continued by foot to Sessni seeing several **Sultan Tits**, more **Yellow-throated Fulvettas**, **Long-tailed Sibia**, **Great Barbet** and had a close call with a calling **Grey Peacock-pheasant** that we hoped was going to cross the track in front of us – but of course, it didn't. At Sessni, a **Rufous-bellied Eagle** soared over the ridge and a few **Blue-winged Laughingthrushes** skulked in typical fashion.

We decided to return to Doi Mara Bridge after lunch and what a good decision this turned out to be as Les picked up a beautiful **Pied Falconet** on its favourite perch. It was also a good area for some commoner, lower elevation species such as **Green Heron**, **Striped Tit-babbler**, **White-rumped Shama** and **White-throated Bulbul**. But as it was getting quite late in the day we decided to try for the elusive frogmouth again and drove back uphill, seeing **Red Junglefowl**, **Kalij Pheasant**, **Capped Langur** and a **Wild Boar** along the way. With just a short time before dusk settled we managed to see **Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch** and **Rufous-backed Sibia** but there was no sign of the frogmouth.



But the day wasn't over as Peter had arranged for dinner to be brought down to Sessni and when we drove around the corner a roaring bonfire greeted us and the dinner table was laden with a mouth-watering selection of delicacies. It was a very fine way to end the day.

Day 14 Saturday 16th May

The day dawned perfectly clear with a deep blue sky and the dawn chorus was absolutely fantastic this morning. Walking down to Sessni we had good views of a small group of **Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbills**, 2 **Coral-billed Scimitar-babblers** and a **Mountain Bulbul** in a little grove of trees. We walked for most of the morning and had decent views of pretty much everything we saw such as **White-spectacled Warbler**, **Small Niltava**, **Rufous-backed Sibia**, **Sultan Tit** and even more **Himalayan Cutia**. A couple of **Rufous-throated Hill-partridges** were flushed from the track in front of us and there were brief views of **Blue-winged Laughingthrush** as well.

Lunch was again taken at Sessni and over lunchtime there was a lot of activity in a huge fruiting tree close by. In fact the tree was full of **Golden-throated Barbets** with over a dozen present, along with more **Cutias**, **Common Green Magpie**, **Black-chinned Yuhinas** and a fine selection of commoner species as well. A **Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler** came in close at the same spot, some skulking **Scaly Laughingthrushes** did their thing as well and a male **Red-headed Trogon** was scoped nearby, with a noisy group of **White-crested Laughingthrushes** providing their usual spectacle. The undoubted highlight of the day was the fabulous pair of **Collared Treepies** that we first heard some distance away and then, as they began to come closer and closer, eventually appeared at the top of a nearby tree and showed outstandingly well.



We then spent the rest of the afternoon walking back along the Jeep Track, seeing all the usual suspects, including yet another **Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler**. It was kind of hard to remember that this is a range-restricted, rare, shy and retiring species!

Day 15 Sunday 17th May

Left camp at 4am and drove down to the bamboo below Sessni but despite the fine weather, bird activity was slow, so we walked down to our breakfast site where our usual dining table had been erected by our ever attentive ground staff. Even by 7am it was getting pretty warm and would remain the same until some early afternoon showers cleared the air somewhat. Anyway, as we walked down the track with bamboo either side of us some gentle tapping could be heard from the slope above us, but the bamboo was so dense it was impossible to see inside. It was either going to be 'just' a piculet or something much, much better so we waited patiently and tried every conceivable angle to peer into the gloom but nothing materialised. After a while the tapping stopped and all of a sudden a smallish woodpecker flew across the track some 10 metres away and off down the slope. Hardly daring to breathe a few of us peered over the edge and there, not more than 20 metres away was a totally sublime male **Pale-headed Woodpecker** picking at a Bamboo stand just above the forest floor. Just as I got the scope onto it the bird flew away, never to be seen again!

Around the corner we called in a **Collared Owlet** which was being mobbed by a mixed group containing **White-bellied Erpornis**, **Striated Yuhina**, **Rufous-faced** and **Yellow-bellied Warblers**, and a **Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo**. Then a strange whirring noise above us was caused by a low flying **Wreathed Hornbill** which appeared enormous as it sailed low overhead. A **Himalayan Griffon** then flew over, and we found a very confiding pair of **Rufous-backed Sibilias** and an obliging **Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker**.

Lunch was taken in the Ranger's hut at Khellong, during which we had a few heavy showers, but it did clear the air. During the next few hours we worked a nice patch of forest and is an area you normally just drive past on the way to better known sites, but this is obviously a mistake as we enjoyed some fine birds amidst the lush, subtropical habitat. First up was a calling **Eye-browed Wren-babbler** that precipitated some adventurous climbing up the slippery slope and inside the forest, but the habitat was much too dense to see anything apart from a small brown shape skulking some distance away. Then a large flock came into view above us and we saw **Sultan Tit**, **Yellow-**

vented Warbler, Common Green Magpie, Black-naped Monarch, lots of Nepal Fulvettas, and best of all a Speckled Piculet. Just down the road a family of Spot-throated Babblers caused us a few headaches as the birds looked sodden from the last shower and at least 2 fledglings were present. It wasn't until an adult bird was eventually seen that we were sure of our identification.

We continued walking down the road, enjoying the cleared weather and a whole bunch of good birds including a family party of Large Woodshrikes David T found, and there was also Rufous Woodpecker, Puff-throated and Grey-throated Babblers, a calling Asian barred Owl, Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, Indian and Drongo Cuckoos, plus plenty of more familiar Himalayan species.

Our final session of the day was just above Sessni where a large tree held a flock of Long-tailed Sibia and a very smart Little Pied Flycatcher.

Day 16 Monday 18th May

Left Bompou very early after saying our farewells to our excellent ground crew and drove up to Eaglenest Pass which was shrouded in mist, but after half an hour of searching for Brown Parrotbill and about to give up as conditions were difficult to say the least we heard a commotion along a side track. There were a few Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrushes and lots of common passerines mobbing something in a low bush at the edge of the bamboo. All of a sudden Dave J said he'd seen a parrotbill and after an anxious wait everyone got to see this superb bird.

