



Indian Peafowl (Craig Robson)

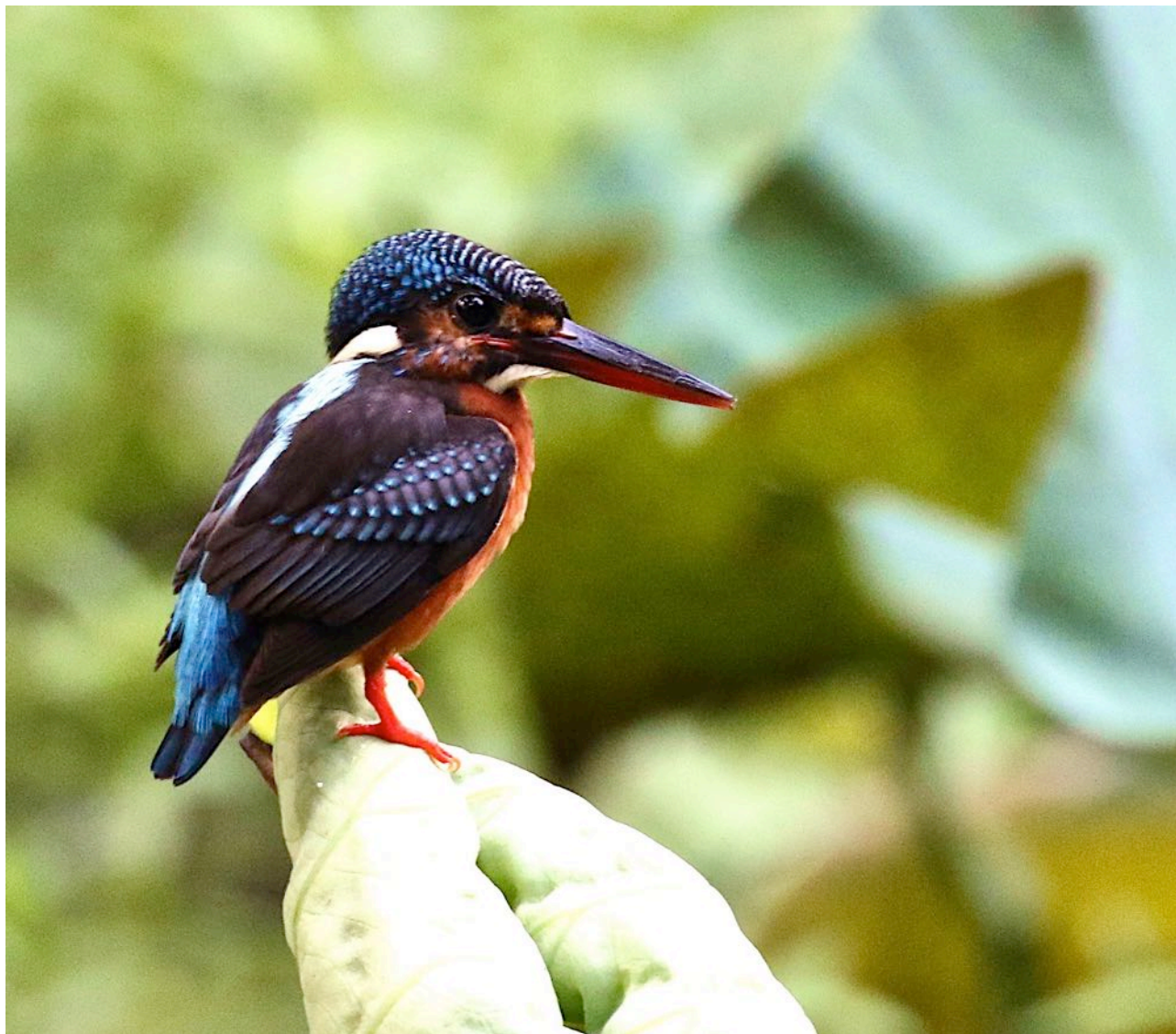
SOUTHERN INDIA & SRI LANKA (INCLUDING THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS)

11/17 – 26 DECEMBER 2017 / 5 JANUARY 2018

LEADER: CRAIG ROBSON

This remarkable South Asian tour certainly came up with the goods this year, with ALL of the endemic targets located. Amongst a ridiculous 26 species of nightbird (including 19 owls), was a new species for Birdquest, in the form of the fantastic Sri Lanka Bay Owl. In the Andamans we saw all 21 endemics very well, with a flock of over 80 Andaman Teals, a very showy Andaman Crake and a superb pair of Andaman Masked Owls being particularly memorable. There were also quite a few unexpected extras, including four wintering Chinese Egrets. In South India, we birded our way from Bengaluru (Bangalore) to the Nilgiris and south-west to the lowland forests of Kerala, finding Painted Bush Quail, Indian Eagle-Owl, Mottled Wood

Owl, Indian Pitta, White-bellied Minivet, the lovely White-bellied Treepie, Indian Black-lored Tit, Yellow-throated and Grey-headed Bulbuls, Western Crowned Warbler, Rufous Babbler, Wynaad, Nilgiri and Palani Laughingthrushes, Black-and-orange Flycatcher, Nilgiri and White-bellied Blue Robins, and Nilgiri Pipit amongst numerous highlights. Across the straits in Sri Lanka we again found all of the endemics, tame Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Legge's Hawk-Eagle, Red-faced Malkoha, day-roosting Serendib Scops Owl and Sri Lanka Frogmouths, Ashy-headed Laughingthrush, Pied and Sri Lanka Thrushes, and Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush just the cream of the crop.



Juvenile Blue-eared Kingfisher of the endemic Andaman race rufigastrea (Craig Robson)

Once we had all met at Bengaluru Airport for the Andamans extension, we took the seemingly brief two-and-a-bit hours flight to Port Blair. We were at our very pleasant hotel overlooking the ocean in no time and, after a fairly brief turn-around, we drove south to the forested area known as Chidiyatapu. As the Andaman Islands are still on Delhi time, it gets dark early, which means there is plenty of time for night-birding before dinner! Andaman Nightjar was first on the agenda, and a co-operative pair soon appeared and patrolled up and down at close range. Hume's Hawk-Owl (or Boobook) followed, and then excellent views of both Andaman and Walden's Scops Owls (the latter still usually lumped in Oriental). Feeling pretty satisfied, we headed back to the hotel for some catch-up sleep.

Over the next few days, guided by two very competent and knowledgeable local birders (Shakti and Vikas), we spread our birding across a range of forest and wetland sites. Chidiyatapu produced the bulk of the

endemics on the first full mornings birding, with perched Andaman Serpent Eagle and Andaman Wood Pigeon, as well as Andaman Cuckoo-Dove, Andaman Green Pigeon, Andaman Coucal, Violet Cuckoo, Long-tailed Parakeet, Andaman Woodpecker, Andaman Drongo, Andaman Treepie, Andaman Bulbul, good numbers of White-headed Starlings, Andaman Sharma, Andaman Flowerpecker, and Forest Wagtail. A further evening visit resulted in close encounters with a juvenile Blue-eared Kingfisher and a pair of Andaman Hawk-Owls (or Boobooks).

Across the bay to the north of Port Blair was Kalatang, where we did the rest of our forest birding. Guided to a site for the secretive Andaman Crake, we had some amazing views of one in the open after hearing its weird grunting calls. This site also produced our only Andaman Cuckooshrikes, and strips of mangrove held a couple of smart Ruddy Kingfishers and a pair of Mangrove Whistlers. Black Baza, Ashy Minivet, Arctic Warbler, and Orange-headed Thrush were nice additions. A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler at a nearby location was a rare find for the Indian Subcontinent.