We called in to Lama Camp for a toilet stop before continuing on to Tenga and the drive to the border with Assam. Along the way we saw a confiding Long-billed Wren-babbler, plus Black-throated Prinia, Grey-cheeked Warbler, Rufous-capped babbler, Black-breasted Sunbird, Himalayan Cutia, Black-eared Shrike-babbler, White-naped Yuhina, and lots of other regular species, plus a troop of Pig-tailed Macaques. At Bhalukpong an Oriental Pied Hornbill flew onto our lists and a herd of Indian Elephants were seen feeding beside the road, totally oblivious to the traffic. On arrival at Nameri Eco-Camp everyone was eager to go for a late afternoon walk so we headed down to the Jai-Bhorelli River where we had an Osprey, Ruddy Shelduck, Dollarbird, Green Imperial-pigeon, Indian Cuckoo, Large Cuckooshrike, Greater Flameback, Common Sandpiper, Capped Langur and Barbara found a Blue-bearded Bee-eater.

During the evening a Forest Eagle-owl called on the edge of camp but was extremely shy and despite our best efforts remained just a voice in the jungle, but a Brown Hawk-owl was seen by most of the group.

Day 17 Tuesday 19th May

With just a little time to spare after breakfast we staked out a large fruiting tree at the edge of camp which turned out to be a decent move as both Grey-fronted and Wedge-tailed Green-pigeons were present, and Barbara also had good views of Thick-billed Green-pigeon. Also around camp were Asian Barred Owl, Red-breasted Parakeet, Green Imperial-pigeon, Red-Collared Dove, Asian Koel, Blue-throated Barbet and several Common Hill-mynas.

So we drove to Guwahati, seeing a couple of Ganges River Dolphins during the crossing of the Brahmaputra River before checking out the famous rubbish dump where several Greater Adjutants and Black-eared Kites were present. And that was the end of our birding as all that remained was to transfer the short distance to the airport where we said our goodbyes to Peter and our excellent drivers before taking the internal flight to Delhi. On arrival we were taken to our hotel and after a refreshing shower dined at a nearby restaurant in fine style.

Day 18 Wednesday 20th May

We left Delhi in the early hours of the morning and arrived later this afternoon at Heathrow where the tour concluded and everyone set out on the final stage of the journey home.



Greater Adjutants at Guwahati

BIRDLIST FOR INDIA – EAGLENEST

Sunday 3rd May – Tuesday 19th May 2009

SPECIES		SCIENTIFIC NAME	NOTES
1.	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	Just a couple seen near Guwahati at either end of the tour.
2.	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Seen as we drove across Assam at either end of the tour.
3.	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Quite a few seen in the Assam lowlands.
4.	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	A split from the 'western' species and seen on 4 dates.
5.	Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	A few seen in the lowlands.
6.	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	Single observed from the Doi-Mara Bridge.
7.	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	70+ counted on our first day in Assam.
8.	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	At least 4 were seen as we drove from Guwahati to Nameri Eco-Camp.
9.	Greater Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos dubius</i>	A globally endangered species. Single observed shortly after leaving Guwahati, and 100+ present at the refuse dump near Guwahati on our last day in Assam.
10.	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	Pair present on the lake at SeLa Pass and a few seen as we returned to Guwahati on our last day in Assam.
11.	Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	A few seen at either end of the trip.
12.	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	A couple we seen at the beginning of the tour.
13.	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans govinda</i>	A common sight around Delhi.
14.	Black-eared Kite	<i>Milvus migrans lineatus</i>	Very common around Guwahati.
15.	Osprey	<i>Pandion heliatus</i>	Single seen on the Jai-Bhorelli River at the end of the tour.
16.	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	Single observed on outskirts of Guwahita short after arriving and another below Khellong.
17.	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	A pair observed on both our visits to SeLa Pass..
18.	Crested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>	Seen on 3 dates at Eaglenest with nice views of a displaying male near Lama Camp.
19.	Himalayan Buzzard	<i>Buteo burmanicus</i>	A recent split from Common Buzzard. Seen well on both visits to SeLa Pass.
20.	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhyncus</i>	Seen on 4 dates at Eaglenest.
21.	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	A couple of birds were present below Khellong.
22.	Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus kienerii</i>	A superb sighting on our first visit to the Mandala Road was followed by another full adult present on 2 dates at Sessni.
23.	Mountain Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>	Good views at Lama Camp at Sessni of soaring birds.
24.	Changeable Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i>	A recent split from Crested Hawk-eagle. A new bird for the tour and seen on a couple of occasions above Doi-Mara bridge.
25.	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>	Common and seen on 10 dates.
26.	Himalayan Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	A couple of these huge beasts were seen this year.
27.	Lammergeier	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	The sight of this majestic raptor soaring along the valley beyond SeLa Pass was one of the highlights of the tour.
28.	Pied Falconet	<i>Microhierax melanoleucos</i>	On our second visit to Doi Mara Bridge we saw this special bird back on its usual perch and the 4 th time out of 4 tours I have seen it there!
29.	Oriental Hobby	<i>Falco severus</i>	The pair present at Nameri Eco-Camp are most probably the most watched birds in Asia at present. We had great views of one of the almost full grown juveniles.
30.	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrines peregrinator</i>	Just a lone bird flying over the upper Mandala Road.
31.	Snow Partridge	<i>Lerwa lerwa</i>	After walking along the 'Chicken trail' SeLa Pass we had amazingly close views of a pair for over an hour. Many other birds were present along the path but the mist hampered viewing until it finally lifted long enough for us to see this pair.
H	Common Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila torqueola</i>	Heard on 9 dates!

32.	Chestnut-breasted Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila mandelli</i>	Seen on 2 dates between Bompou and Sessni. The first pair scrambled up the bank in front of us and lingered long enough for us to get a decent view, the second pair were feeding beside the Jeep Track and showed briefly, although they did fly back across in front of us a short while later. Heard on a further 4 dates as well.
33.	Rufous-throated Hill-partridge	<i>Arborophila rufogularis</i>	Pair showed briefly below Sessni. Also heard on 4 dates.
34.	Rain Quail	<i>Coturnix coromandelica</i>	Two of our vehicles observed this <i>coturnix</i> beside the road as we made our way down from a new site near Dirang. At around 2000m this is possibly the highest recorded individual ever and well done to Rafik for taking a photo!
35.	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	A few were flushed from the track below Sessni.
36.	Blood Pheasant	<i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>	After only hearing them below SeLa Pass on our first visit, the views on 2 separate occasions during our 2 nd visit were ample compensation.
H	Blyth's Tragopan	<i>Tragopan blythii</i>	Heard twice along the Mandala Road and above Bompou.
37.	Himalayan Monal	<i>Lophophorus impejanus</i>	At least 3 birds were seen during our first visit to SeLa Pass. One fine male in particular was seen flying across a valley before being scoped walking along a grassy slope.
H	Grey Peacock-pheasant	<i>Polyplectron bicalcaratum</i>	Heard on 4 dates.
38.	Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos lathami</i>	A few seen on the Jeep track between above Khellong.
39.	Black-tailed Crake	<i>Porzana bicolor</i>	A pair showed really well, feeding out in the open beside their little marsh in the Sangti Valley.
40.	Slaty-breasted Rail	<i>Rallus striatus altiventer</i>	Even more surprising than finding this bird last year! A single again observed in the Sangti Valley.
41.	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	Only seen as we drove towards Bhalukpong.
42.	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>	Seen in the lowlands at either end of the tour.
43.	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Only seen on the Jai-Bhorelli River at Nameri.
44.	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	A few seen in the lowlands of Assam, as well as a pair in the Sangti Valley.
45.	Long-billed Plover	<i>Charadrius placidus</i>	A fine adult bird perched on a shingle bank in the Sangti Valley gave excellent scope views.
46.	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Seen on 9 dates.
47.	Snow Pigeon	<i>Columba leuconota</i>	A pair was present on the far side of an army camp at SeLa Pass on our first visit.
48.	Green Imperial-pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>	Only seen around Nameri Eco-Camp.
49.	Mountain Imperial-pigeon	<i>Ducula badia</i>	Common and seen on 10 dates.
50.	Speckled Woodpigeon	<i>Columba hodgsonii</i>	A few seen as we drove to SeLa Pass on 6 th May.
51.	Ashy Woodpigeon	<i>Columba pulchicollis</i>	Some good views at Eaglenest this year and seen on 4 dates.
52.	Oriental Turtle-dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	Seen on 8 dates at scattered sites.
53.	Red Collared Dove		A single bird was present near Nameri Eco-Camp.
54.	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	Seen on 6 dates.
55.	Eurasian Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	A few seen as we drove to Nameri on the first afternoon.
56.	Barred Cuckoo-dove	<i>Macropygia unchall</i>	Seen on 4 dates at scattered locations.
57.	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	Seen on a few occasions between Sessni and Khellong, usually just flying by,
58.	Ashy-headed green-pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora</i>	A recent split from the 'pompador' complex. Several were present in a large fruiting tree beside Nameri.
	Thick-billed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron curvirostra</i>	Only seen by Barbara at Nameri Eco-Camp.
59.	Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron sphenura</i>	The commonest <i>Treron</i> species and seen many times during the tour.
60.	Yellow-footed Green-pigeon	<i>Treron p. phoenicoptera</i>	A couple were seen on the drive from Guwahati to Nameri.
61.	Pin-tailed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron apicauda</i>	First seen near the Sessa Orchid Sanctuary, then a flock of 6 were perched in roadside trees above Khellong.

62.	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Just a few seen at either end of the tour.
63.	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	Only seen in Delhi at the start of the tour.
64.	Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>	Common around Nameri Eco-Camp.
H	Asian Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx maculatus</i>	Heard only.
65.	Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>	Great views of a bird perched below the road as we left Dirang on the drive to Eaglenest.
66.	Square-tailed Drongo Cuckoo	<i>Surniculus lugubris</i>	A recent split with Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo found in Southern India and Sri Lanka. Many more heard calling at Eaglenest. Between Dirang and Eaglenest, we called in a calling bird which perched very close beside the road.
67.	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>	Common in Assam.
68.	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>	A common sound in the Himalayas at this time of the year. Recorded on 11 dates, but seen well only on a couple of occasions.
69.	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	A common sound in the Himalayas at this time of year.
70.	Himalayan Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>	A recent split from Oriental Cuckoo. Very common in the Himalayas in Spring and recorded on 13 dates.
71.	Small (Lesser) Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>	First seen along the Mandala Road and we soon got used to the call with birds heard on 7 further dates and seen a couple of times at Eaglenest.
72.	Large Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx sparverioides</i>	Common and recorded on 15 dates at various sites.
73.	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	A few seen in the lowlands.
74.	Brown Hawk-owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>	Only seen at Nameri Eco-Camp at the end of the tour.
H	Forest Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo nipalensis</i>	Also called Spot-bellied Eagle-owl. Heard both nights at Nameri Eco-Camp
75.	Brown Wood-owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>	We were surprised to find a pair in broad daylight between Bompou and Sessni.
H	Oriental Scops-owl	<i>Scops sunia</i>	A calling bird during our first night at Nameri was unresponsive.
H	Mountain Scops-owl	<i>Otus spilocephalus</i>	Heard at Eaglenest on 8 nights but always unresponsive.
76.	Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>	Only seen at Nameri Eco-Camp.
77.	Collared Owlet	<i>Glaucidium brodiei</i>	Seen well at Khellong.
H	Hodgson's Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus hodgsoni</i>	Heard briefly above Khellong, but it appears that excessive tape playing has rendered this eminently gettable species practically silent. In fact we never stood a chance as these birds have been visited excessively all through the season and the antics of some birders was apparently shameful.
78.	Grey Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus jotaka</i>	A recent split from Indian Jungle Nightjar. A bird was present behind Bompou Camp for a couple of evenings..
H	Large-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus macrurus</i>	Heard near Nameri Eco-Camp.
79.	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensi</i>	Quite common around Palm trees in Assam.
80.	Himalayan Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus brevirostris</i>	Relatively common throughout the tour.
81.	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	Several small groups seen during our stay at Eaglenest.
82.	White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	First seen over Bompou with a flock of 8 low flying birds, followed by sightings over the following 4 days..
83.	Silver-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus cochinchinensis</i>	Quite scarce this year and what was probably the same flock present on both visits below Khellong.
84.	Dark-rumped Swift	<i>Apus acuticauda</i>	An endemic breeding bird to India. A few lucky people saw some as we drove up to Eaglenest Pass on 11 th May
85.	Black-billed Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis affinis</i>	A distinctive subspecies which may well be a split from nominate Indian Roller in the future. A few seen in the lowlands at either end of the tour.
86.	Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>	A group of 3 were present beside the road, not far from Bhalukpong at the start of the tour. Another one showed well near Nameri Eco-Camp.
87.	Red-headed Trogon	<i>Harpactes erythrocephalus</i>	A cracking male showed well near Sessni one afternoon, and Barbara found a pair a few days earlier.