Often somewhat elusive, it was nice to scope this Andaman Wood Pigeon (Craig Robson)

Exploring the mosaic of wetlands and coastal inlets between Port Blair and Ograbranj, we eventually scored with the much-wanted Andaman Teal and were well-impressed by a flock of more than 80 individuals - very heart-warming. There is often something unexpected in these habitats on S Andaman, and this year we were treated to scope views of four wintering Chinese Egrets, as well as a single Ferruginous Duck, Slaty-breasted Rail, Watercock, Long-toed and Red-necked Stints, Black-capped Kingfisher, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, several Daurian Starlings at a roost-site, and flocks of Red-throated Pipits.

In Port Blair itself, we were treated to great views of a pair of Andaman Masked Owls one evening, a species that has been tricky to find on a number of previous tours, but might now be getting a bit easier to pin-down.

After returning to mainland India, and meeting-up with our experienced local guide Satheesh Kumaran Nair (SK), we began our main tour with an early departure to the south-west from Bengaluru (Bangalore). Our first port of call was the scenic Ramdevvara Betta Vulture Sanctuary. Set-up to protect breeding vultures, of which we saw a pair each of Egyptian and Indian, the site is also very good for the restricted-range endemic Yellow-throated Bulbul, and we found at least four amongst the much commoner White-browed's. Our very enthusiastic local guide Shashikumar Ramanagara soon had us at the best spots and, thanks to him we were also lucky enough to see a hulking Indian Eagle Owl roosting on a ledge.



Yellow-throated Bulbul (Craig Robson)

Continuing south, SK had some interesting sites lined-up for us. Just north of Mysuru (Mysore), at Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, we had a guided boat trip around a breeding colony of large waterbirds. There were amazingly close views of Spot-billed Pelicans and Eurasian Spoonbills sparring in their full breeding plumage, as well as good numbers of cormorants, storks, and ibises. Short-toed Eagle, Great Stone-curlew, River Terns, and a colony Streak-throated Swallows added some flavour and, around the parking lot, we added White-spotted Fantail. Lesser Fish Eagle was an unexpected write-in.

An area of un-developed ground along the Mysuru ring-road produced Grey Francolin, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Spotted Owlet, and Tawny Pipit, and to the south of the city, we found some smart Red-naped Ibises by the roadside.

Nearing our destination at Jungle Hut, we drove slowly through Bandipur National Park and then crossed the Tamil Nadu state line into Mudumalai National Park. Roadside mammals were now much in evidence, with

Asian Elephant, Bonnet Macaque, Southern Plains Grey Langur, Wild Boar and Chital, and there were lots of Indian Peafowl too.

We had a full day and a morning to explore the outskirts of Mudumalai National Park. We began with a bus safari through the park's scrub jungle, as we were not allowed to walk in the area, it being designated as a Tiger Reserve. Our local guide however knew all the good places and we had a successful outing, finally catching up with our main target, the lovely White-bellied Minivet just before breakfast.



Malabar Lark (Craig Robson)

The surroundings of our nicely situated accommodation were alive with birds, even including such specialities as Grey Junglefowl, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Indian Pitta, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Blackbird, the secretive Nilgiri Thrush (which we managed to scope), Brown-breasted and Rusty-tailed Flycatchers, Malabar Whistling Thrush, and Loten's Sunbird. Our first Brown Fish Owl was seen in flight. Just a few hundred metres further out in to the park buffer zone, we found Crested (or Changeable) Hawk-Eagle, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Plum-headed Parakeet, White-cheeked Barbet, Heart-spotted and Yellow-crowned Woodpeckers, Malabar Flameback (often still lumped in Greater), Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Bay-backed Shrike, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Indian Nuthatch, Brahminy Starling, Jerdon's Leafbird, and Nilgiri Flowerpecker.

The slopes of a prominent hill were home to a flock of Malabar Larks, and there were also surprises here in the form of Jungle Bush Quail, Red-headed Vulture, Indian Spotted Eagle and Blyth's Pipit. Our guide showed us a roosting Savanna Nightjar and at dusk, we added Jungle and Indian Nightjars at point-blank range.

During a night-drive with our guide we had a pretty good look at a scurrying pair of Indian Crested Porcupines, a Large Brown Flying Squirrel feeding up a tree, and several Indian (or Black-naped) Hares.

It was soon time to head up into the hills, and we followed the winding Sigur Ghat Road, with its 36 hairpin bends, to the hill station of Ooty. On the way, we stopped at a good site for Painted Bush Quail but, despite searching throughout the afternoon, and early the following morning, we only managed to hear a couple briefly. The only noteworthy birds were Jacobin Cuckoo, Hill Swallow, White-spotted Fantail, and Tawny-bellied Babbler.



Nilgiri Blue Robin (Craig Robson)

At Ooty, we divided our time between Doddabetta Peak (2637m) and Cairnhill Eco-Awareness Centre. Arriving at the former site as early as we could enter, we were pleased to see Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Nilgiri Laughingthrush and Indian Blackbird feeding tamely on the ground around the food stalls. Unfortunately, the hordes of local 'pilgrims' and sightseers soon overran the trail and, apart from a rather tame Black-and-orange Flycatcher behind a stall, there were clearly going to be few other opportunities. Moving on to the latter site, we found little else before lunch. Fortunately, back at our hotel, we had crippling views of a male Nilgiri Blue Robin in a rather unlikely spot - such is birding. Returning to Cairnhill for the afternoon, we sorted through various *Phylloscopus* warblers and added Nilgiri Flycatcher to the growing list, and we also had an amazing encounter with a fantastic tame herd of 10 Gaur. Early the next morning we continued south and

descended the Nilgiris. A dawn roadside-stop on the way down proved to be birdy, with some great views of Blue-winged Parkakeets, Indian Golden Oriole, and Crimson-backed (or Small) Sunbirds. After one of our many very tasty 'second breakfasts' we continued on to Coimbatore. On the way out of town, we stopped to look at a Kurichi Kalam. This large water-body held many birds. There was a good flock of ducks, including Garganey, Northern Shoveler, Indian Spot-billed, and Northern Pintail and Eurasian Teal, Booted Eagle, Kentish Plovers, and good numbers of Little and Temminck's Stints. Crossing Palakkad (Palghat) Gap to Pollachi, we had lunch before continuing to the Kerala border - our last Tamil Nadu bird being a small group of Large Grey Babblers. Once over the state line, we were in Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary. Here we set off for a walk with a couple of rangers, with high-hopes of seeing a roosting Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl that they had seen earlier. Unfortunately, the bird had moved to another location and we were unable to re-locate it - one of our few disappointments of the tour!



White-bellied Blue Robin (Craig Robson)

We carried on up into the High Range and our comfortable hotel in the bustling tourist-town of Munnar. In order to visit Eravikulam National Park, one must ride up a narrow road in official park buses along with all the other visitors. Despite our best efforts we weren't to be the first on the scene, and visitors are now only allowed to walk along the road at the top. Fortunately, this did not prevent us from finding all of our targets. At the top level, despite the hordes, we had good views of Nilgiri Pipit, as well as a handful of both endemic Nilgiri Tahr and Nilgiri Langur, and there was a Broad-tailed Grassbird that unfortunately only popped-up for Craig and SK. Near a tea-shop, we had great views of a family of Painted Bush Quails (phew!), as well as remarkably tame White-bellied Blue Robin, Palani Laughingthrush, Indian Blackbird, and Malabar Whistling Thrush. At another location, on the way back to Munnar, we enjoyed good views of Nilgiri Flycatcher, as well as more laughingthrushes, and our first Blue-capped Rock Thrush.

In the afternoon, we tried a completely new area to the south-east of Munnar. An excellent narrow road through a patch of forest turned-up trumps, with Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Indian Black-lored Tit, Southern Hill Myna, and Western Crowned Warbler, as well as a nice Ruddy Mongoose with its black-tipped up-turned tail.

This morning we travelled south towards Periyar Tiger Reserve, with a pause in the high country to search some rocky and grassy hillsides. There was no more sign of the much-wanted Broad-tailed Grassbird, but we had better and closer views of a number of Nilgiri Pipits. We arrived at another nice hotel, our base for visits to Periyar, in time for lunch.



White-bellied Treepie (Craig Robson)

In the afternoon, we set off on our first walk into the reserve with our personal ranger. We were soon looking at our first Jungle Owlet, then the endemic White-bellied Treepie, along with the more widespread Rufous, and then a roosting pair of Oriental Scops Owls. There seemed to be loads of birds. Walking along into a fairly narrow valley, we added several hulking Great Hornbills, and a vocalising group of Malabar Woodshrikes. The next day we returned, and this time explored a different section. At first light, groups of Malabar Starlings gathered on the exposed tree-top branches and, as we passed an area of bamboo, we finally located a small group of Rufous Babbblers that put on a good performance. Further into a narrow valley we found our first rather gaudy Flame-throated Bulbuls, had better views of Heart-spotted Woodpecker, and scoped a roosting Brown Hawk-Owl (or Boobook). In the afternoon, our guide got a call from a colleague to

say that a group of rare Wynaad Laughingthrushes had been spotted. Arriving at the location, we were told that a couple of elephants were feeding nearby, and our guard would have to keep watch on them while we looked at the laughingthrushes. It was quite an experience, with the mixture of excitement at seeing the birds mingling with the fear of being quite close to feeding elephants. Hat's-off to our guide for a job well done! Other good birds at Periyar were a group of Red Spurfowl that we ran into on a couple of occasions, Woolly-necked Stork, Black and Booted Eagles, lots of Pin-tailed Snipes, Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Brown-backed Needletail, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Malabar Barbet, Common Flameback, Dark-fronted Babbler, a lovely male White-bellied Blue Flycatcher, Little Spiderhunter, and Forest Wagtail.



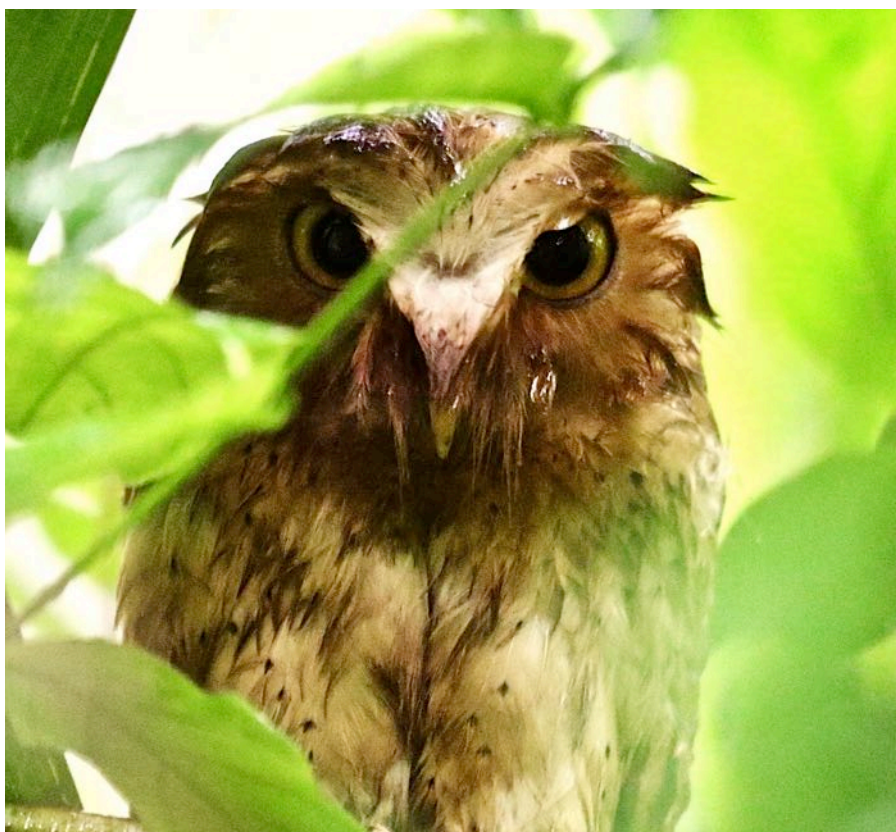
Rufous Babbler at Periyar (Craig Robson)

From Periyar, we took the back roads to Thattekad, currently perhaps the best-known and birdiest place in the south. Once we had checked-in to our accommodation and had lunch, we set off with our enthusiastic guide, Ajo Mon, for what was to be a very busy afternoon. A nice male Streak-throated Woodpecker in the parking-lot got things rolling. From there we went to a small area with a lot of fruiting shrubs and small trees. The scarce Grey-headed Bulbul was very showy and easy to find at this spot, a great bonus, and nearby there was a roosting pair of Brown Hawk-Owls and a fantastic Brown Fish Owl that we were able to scope. We moved on once more to a grove of tall trees where Mottled Wood Owl can often be found roosting. Fortunately, a pair were present and, after some rather tense moments, we were able to get good scope views of one of them – a great addition to our trip checklist. At nightfall, at some nearby ricefields, we watched Great Eared Nightjars as they emerged from their roosts and headed out to hunt, and there was a brief view of Jungle Nightjar again. Spot-bellied Eagle proved difficult again but we did spotlight a perched Indian Scops Owl (with a frog!) and a couple of Jerdon's Nightjars. Our final destination of the evening was reserved for the keenest of owl enthusiasts. As we finally reached a narrow forest road and got out of our vehicle, we were greeted by traffic and loud fireworks, like bombs going off. Well it was Christmas Eve, but not the best conditions for finding one of the World's trickiest nightbirds - Sri Lanka Bay Owl. Miraculously things quietened-down and, before long, we heard the bizarre warbling cries of this shy riparian forest denizen. The sound got louder and closer. Fortunately, our guide wasn't shy about 'going-in' and, after several close-calls with the bird flying to another location, we eventually had it right in front of us, glaring down from its low perch. What a bird - and a new one for Birdquest!

Our time in South India ended the following morning, as we drove the relatively short distance to Kochi (Cochin) Airport, and flew across the straights to Colombo in Sri Lanka. It was to be the start of another adventure with some new faces, and another great guide - Saman.

We slowly wove our way along the hill roads to reach Kitulgala, stopping en route to view our first Sri Lankan endemic, in the form of Sri Lanka Swallow. Just before reaching our hotel, we had a quick go at seeing Chestnut-backed Owlet at dusk, but only managed to get rather unsatisfactory views. Our first Spot-winged Thrush behaved much better! Returning to the same location first thing in the morning, we had more success and managed to get one of these crepuscular owls in the scope. Our pre-breakfast haul also included Sri Lanka Junglefowl, a stunning Black-backed Kingfisher (still lumped in Oriental Dwarf by some authorities), Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Brown-headed Barbet, Red-backed Flameback (split from Black-rumped), Layard's Parakeet, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, White-bellied Drongo, an amazing performing pair of Brown-capped Babblers, Yellow-billed Babbler, and Brown-breasted Flycatcher.

Much of the remainder of the day, and dawn the following morning, was spent across the river in the plantations and gardens, and the Makandawa Forest Reserve. Here we found a responsive pair of Green-billed Coucals, Malabar Trogon, another Black-backed (or Oriental Dwarf) Kingfisher, Sri Lanka Drongo, Black-capped and Square-tailed Bulbuls, Green and Large-billed Leaf Warblers, Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, and Dark-fronted and Orange-billed Babblers.