88.	Ward's Trogon	<i>Harpactes wardi</i>	Great views of this eastern Himalayan speciality a few kilometres above Bompu. The male came in first and landed in classic fashion on a mossy vine, shortly followed by the female.
89.	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	Several present in the lowlands of Assam.
90.	Crested Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle lugubris</i>	Singles seen in the Sangti Valley and near Dirang.
91.	Lesser Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Single seen on the drive from Guwahati to Nameri.
92.	Blyth's Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo hercules</i>	A huge surprise this year when one of these highly prized birds flew along the river beside us between Khellon and Doi Mara Bridge.
93.	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Single bird seen.
94.	Little Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	Only seen on the first day of the tour.
	Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>	Barbara found one near Nameri Eco-Camp.
95.	Rufous-necked Hornbill	<i>Aceros nipalensis</i>	One of the stars of the trip and we had amazing views of a male perched on a mossy vine above Sessni. But even better was a different male making repeated food passes to a female walled-up inside a nesting hole. It really was like what you see on t.v!
96.	Great Pied Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>	Good flight views of a pair (on 2 occasions) flying overhead in the clear blue sky below Khellong.
97.	Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>	Just a single sighting at Bhalukpong – but a new bird for this tour.
98.	Wreathed Hornbill	<i>Aceros undulatus</i>	First seen beside Nameri Eco-Camp when a huge adult flew over our heads. Also seen on 3 other dates with the highest count being 6 birds flying across a valley.
	Yellow-rumped Honeyguide	<i>Indicator xanthonotus</i>	Chris F was lucky to find this bird perched below Lama Camp on our first afternoon at Eaglenest. Unfortunately nobody else was in the right place at the right time.
99.	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>	A few seen in Assam at either end of the tour.
100	Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>	A common bird of lower elevations.
101	Golden-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima franklinii</i>	Replaces the previous species at higher elevations.
102	Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>	A nesting pair beside the petrol station on our first day was the only ones seen.
103	Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>	A very common Himalayan bird and seen frequently.
104	Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>	Single observed in a large flock below Khellong. And gave good views.
105	White-browed Piculet	<i>Sasia ochracea</i>	Seen very well feeding in the Bamboo near the Sessa Orchid Sanctuary.
106	Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus canicapillus</i>	Pair below Khellong on 17 th May.
107	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus hyperythrus</i>	A few were seen along the Mandala Road and gave good views.
108	Crimson-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus cathartus</i>	Seen along the Mandala Road and above Bompu.
109	Darjeeling Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus darjellensis</i>	The commonest <i>dendrocopus</i> and seen on 4 dates at various locations.
110	Greater Yellownape	<i>Picus flavinucha</i>	A few seen between Khellong and Doi Mara bridge.
111	Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>	Just a couple observed below Khellong.
112	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>	3 birds present below Khellong – a new species for this particular tour.
113	Bay Woodpecker	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>	Always frustratingly elusive but we had several brief views below Khellong. One bird showed well higher up but we were trying to watch Chestnut-breasted Hill-partridge at the time.
114	Pale-headed Woodpecker	<i>Gecinulus grantia</i>	After hearing a non-responsive bird at Sessa, some of the group had good views of a single in the bamboo between Sessni and Khellong.
115	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	Only seen in Assam on the first day of the tour.
116	Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>	One of the many species which involve a recent split from The Ripley Guide, with the Sri Lanka birds now elevated to full species status. The resident pair at Nameri Eco-Camp showed well at either end of the tour.

117	Long-tailed Broadbill	<i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i>	The advanced breeding season came to our advantage when we discovered a nest beside the road not far from Sessni. The pair were in attendance constantly and it was a real privilege to watch the adults put the finishing touches to their suspended nest of moss.
H	Blue-naped Pitta	<i>Pitta nipalensis</i>	Heard a couple of times on the lower slopes.
118	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>	We found several pairs nesting at over 2000m at a new site we discovered near Dirang. New for the tour.
119	Eurasian Crag-martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	Seen en-route to Dirang from Sessa.
120	Nepal House Martin	<i>Delichon nipalensis</i>	Seen in the Sangti Valley and below SeLa Pass.
121	Asian House Martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>	Flock present below SeLa Pass on our second visit. Another new species for this tour.
122	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Seen just the once on the way to SeLa Pass.
123	Himalayan White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alboides</i>	The common <i>alba</i> at this time of year.
124	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	Several small flocks still present despite the onset of the breeding season – seen on 7 dates.
	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla madaraspatensis</i>	Barbara saw this species along the river en-route to SeLa Pass.
125	Rosy Pipit	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>	Several present at SeLa Pass.
126	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi rufulus</i>	Single bird beside the road as we drove to Bompu.
127	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>	Seen in the lowlands at either end of the tour.
128	Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis gularis</i>	Another recent split with Malabar Woodshrike found in SW India. David T discovered a family party below Khellong.
129	Pied Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>	A few seen below Khellong.
130	Black-winged Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>	Not uncommon this year and seen on 4 dates.
131	Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>	Seen at Nameri Eco-Camp.
132	Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>	Flock present above Doi Mara Bridge on 17 th May were the only ones seen this year.
133	Short-billed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus brevirostris</i>	Common and seen on 8 dates.
134	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus</i>	Another Ripley split with Orange Minivet confined to Western ghats and Sri Lanka.
135	Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>	Seen at Sessa and along the Mandala Road, and on several dates between Bompu and Sessni.
136	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	Common.
137	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	Just a few seen at the start of the tour.
138	Himalayan Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>	A recent split according to the Ripley Guide and different to the Black Bulbuls in SW India. Seen on 13 dates, mostly in small flocks.
139	Mountain Bulbul	<i>Ixos mcclllandii</i>	A few seen around Sessni.
140	White-throated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaveolus</i>	A common voice from lower areas of Sessa to Khellong, usually in small groups.
141	Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i>	Recently split into 3 species – see Ripley Guide. Just a few seen at Sessa and below Khellong.
142	Striated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus striatus</i>	A good series of widespread sightings this year.
143	Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>	Seen on 6 dates.
144	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>	Seen on 4 dates.
145	Asian Fairy Bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>	An increasingly common sighting below Sessni.
146	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach tricolor</i>	A common sight during the first half of the tour.
	<i>Long-tailed Shrike</i>	<i>Lanius scach erythronotus</i>	An unconfirmed sighting near Sessa.
147	Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>	Just a few seen in higher areas this year.
148	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	Several heard calling above Doi Mara bridge and a few of us saw one perched.
149	Yellow-bellied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura hypoxantha</i>	Regularly seen in flocks at various sites.
150	White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>	Another species that may well be a split in the future according to The Ripley Guide. A common sight in most areas visited.
151	Brown Dipper	<i>Cinclus pallastii</i>	We finally caught up with this one in the Sangti Valley.

152	Purple Cochoa	<i>Cochoa purpurea</i>	At least 3 birds were visiting a fruiting tree above Bompu in company with the next species, although getting a decent view proved frustrating. A female was seen by everyone in the scope a day later.
153	Green Cochoa	<i>Cochoa viridis</i>	A couple visited the same fruiting tree and were scoped.
154	Grandala	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>	After a lengthy search we eventually saw at least 6 birds very well at SeLa pass.
155	Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>	Seen on 7 dates in more open forests from Mandala to Bompu.
156	Blue-capped Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola cinclorhynchus</i>	Very good views on 7 dates and the birds around Dirang tend to perch on roadside wires, allowing a close approach.
157	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina citrina</i>	Another new species for this tour and a confiding bird fed right in front of our vehicles along the Jeep Track one day as we left Khellong.
158	Blue Whistling-thrush	<i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>	Common.
159	White-collared Blackbird	<i>Turdus albocinctus</i>	A regular sight along the Mandala Road.
160	Grey-winged Blackbird	<i>Turdus boulboul</i>	Several seen along the Mandala Road.
161	Plain-backed Thrush	<i>Zoothera mollissima</i>	A couple seen feeding along the Mandala Road gave good views.
162	White-browed Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx montana</i>	A female showed well at point-blank range to some of the group beside the Mandala Road and a male was seen on 18 th May.
163	Lesser Shortwing	<i>Brachypterus leucophrys</i>	A singing bird was typically unobtrusive in a dense bush below Lama Camp but was visible for a patient few!
H	Blue-fronted Robin	<i>Cinclidium frontale</i>	Unfortunately remained just a voice in the forest.
164	White-tailed Robin	<i>Myiomela leucura</i>	Seen a few times near Dirang.
165	Rufous-breasted Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger hyperythrus</i>	Female present on the Mandala Road on 7 th May.
166	White-browed Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger indicus</i>	Seen along the Mandala Road and below SeLa Pass.
167	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>	Seen very well on our approach to Dirang and heard several times during the following few days.
168	Golden Bush-robin	<i>Tarsiger chrysaeus</i>	Seen several times at Mandala and SeLa.
169	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	Single at Doi Mara Bridge was the only sighting.
170	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	A common bird of the lowlands.
171	Slaty-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>	Pair showed well during one of our walks above Bompu.
172	Spotted Forktail	<i>Enicurus maculatus</i>	Also seen well at our new site near Dirang.
173	Blue-fronted Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>	Seen well en-route to SeLa Pass.
174	Plumbeous Water-redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>	Common along all the rivers.
175	White-capped River-chat	<i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>	Seen a few times along fast-flowing mountain rivers.
176	Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferreus</i>	Seen on 8 dates.
177	Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>	A common sight in the Himalayas at this time of year.
178	Ferruginous Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa ferruginea</i>	A perched individual along the Mandala Road was also new for this tour.
179	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>	Single above Sessni was new for this tour.
180	White-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula monileger</i>	Great views of a singing bird beside the Jeep Track as we walked towards Sessni.
181	Ultramarine Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula superciliaris</i>	This stunner was seen regularly during the tour.
182	Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophitata</i>	Seen on 4 dates.
	Slaty-blue Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula tricolor</i>	A leader only sighting on the Mandala Road on 7 th May.
183	Sapphire Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula sapphire</i>	Pair present below Lama Camp and also seen near Bompu camp.
184	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassina</i>	Common and seen on 12 dates.
185	Pale Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis unicolor</i>	Singing bird observed at Khellong.
186	Rufous-bellied Niltava	<i>Niltava oatesi</i>	Seen on 6 dates.
187	Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>	Just a few seen this year.
188	Large Niltava	<i>Niltava grandis</i>	Seen on a couple of occasions.
189	Bhutan Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron imbricatum</i>	A recent split from Streaked Laughingthrush. Pair showed incredibly well along the Mandala Road, and also seen at Dirang and Lama Camp.