Serendib Scops Owl through the scope (Craig Robson)

At a location in the hilly rubber plantations, we had very good views of both Yellow-fronted and Crimson-fronted Barbets; the latter being particularly confiding.

From Kitulgala, we drove directly to Sinharaja and checked-in at the well situated, and now much-improved Blue Magpie Lodge. One of our drivers doubles as an owl-finder and, after lunch, we made our way to a remote spot where he had staked-out a roosting Serendib Scops Owl. One is often struck by just how low down in the vegetation these birds roost and, one-by-one, after a fairly short muddy scramble, each one of us was able to



Serendib Scops Owl (Craig Robson)

get good views through the scope as we knelt precariously on the slope. Not far away, we were also shown our first day-roosting Sri Lanka Frogmouths - a dripping-wet pair huddled-up together.

Most of the following two days were spent in and around Sinharaja Forest Reserve. This World-famous (and indeed World Heritage) site probably needs little introduction, as it is the most important lowland rainforest location in the country - and thank heavens it survived.

Inside the reserve itself, we followed the old logging road to the research station. Entering early, with very few other people around, we were fortunate to get an early look-in with the very tricky Sri Lanka Thrush, which decided to show itself up very easily, along with a number of Spot-winged Thrushes. Many of our targets were to be found in the large mixed-species feeding flocks or 'bird-waves'. We encountered two such flocks, with one being particularly large. At lower levels, and even on the ground, were the likes of Ashy-headed Laughingthrush and Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, whilst in the very tree-tops were a good number of striking Red-faced Malkohas. In between, were several Malabar Trogons, Orange Minivet, numerous Sri Lanka Drongos and we glimpsed our first Crimson-backed Flamebacks. Several noisy Sri Lanka Blue Magpies were pretty much keeping to themselves, and we had a couple of good raptors in flight, in the form of Besra and Legge's Hawk-Eagle. Also of note in the reserve were Sri Lanka Frogmouth and Green-billed Coucal, which showed even better than before, and a lovely and unconcerned male Indian Blue Robin.



Indian Blue Robin (Craig Robson)

Both lunch-times were spent at Martin's Place, enjoying some excellent home cooking, and their feeders attracted the likes of Yellow-fronted Barbet and Yellow-browed Bulbul. One lucky find was a pair of nest-building Black-throated Munias here, and just down the road we had our first Sri Lanka Green Pigeons and a nice pair of Legge's Flowerpeckers. Near the information centre we scoped the secretive White-faced Starling.

On our final morning, we were led to a small secluded house where, thanks to the owners, Sri Lanka Spurfowl can now be seen very easily as they briefly come to nibble on scraps before heading off for their day. A nice Slaty-legged Crane also gave a show, along with an Indian Pitta - fantastic. A nearby fruiting tree supported a flock of Sri Lanka Hill Mynas, at unusually close range. Back at the Blue Magpie Lodge, we enjoyed watching a wide range of commoner species around the grounds. A couple of us were lucky enough to see the likes of Slaty-legged Crane and Sri Lanka Hill Myna, and the cries of a Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl woke some of us on the last morning - though it was not to be seen.



Female Sri Lanka Frogmouth at her day-roost (Craig Robson)

We set off eastwards for our next destination, and arrived at our hotel in Embilipitiya, situated on the shores of Chandrika Wewa, just before lunch. This large lake supports a variety of waterfowl, and in the garden, we found a nice roosting pair of Indian Scops Owls.

In the afternoon, we drove to Uda Walawe National Park, where we had jeep rides booked for the afternoon and the following morning. Not just famous for its many elephants, this excellent protected area supports a

rich and varied avifauna too. The scrub jungle, bushlands and grassland were alive with Green Bee-eaters, Jerdon's Bush Larks, Ashy and Jungle Prinias, and Yellow-eyed and Tawny-bellied Babbler. One of our star finds was Marshall's (or White-tailed) lora, and we watched one male for a long time. Also of note were several Barred Buttonquails, a small group of Rosy Starlings, and quite a few Tricoloured Munias. Isolated trees provided perches for raptors like Black-shouldered Kite and Crested (or Changeable) Hawk-Eagle. As the habitat became more like woodland, we added a good number of Malabar Pied Hornbills, both Blue-faced and Sirkeer Malkohas, Jacobin and Grey-bellied Cuckoos, and Sri Lanka Woodshrike - which initially proved quite elusive. A Brown Fish Owl roosting in plain view was a nice bonus. A rocky outcrop provided a safe spot to stretch our legs and was also a well-known wintering area for Hume's Whitethroat, which showed well. Around the wetlands here were both White-bellied Sea and Grey-headed Fish Eagles, and there were many Great Stone-curlews.



Yellow-fronted Barbet (Craig Robson)

On one evening, just outside the park, we enjoyed great views of both Jerdon's and Indian Nightjars, before heading back to the hotel.

We continued south to Tissamaharama (Tissa), and settled in to a very nice hotel by one of the immense tanks (reservoirs). During our first afternoon at Tissa, we took in a variety of sites around the tanks, other wetlands and gardens. Stake-outs for White-naped Woodpecker, Eastern Barn Owl, Indian Scops Owl, and Jungle Owlet all came up trumps, and the woodpeckers were particularly enjoyable, as we saw a pair at their nest-hole with a pre-fledging youngster sticking its head out to investigate the surroundings. On the tanks, we spotted Cotton Pygmy-geese, several Black Bitterns and Watercocks, large numbers of Pheasant-tailed Jacanas in breeding plumage, White-winged Terns, and Indian (or Clamorous) Reed Warbler etc.