190	Blue-winged Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax squamatus</i>	A familiar song at Eaglenest this year having missed this one last year. We had several views of calling birds near Lama Camp and around Sessni, but always shy and difficult to pin down.
H	Scaly Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax subunicolor</i>	Heard on 4 dates.
191	Red-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax erythrocephalus</i>	Previously called Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush. Sen on 7 dates.
192	Red-faced Liocichla	<i>Liocichla phoenicea</i>	A shy bird was present at Sessni on 16 th May.
193	Bugun Liocichla	<i>Liocichla bugunensis</i>	Endemic. Possibly THE highlight of the tour. This recently discovered species performed amazingly well at Eaglenest this year. On our first afternoon we heard at least 5 singing birds but had to wait until the following day to actually see one. In fact we had seen a pair very well before 5am the following morning and they were on show for over an hour as they fed in a bush below the Jeep Track.
194	Spotted Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax ocellatus</i>	First seen along the Mandala Road when a curious pair came in to have a look at us. Also seen well at our new site near Dirang.
195	Black-faced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax affinis</i>	Several seen below SeLa Pass and the Mandala Road.
196	Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax striatus</i>	Common and seen on 9 dates.
197	White-throated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax albugularis</i>	Flocks seen on the Mandala Road and our new site near Dirang.
198	Grey-sided Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax caerulatus</i>	Seen on 8 dates.
199	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>	The area from Sessni to Khellong in <i>THE</i> place to see this species.
200	Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax monileger</i>	A small group present around Khellong were the only ones seen this year.
201	Striped Tit-babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>	One showed well near Doi Mara Bridge.
202	Rufous-capped Babbler	<i>Stachyris ruficeps</i>	Seen on 10 dates, usually in small flocks.
203	Rufous-fronted Babbler	<i>Stachyris rufifrons</i>	Good views of a single bird below Khellong. Also heard a few times as well.
204	Golden Babbler	<i>Stachyris chrysie</i>	Seen regularly during the second half of the tour.
205	Grey-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigriceps</i>	A few seen from Bompou to Sessni.
206	Slender-billed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Xiphirhynchus superciliosus</i>	Repeated close views along the Mandala Road this year.
207	Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>	Seen along the Mandala Road and Bompou.
208	White-browed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus schisticeps</i>	Single observed at Khellong.
209	Coral-billed Scimitar-babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ferruginosus</i>	A few seen very well below Bompou this year.
210	Fire-tailed Myzornis	<i>Myzornis pyrrhoura</i>	At least two pairs were found below SeLa Pass this year. After our 2 visits here we came away having had point-blank views of them and were my bird of the trip.
211	Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argentauris</i>	Seen on 6 dates.
212	Red-billed Leiothrix	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	Seen on 4 dates.
213	Black-chinned Yuhina	<i>Yuhina nigrimenta</i>	Several fast moving flocks present below Sessni.
214	White-bellied Erpornis	<i>Yuhina zantholeuca</i>	Seen at Sessa and Khellong.
215	Striated Yuhina	<i>Staphida castaneiceps</i>	A few flocks were present below Khellong.
216	Whiskered Yuhina	<i>Yuhina flavicollis</i>	A very common sight and seen on 13 dates.
217	White-naped Yuhina	<i>Yuhina bakeri</i>	An Eastern Himalayan specialty and seen well at either end of the tour.
218	Rufous-vented Yuhina	<i>Yuhina occipitalis</i>	Regularly seen along the Mandala Road.
219	Stripe-throated Yuhina	<i>Yuhina gularis</i>	The common yuhina of higher areas.
220	Rufous-winged Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe castaneiceps</i>	Seen at Dirang and Bompou.
221	Yellow-throated Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe cinerea</i>	A common bird in the right habitat but still an Eastern Himalayan specialty.
222	Golden-breasted Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe chrysotis</i>	This little stunner was seen on a number of occasions, usually in small groups.
223	Brown-throated Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe ludlowi</i>	Quite common this year along the Mandala Road.
224	Nepal Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>	A few were found below Khellong.

225	Rusty-fronted Barwing	<i>Actinodura egertoni</i>	Regularly seen in mixed flocks during the second half of the tour.
226	Streak-throated Barwing	<i>Actinodura waldeni</i>	Only seen along the Mandala Road.
227	Rufous-backed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia annectans</i>	Seen at Sessni and Khellong. At the latter site a pair were obviously on territory and were very bold and inquisitive!
228	Long-tailed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia picaoides</i>	An Eastern Himalayan specialty and an increasingly common sight from Sessni to Doi Mara.
229	Beautiful Sibia	<i>Heterophasia pulchella</i>	One of the commonest species present during the tour and seen on 14 dates.
230	Indian White-hooded Babbler	<i>Gampsorhynchus rufulus</i>	A recent split. Great views of a single bird below Khellong. Seems you need just the right call to bring it in!
231	Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>	A regular sight in mixed feeding flocks during the tour.
232	Chestnut-tailed Minla	<i>Minla strigula</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
233	Red-tailed Minla	<i>Minla ignotincta</i>	This striking species was seen a number of times at various sites.
234	Black-eared Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius melanotis</i>	Just seen on the penultimate day of the tour as we left Eaglenest.
235	White-browed Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius flaviscapis</i>	First seen along the Mandala Road and then later in the tour we found a pair in the same tree as the following species.
236	Black-headed Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius rufiventer</i>	Saw both male and female on different days at Eaglenest. An Eastern Himalayan speciality.
237	Himalayan Cutia	<i>Cutia nipalensis</i>	Very common below Bompu this year and we were treated to numerous close views.
238	Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Seen on 5 dates.
H	Scaly-breasted Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga albiventer</i>	Only heard at Eaglenest this year.
239	Pygmy Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>	Decent views below Lama Camp this year.
240	Rufous-throated Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis caudatus</i>	Endemic to the Indian Subcontinent. Seen on 4 dates and we had very good views at close range.
241	Spotted Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis formosus</i>	Incredible views of a bird singing from an exposed perch at Sessa was a little special.
242	Bar-winged Wren-babbler	<i>Spelaeornis troglodytoides</i>	Amazing views down to 2 metres along the Mandala Road.
H	Eye-browed Wren-babbler	<i>Napothera epilepidota</i>	Only heard near Sessni.
243	Long-billed Wren-babbler	<i>Rimator malacoptilus</i>	Continuing our amazing success with wren-babblers we had several confiding birds during the second half of the tour.
244	Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler	<i>Sphenocichla humei</i>	This year we actually saw 6 different individuals, without really trying. Pont blank views on successive days at Sessni were mind-blowing!
245	Spot-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum albiventre</i>	A family group during a heavy shower below Khellong tried hard to look like something else!
246	Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>	Single observed at Khellong.
247	Fulvous Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis fulvifrons</i>	A small flock along the Mandala Road were seen very well.
248	Black-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis nipalensis</i>	A few flocks of this delightful species were seen beside the Jeep track at Eaglenest.
249	Brown Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis unicolor</i>	We did well to find this bird at Eaglenest in thick mist but our perseverance paid off big time!
250	Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis atosuperciliaris</i>	Flock present above Khellong were the only ones seen.
251	Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis ruficeps</i>	Seen on 3 dates during the second half of the tour and we had really nice views.
252	Striated Grassbird	<i>Megalurus palustris</i>	A few seen and lots heard driving across Assam.
253	Black-throated (Hill) Prinia	<i>Prinia atrogularis khasiana</i>	This is a recent split from Hill Prinia <i>Prinia superciliaris</i> found in Myanmar and further east. Seen on 4 dates.
254	Hume's Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia acanthizoides</i>	Also called Yellowish-bellied Bush-warbler. This species may well be split from the forms found in China (<i>acanthizoides</i>) and Taiwan (<i>concolor</i>). Great views along the Mandala Road.

255	Brownish-flanked Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia fortipes</i>	Also called Strong-footed Bush-warbler. A very common bird in the Himalayas during the spring/summer. Recorded almost every day and seen well numerous times.
256	Grey-sided Bush-warbler	<i>Cettia brunnifrons</i>	Seen several times along the Mandala Road with birds singing from the tops of bushes beside the road.
257	Russet Bush-warbler	<i>Bradypterus mandelli</i>	A recent split from Brown Bush-warbler <i>Bradypterus luteoventris</i> . Seen by a few lucky group members but quite tough and unresponsive this year.
258	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	Seen in the lowlands at either end of the tour.
259	Mountain Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus cuculatus</i>	Quite common below Bompu this year.
260	Slaty-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia olivea</i>	A common sound at Eaglenest and seen wll several times.
261	Grey-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>	Seen along the Mandala Road and at Eaglenest.
262	Chestnut-headed Tesia	<i>Tesia castaneocoronata</i>	Singing birds observed numerous times, but the bird present at our breakfast stop below Eaglenest perched on top of a bush was the best one.
263	Broad-billed Warbler	<i>Tickellia hodgsoni</i>	Several seen around stands of bamboo at Mandala and above Bompu.
264	Black-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>	Seen on 5 dates.
265	Rufous-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus albogularis</i>	First seen as we entered the Sessa Orchid Sanctuary but very common near Khellong.
266	Yellow-bellied Warbler	<i>Abroscopus supercilialis</i>	Seen at either end of the tour.
267	Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
268	Grey-hooded Warbler	<i>Seicercus xanthoschistus</i>	A common bird in the Himalayas.
269	Grey-cheeked Warbler	<i>Seicercus poliogenys</i>	Good views on 5 dates at various sites.
270	White-spectacled Warbler	<i>Seicercus affinis</i>	Single observed near Sessni was the only one seen.
271	Green-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>	A recent split from what was formerly called Golden-spectacled Warbler. A coupe seen along the Mandala rd.
272	Whistler's Warbler	<i>Seicercus whistleri</i>	One of the other splits from the Golden-spectacled Warbler complex. Not uncommon during the first half of the tour.
273	Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	Common.
274	Tickell's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus affinis</i>	Single at Bompu Camp was the only one this year.
	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	Leader only sighting below Bompu.
275	Large-billed Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>	One of the typical Himalayan songs and seen well on several dates during the first half of the tour.
276	Blyth's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>	Common and seen on 7 dates.
277	Buff-barred Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>	Common along the higher stretches of the Mandala Rd.
278	Lemon-rumped Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>	Quite a few present along the Mandala Road in mixed flocks.
279	Ashy-throated Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus maculipennis</i>	Another regularly seen bird this year.
280	Yellow-vented Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus cantator</i>	Finally had decent views on successive days below Sessni.
281	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Present in mixed flocks along the Mandala Road.
282	Grey-crested Tit	<i>Parus dichrous</i>	A few seen in a mixed tit flock on the Mandala Road.
283	Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>	Seen on 9 dates.
284	Black-throated Tit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	Also called Red-headed Tit. Great looks at this smart bird on several dates.
285	Rufous-fronted Tit	<i>Aegithalos iouschistos</i>	An Eastern Himalayan specialty but only seen on the Mandala Road.
286	Yellow-cheeked Tit	<i>Parus spilonotus</i>	Seen on 4 dates.
287	Sultan Tit	<i>Melanochlora sultanea</i>	Quite common below Bompu this year and we never got bored with this stunning bird.
288	Rusty-flanked Treecreeper	<i>Certhia nipalensis</i>	Seen just the once but great views on the Mandala Rd.
289	Brown-throated Treecreeper	<i>Certhia discolor</i>	Seen along the Mandala Road and another new bird for this tour.