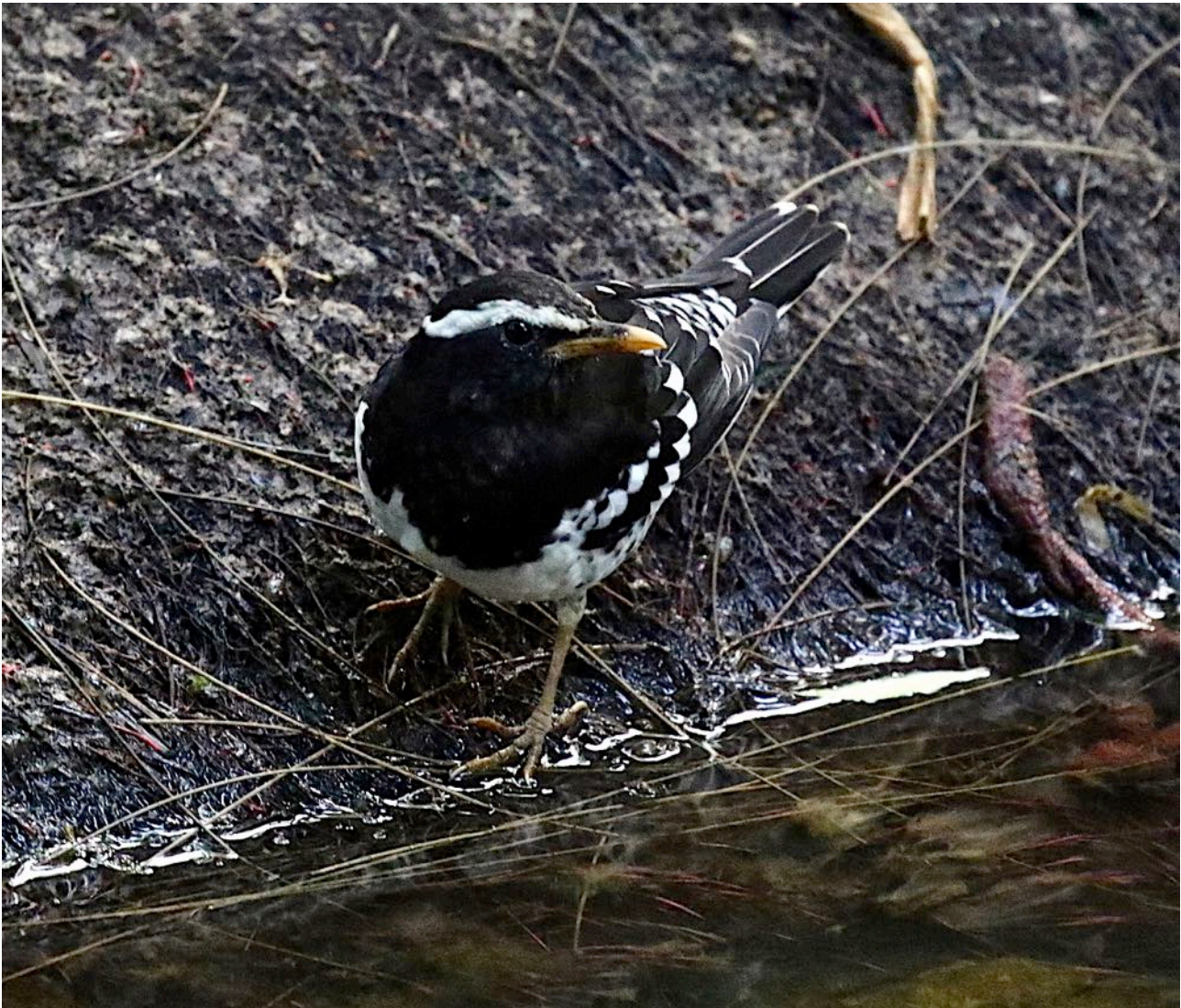


Indian Stone-curlew (Craig Robson)

Early the next morning we headed for Bundala National Park, another very birdy location, this time right on the coast. Largely consisting of an excellent mosaic of huge varied wetlands and scrubby forest, we added Indian Stone-curlew, Yellow-wattled Lapwing and Greater Painted-snipe to our tally. At the edge of the reserve are the famous salt pans, which were teeming with shorebirds during this visit. Thousands of Lesser Sand Plovers were admixed with a few Greater Sand, Kentish, Grey and Pacific Golden Plovers, Black-tailed Godwits, Ruddy Turnstone, and of course the excellent Small Pratincoles that breed on the sandy

bunds. There was also a nice mixture of terns, with Caspian, Greater Crested, Gull-billed, Little, and Whiskered; as well as a single Brown-headed Gull. Rarer species were represented by several Common Ringed Plovers and a handful of Red-necked Phalaropes. We also found our only Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Larks and Oriental Skylarks of the tour here. Amongst the non-birds, there were more Asian Elephants, large numbers of Toque Macaques and Tufted Grey Langurs, and some Mugger Crocodiles.

From Bundala, we drove up into the mountains, visiting an old overgrown tea estate where Saman quickly found us a roosting Brown Wood Owl, before arriving at a small stream on the outskirts of Nuwara Eliya. One of the many sites for the elusive and often downright difficult Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush, I wasn't holding-out for much luck on this initial attempt - but I was fortunate to be proved completely wrong. As THE time approached, we heard a bird calling and before long we were getting very close views of a female at a small waterfall. The male also put in a very brief appearance. Well satisfied, we headed off to our hotel.



A male Pied Thrush in Nuwara Eliya (Craig Robson)

With the whistling thrush under-the-belt, our visit to Horton Plains on the following day was a much more relaxed affair than normal. Starting near Pattipola on the way up, Saman successfully showed us a couple of nice Sri Lanka Wood Pigeons at their early morning spot, and we got good views of a cracking male Kashmir Flycatcher in full breeding plumage nearby. Up on the high plateau we enjoyed great views of Yellow-eared Bulbuls and Sri Lanka White-eyes, then a showy roadside Sri Lanka Bush Warbler, then a male Dull Blue Flycatcher, and finally a fantastic and highly responsive male Crimson-backed Flameback. We celebrated a very successful morning with tea and biscuits at the café, where a pair of Hill Swallows were busy nest-

building. Before lunch, another of Saman's sites produced the desired Legge's Hawk-Eagle, this time a prolonged view through the scope.

In the afternoon, we birded Victoria Park in Nuwara Eliya. The main target was Pied Thrush, but the birds only appeared briefly (though quite well) in the evening, when they were going to roost. Otherwise, we found another Kashmir Flycatcher (though rather dull compared to the one in the morning), Brown-breasted Flycatcher, and several Forest Wagtails.

Very early the following morning, before leaving town, we returned to the park, and this time had superb close views of several male Pied Thrushes.

A relatively easy drive delivered us to the tour's final destination at Kandy. An evening visit to Udawattekele Sanctuary was a fairly leisurely affair, as we had already seen everything, though Southern Hill Myna showed again. Further attempts to find Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl drew a blank, and this was to be the tour's bogey-bird!

A guided tour of the Temple of the Tooth, where the ancient relic of Buddha's wisdom tooth is kept, followed breakfast on our final morning. A very peaceful experience, and a good way to end our trip, and well worth the visit despite our obsessive birding tendencies! After this it was time to begin our journey towards the coast, with a final lunch en route,

Thus, our three-part odyssey across South Asia came to an end, rich in endemic birds, in some great landscapes, and all fuelled by some excellent cuisine.



Kitulgala (Craig Robson)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leaders are indicated by the symbol (NL)

BIRDS

Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*

Cotton Pygmy Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus*

Garganey *Anas querquedula* 150 at Kurichi Kulam, Coimbatore.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* 25 at Kurichi Kulam.

Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* 12 at Kurichi Kulam.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* 40 at Kurichi Kulam.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* Three at Kurichi Kulam.