290	Yellow-browed Tit	<i>Sylviparus modestus</i>	Seen on 4 dates in mixed feeding flocks.
291	White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>	Quite common in the higher areas visited during the tour.
292	Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta cinnamoventris</i>	A recent split with Indian Nuthatch <i>Sitta castanea</i> confined to peninsular India. Single observed below Khellong.
H	Beautiful Nuthatch	<i>Sitta formosa</i>	Heard distantly at Eaglenest but unusually absent from its usual haunts.
293	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>	Common during the second half of the tour.
294	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	Seen on 9 dates.
295	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>	This species involves one of the latest splits from The Ripley Guide, with Vigors's Sunbird confined to the Western Ghats. Only seen during a brief stop en-route to Nameri Eco-Camp.
296	Fire-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga ignicauda</i>	This high altitude stunner was easily seen below SeLa Pass, with a few males displaying beside the road.
297	Mrs Gould's Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga gouldiae isolata</i>	A common bird from Mandala to Lama camp.
298	Black-breasted Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
299	Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>	Seen on 11 dates.
300	Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>	A common bird at lower elevations.
301	Alpine Accentor	<i>Prunella collaris</i>	A few present at SeLa Pass, here of the distinctive <i>nipalensis</i> race.
302	Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophiata</i>	Several singing birds at SeLa Pass showed well.
303	Crested Bunting	<i>Melophus lathami</i>	Only seen in the Sangti valley and as we left Arunachal Pradesh at the end of the tour.
304	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	Single along the Mandala Road was a surprise.
305	Plain Mountain-finch	<i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>	Rafik somehow spotted a bird perched in a Pine tree high up the Mandala Road that turned out to be this species. Also seen at SeLa Pass.
306	Yellow-breasted Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis spinoides</i>	Also called Himalayan Greenfinch. Seen at SeLa, Sangti valley and Dirang.
307	Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus thura</i>	Present just below SeLa Pass,
308	Dark-rumped Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus edwardsii</i>	Good views below SeLa Pass.
309	Dark-breasted Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus nipalensis</i>	Continuing our rosefinch-fest we had good views of several birds below SeLa Pass.
310	Crimson-browed Finch	<i>Propyrrhula subhimachala</i>	A couple of flocks present below SeLa Pass.
311	Scarlet Finch	<i>Haematospiza sipahi</i>	A group of 3 were present just below Lama Camp.
312	Gold-naped Finch	<i>Pyrrhoptectes epauletta</i>	A cracking male was showing well along the Mandala Road.
313	Red-headed Bullfinch	<i>Prorrhula erythrocephala</i>	A few small groups were seen below SeLa Pass.
314	Brown Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula nipalensis</i>	A group of 4 were on the Mandala Road on one of our visits.
315	Collared Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas affinis</i>	Fantastic close views of a pair on the Mandala Road.
316	White-winged Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas carnipes</i>	Several seen around SeLa Pass.
317	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	Seen near Nameri Eco-Camp.
318	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus indicus</i>	A few seen.
319	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Seen on 10 dates.
320	Russet Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>	Also called Cinnamon Sparrow. The usual small colony in the Sangti Valley gave us our first views, but we also found them at several other sites.
321	Eastern Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus burmanicus</i>	A potential split – see Ripley Guide. Seen on the last day of the tour.
322	Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>	Seen on 8 dates at various sites.
323	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	Seen in Assam.
324	Slender-billed Oriole	<i>Oriolus tenuirostris</i>	Several present in the Sangti valley.
325	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	Common in Assam.
326	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>	Common and seen on 14 dates.

327	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
328	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>	Seen on 4 dates below Bompu.
329	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	Just a few seen.
330	Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	Only seen at Nameri Eco-Camp.
331	Grey-headed Starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>	Formerly called Chestnut-tailed Starling, which was split to include this species and Malabar White-headed Starling. A few seen at either end of the tour in Assam.
332	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	A common bird in Assam.
333	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
334	Bank Myna	<i>Acridotheres ginginianus</i>	Only seen in Delhi.
335	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>	Common in Assam.
336	White-vented Myna	<i>Acridotheres cinereus</i>	A few seen in Assam.
337	Common Hill-myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>	Another recent split from The Ripley Guide. Seen at Nameri Eco-Camp.
338	Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	A few seen on the higher reaches of the Mandala Rd.
339	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	A few at SeLa Pass.
340	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendensponensis</i>	Common in Assam.
341	Eastern Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus leuillanti</i>	Common in the lowlands.
342	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus japonensis</i>	Formerly lumped with the previous species. Seen on 7 dates in Arunachal Pradesh.
343	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius interstinctus</i>	Only seen along the Mandala Road.
344	Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>	A few seen below Khellong.
345	Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa flavirostris</i>	A few present along the upper Mandala Road.
346	Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	Seen a few times below Bompu.
347	Collared Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	One of the stars of the tour. A pair showed very well near Sessni.
348	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	Only seen in Assam.

348 species seen - 21 species heard, single observer or leader only - 369 species recorded in total.

OTHER SIGHTINGS

	SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME
1.	Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>
2.	Capped Langur	<i>Presbytis pileata</i>
3.	Indian Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus muntjai</i>
4.	Pig-tailed macaque	<i>Macaca fuscata</i>
5.	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
6.	Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>
7.	Three-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>
8.	Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel	<i>Dremomys lokriah</i>
9.	Malayan Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i>
10.	Hoary-bellied Himalayan Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus pygerythrus</i>
11.	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>
12.	Yellow-throated Marten	<i>Marted flvigula</i>
13.	Himalayan Palm Civet	<i>Paguma larvata</i>
14.	Leopard Cat	<i>Prionailurus bengalensis</i>
15.	Giant Earthworm	<i>Megascolides australis</i>
16.	Green Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes calotes</i>
17.	Skink sp	<i>Scincidae sp</i>

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