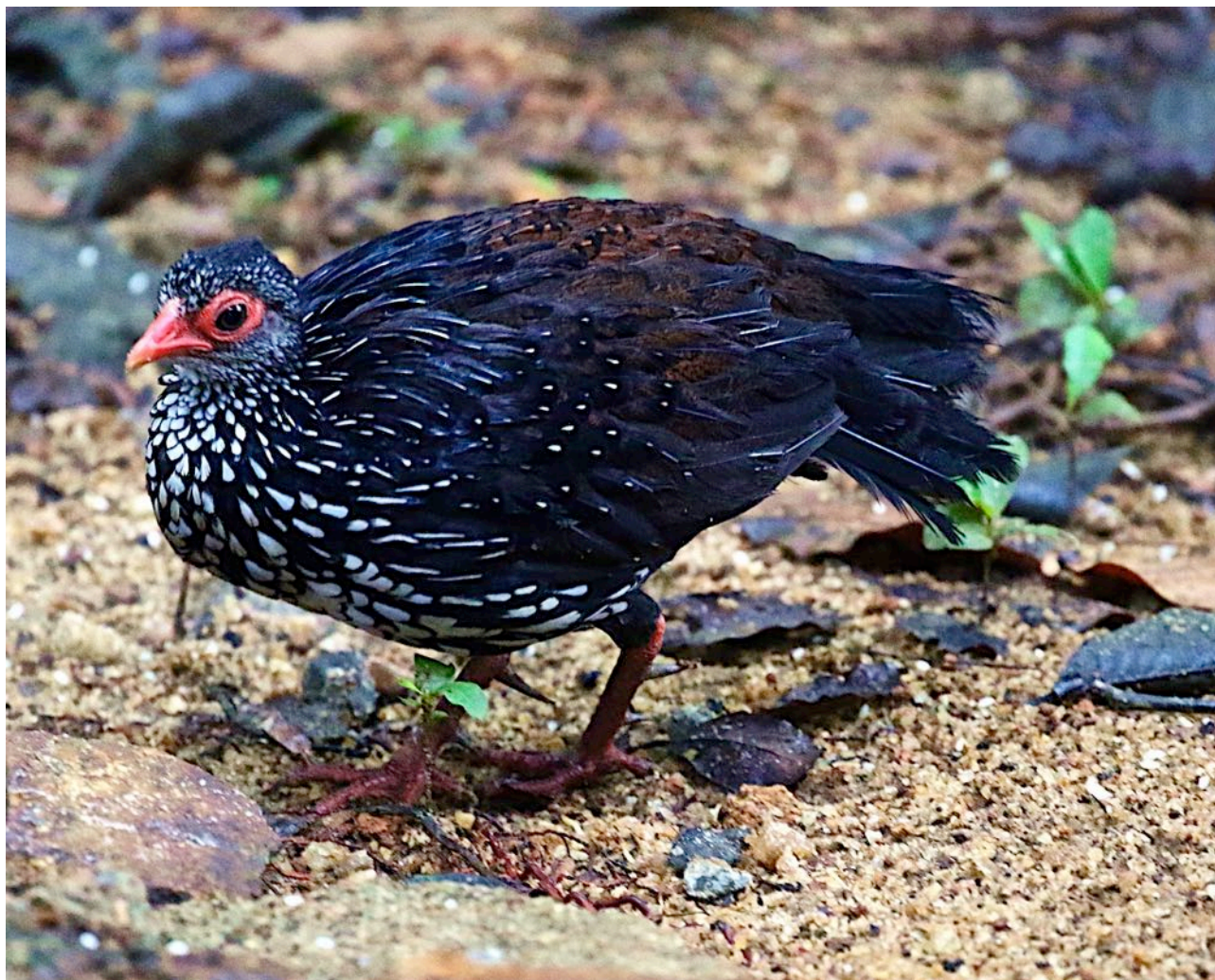
Andaman Teal *Anas albogularis* At least 83 on S Andaman, including 82 at Ograbranj.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* One on S Andaman, at Ograbranj.

Grey Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus* Two along the Mysuru (Mysore) ring-road.

Jungle Bush Quail *Perdica asiatica* Ten at Mudumalai.

Painted Bush Quail *Perdica erythrorhyncha* Only heard near Ooty, then a family of three seen at Eravikulam NP.



Finally, some great views of Sri Lanka Spurfowl (Craig Robson)

Red Spurfowl *Galloperdix spadicea* Several showed briefly at Periyar.

Sri Lanka Spurfowl *Galloperdix bicalcarata* Stunningly close looks at a pair at Sinharaja. Heard at Kitulgala.

Grey Junglefowl *Gallus sonneratii* Seen regularly in S India

Sri Lanka Junglefowl *Gallus lafayettii* Many close encounters.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Seven near Coimbatore, including youngsters.

Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*

Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* Four at Periyar, and four at Sri Lankan wetlands.

Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus* A total of three seen on Sri Lanka.

Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

Red-naped Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa* Five seen along the way from Mysuru to Bandipur.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* One at Bundala National Park.



The attractive and rather under-valued Red-naped Ibis (Craig Robson)

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* 15 at Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary (where breeding); 4 at Bundala NP.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* A single at Ograbranj, S Andaman.

Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* Three seen near Tissa.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Striated Heron *Butorides striata* Common on wetlands on S Andaman (*spodiogaster*).

Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* Common in India and Sri Lanka

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia*

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra* Small number on S Andaman.

Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* We were lucky enough to see four wintering birds at Sippighat, S Andaman.

Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*



Spot-billed Pelicans (Craig Robson)

Little Cormorant *Microcarbo niger*

Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* 27 at Allalasandra Kere, Bengaluru (Bangalore); two singles Sri Lanka.

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Scattered in S India and Sri Lanka.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* A pair at Ramdevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary, near Bengaluru.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes* Small numbers on S Andaman.

Indian Vulture *Gyps indicus* A breeding pair at Ramdevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary.

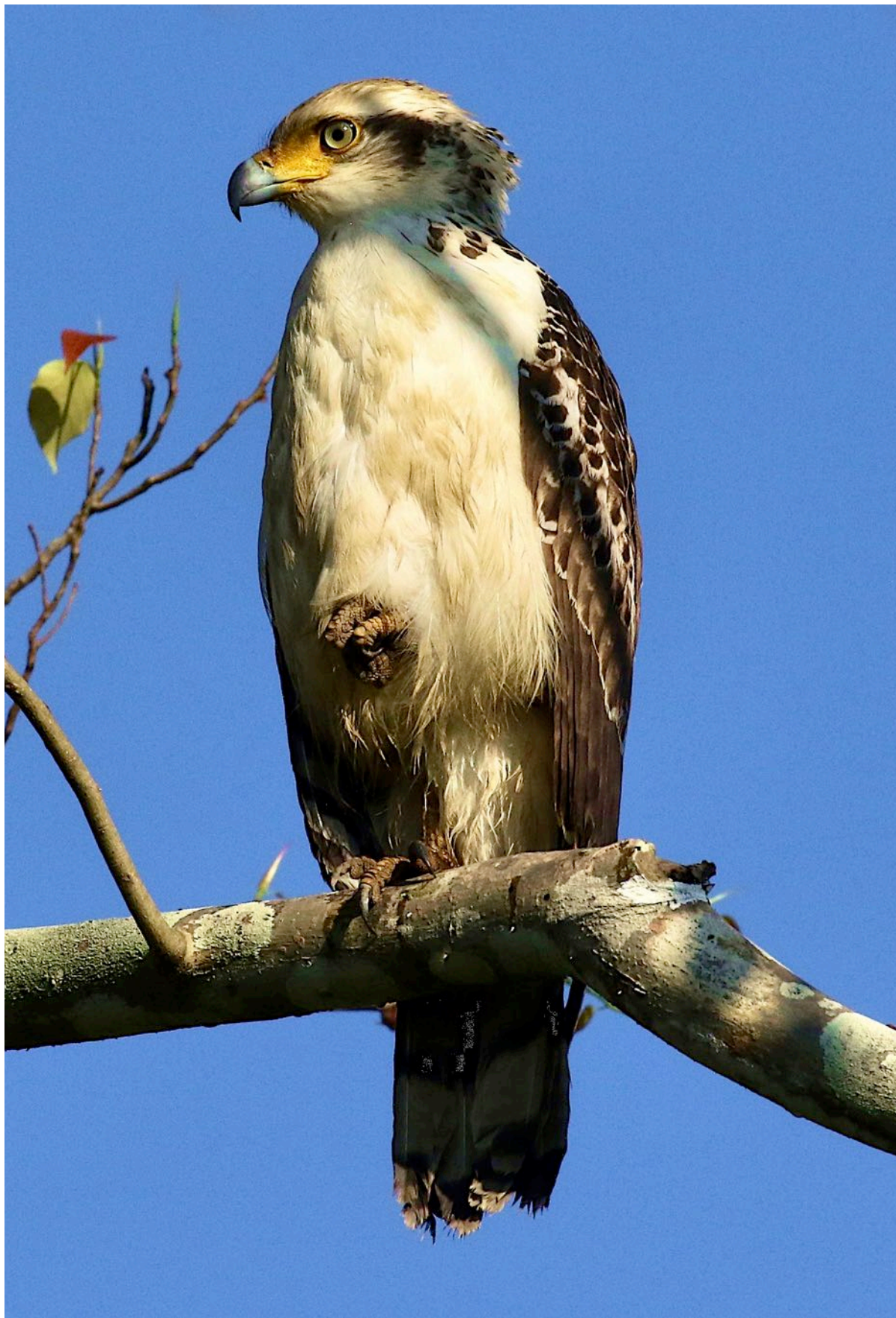
Red headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus* Pair (1 photographed) Murugan Temple Hill, Mudumalai, in Craig's absence!

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* A tame juvenile *davisoni* on S Andaman, others in S India & Sri Lanka.
Andaman Serpent Eagle *Spilornis elgini* Seen well and scoped at Chidiyatapu.
Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* One at Ranganathittu BS.
Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus [cirrhatus] limnaeetus* Several on S Andaman.
Changeable Hawk-Eagle (Crested H-E) *Nisaetus [cirrhatus] cirrhatus* Frequent S India & Sri Lanka.
Legge's Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus kelaarti* One in flight at Sinharaja, and another scoped near Nuwara Eliya.
Rufous-bellied Eagle *Lophotriorchis kienerii* One in flight at Kuttikkanam, en route to Thattekad.
Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis* Just one briefly at Periyar.
Indian Spotted Eagle *Clanga hastata* 1 snapped by the group at Murugan Temple, while Craig's was lark hunting.
Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus* Four singles in S India, and one in Sri Lanka.



Lesser Fish Eagle (Craig Robson)

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* A juvenile perched-up at dawn at Jungle Hut.
Shikra *Accipiter badius* Occasional in S India.
Besra *Accipiter virgatus* One at Sinharaja (*besra*).
Black Kite *Milvus [migrans] govinda* Common S India. One at Ograbranj, S Andaman was unexpected.
Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*



A tame juvenile of the endemic Andaman form of Crested Serpent Eagle (Craig Robson)

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Lesser Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus humilis* One close perched bird at Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary.

Grey-headed Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus ichthyaetus* One scoped at Uda Walawe.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus* A couple seen in the Western Ghats.

Andaman Crake *Rallina canningi* Great views of a calling bird at Kalatang, S Andaman.

Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* A couple of individuals at Sinharaja; seen well.

Slaty-breasted Rail *Gallirallus striatus* A single bird on S Andaman, in a small creek (endemic *obscurior*).

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* Not uncommon on S Andaman and Sri Lanka.

Grey-headed Swamphen *Porphyrio poliocephalus*

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* Small numbers on S Andaman, and four at Kurichi Kulam.

Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* A few on Sri Lanka (endemic *leggei*).

Indian Stone-curlew *Burhinus indicus* One seen well at Bundala NP.

Great Stone-curlew *Esacus recurvirostris* Highest numbers in Sri Lanka, with 15 at Uda Walawe NP.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*



Yellow-wattled Lapwings (Craig Robson)

Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* Nine at the Mysuru ring-road and four at Bundala NP.

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* Five or so at Bundala Salt pans.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* Five at Bundala.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius [mongolus] atrifrons* Mostly in Sri Lanka, with 2000+ at Bundala.

Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* A small number seen on S Andaman and at Bundala.

Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* A nice pair at Bundala NP, at the crack of dawn.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Many at Tissa, in breeding plumage; a few on S Andaman.

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus* Four at Allalasandra Kere, and one at Thattekad.

Whimbrel *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus*

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* Minimum of 35 at Sippighat on S Andaman.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Hundreds flying over at Tissa, and also seen at Bundala.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* One near Chidiyatapu, S Andaman, and 15+ on the salt pans at Bundala.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* S Andaman, Kurichi Kulam, and Bundala.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* 100+ at , Kurichi Kulam.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* 75+ on the S Andaman wetlands.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* A few seen on S Andaman.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* Many at Kurichi Kulam and Bundala.

Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura* A handful on S Andaman, and ten or so at Periyar.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* Ten or so on S Andaman.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* Six at Bundala Salt pans were a pleasing sight.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea* 15+ seen on the salt pans at Bundala. One nest with two eggs.

Brown-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus* One at Bundala.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* Not uncommon on Sri Lanka.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* 20+ on the Bundala salt pans.

Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* 25+ on the Bundala salt pans.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

River Tern *Sterna aurantia* A pair at Ranganathittu BS, and one along the Periyar River at Hornbill Camp, Thattekad.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* Scores flying to their roost at Tissa.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* Wild types were certainly present in parts of S India and in Sri Lanka at Uda Walawe.

Nilgiri Wood Pigeon *Columba elphinstonii* Small numbers, but seen very well.

Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon *Columba torringtoniae* Great scope views of two at Pattipola.

Andaman Wood Pigeon *Columba palumboides* Two at Chidiyatapu. More great scope views.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* Numerous on S Andaman.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* Small numbers in S India.

Andaman Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia rufipennis* Just a couple, but very good views.

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* Endemic *maxima* on S Andaman and *robinsoni* on Sri Lanka.

Orange-breasted Green Pigeon *Treron bicinctus* A few seen in Sri Lanka (endemic *leggei*).

Sri Lanka Green Pigeon *Treron pompadora* Occasional in small numbers.

Grey-fronted Green Pigeon *Treron affinis* Small numbers in S India, with good scope views.

Andaman Green Pigeon *Treron chloropterus* Not uncommon.

Yellow-footed Green Pigeon *Treron phoenicopterus* One scoped at Mudumalai (*chlorigaster*).

Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea* Rather common S Andaman (*andamanica*); Sri Lanka & Chinnar WS (*pusilla*).

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia* Ten at Periyar (Western Ghats endemic *cuprea*).

Green-billed Coucal *Centropus chlororhynchus* Some great views of this at Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

Andaman Coucal *Centropus andamanensis* One of the commonest endemics.

Sirkeer Malkoha *Taccocua leschenaultii* Two seen in the scrub at Uda Walawe NP.

Red-faced Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus* At least seven at Sinharaja, and some fine views.

Blue-faced Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus viridirostris* Several at Uda Walawe.

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* Two seen in Tamil Nadu, and six in Sri Lanka.

Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopaceus*
Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* A male seen well at Chidiyatapu.
Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii* (H) One at Kitulgala.
Grey-bellied Cuckoo *Cacomantis passerinus*
Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx varius* Scattered sightings, with some very confiding individuals.
Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanica* One at its roost-tree near Tissa.
Andaman Masked Owl (A Barn O) *Tyto deroepstorffi* A superb pair were spot-lighted in Port Blair.
Sri Lanka Bay Owl *Phodilus assimilis* A wonderful calling bird during a night-time foray at Thattekad.
Serendib Scops Owl *Otus thilohoffmanni* Seen very well at its day-roost at Sinharaja.
Andaman Scops Owl *Otus balli* Full-on views at Chidiyatapu.
Indian Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* One at Thattekad (with a frog dinner), and three on Sri Lanka.
Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* A roosting pair at Periyar.
Oriental Scops Owl (Walden's S O) *Otus [sunia] modestus* Common by voice on S Andaman, one seen very well.
Indian Eagle-Owl *Bubo bengalensis* One roosting right out in the open at Ramdevvara Betta Vulture Sanctuary.
Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl *B. nipalensis* (H) Only heard this year. If only the helpers at Chinnar had stayed with the bird!
Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* Three individuals seen in S India and Sri Lanka.
Mottled Wood Owl *Strix ocellata* Two roosting birds at Thattekad. Very good scope views of this lovely *Strix*.
Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica* Great scope views of one roosting at Surrey TE; heard at Udawattekele.
Jungle Owlet *Glaucidium radiatum* Four birds seen; three *malabaricum* in Kerala, one nominate in Sri Lanka.
Chestnut-backed Owlet *Glaucidium castanotum* Two or three seen at Kitulgala, a handsome Sri Lanka endemic.
Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* One at the Mysuru ring-road and two at Mudumalai.
Brown Hawk-Owl (B Boobook) *Ninox scutulata* One at Periyar, and two at Thattekad.
Hume's Hawk-Owl (H Boobook) *Ninox obscura* Two seen well at Chidiyatapu, S Andaman.
Andaman Hawk-Owl (A Boobook) *Ninox affinis* A preforming pair at Chidiyatapu.
Sri Lanka Frogmouth *Batrachostomus moniliger* A roosting pair and then a lone female at Sinharaja.
Great Eared Nightjar *Lyncornis macrotis* About five seen at dusk near Thattekad.
Jungle Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* Great looks at three at Murugan Temple Hill, Mudumalai; one at Thattekad.
Jerdon's Nightjar *Caprimulgus atripennis* Seen very well at Thattekad and Uda Walawe; perched and in flight.
Andaman Nightjar *Caprimulgus andamanicus* A pair performed well at Chidiyatapu.
Indian Nightjar *Caprimulgus asiaticus* Scattered sightings in S India and Sri Lanka. Excellent views.
Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* A lovely roosting bird at Murugan.
Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata*
Plume-toed Swiftlet *Collocalia affinis* Common on S Andaman. Split from Glossy.
Indian Swiftlet *Aerodramus unicolor*
Edible-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus fuciphagus* Quite a few on S Andaman.
White-rumped Spinetail *Zoonavena sylvatica* (NL) Steve saw a flock of c.15 coming to drink at Hornbill Camp.
Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus* Occasional throughout.
Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*
Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* 20+ circling over Murugan Temple, and one at Eravikulam NP.
Little Swift *Apus affinis*
Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus* Small numbers in the Sri Lankan rainforests, and some good views.
Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*
Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* A few along the river at Hornbill Camp.
Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis* Frequent in the Andamans, one at Chinnar, a few more in Sri Lanka.
Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda* Nice close looks at two in mangroves on S Andaman.
White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* Sightings included the Andaman endemic form *saturation*.
Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* Two singles on S Andaman.
Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris* Several seen on S Andaman.
Blue-eared Kingfisher *Alcedo meninting* A cracking juvenile at Chidiyatapu (Andaman endemic *rufigastra*).
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Those in Sri Lanka were the S Indian Subcontinent endemic race *taprobana*.
Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher (Black-backed K) *Ceyx [erithaca] erithaca* Three stunners at Kitulgala.
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Three in S India at Ranganathittu BS, and two at Bundala.
Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*
Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*



Brown Fish Owl (Craig Robson)



Roosting Savanna Nightjar (Craig Robson)

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti*

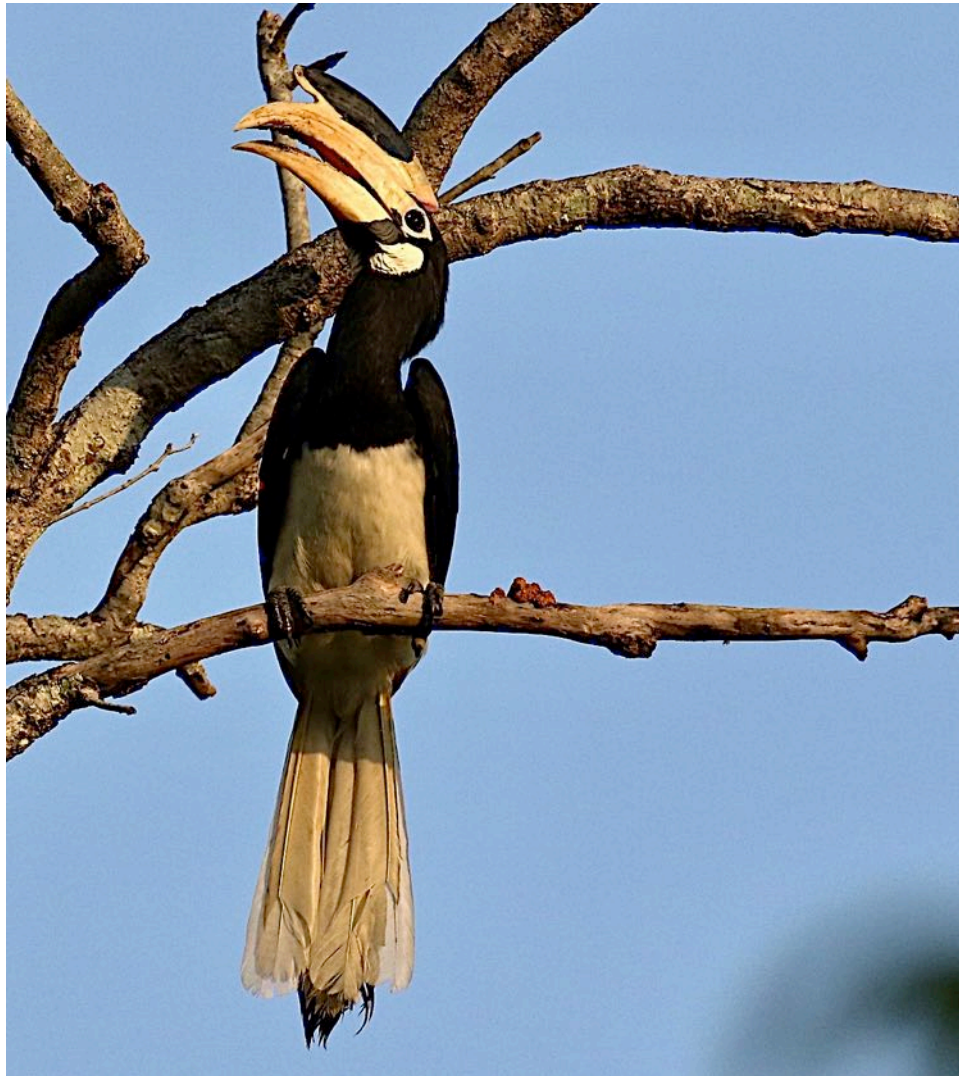
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Great Hornbill (G Pied H) *Buceros bicornis* Five stonkers at Periyar.

Malabar Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus* Great looks at Uda Walawe, and heard at Tissa.

Malabar Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros griseus* Several good sightings in S India.

Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros gingalensis* Several good sightings in Sri Lanka.



Malabar Pied Hornbill (Craig Robson)

Brown-headed Barbet *Psilopogon zeylanicus*

White-cheeked Barbet *Psilopogon viridis* A common S Indian endemic.

Yellow-fronted Barbet *Psilopogon flavifrons* A common Sri Lankan endemic.

Crimson-fronted Barbet *Psilopogon rubricapillus* One seen superbly near Kitulgala. Others heard in Sri Lanka.

Malabar Barbet *Psilopogon malabaricus* Quite common at Periyar where we had good views of many.

Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephalus*

Heart-spotted Woodpecker *Hemicircus canente* One at Mudumalai and two at Periyar, with best views latterly.

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus nanus* 1 Mudumalai (*cinereigula*); 2 Kitulgala (*gymnophthalmos*).

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Leiopicus mahrattensis* Two at Mudumalai, and one at Uda Walawe.

Freckle-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos analis* Seen regularly on S Andaman (endemic *andamanensis*).

Andaman Woodpecker *Dryocopus hodgei* Some good views of these handsome birds.

Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus* One at Jungle Hut (*chorigaster*) and several on Sri Lanka (*wellsi*).

Streak-throated Woodpecker *Picus xanthopygaeus* A nice male at Hornbill Camp, Thattekad.

Common Flameback *Dinopium javanense* A pair at Periyar were unexpected. Western Ghats form *malabaricum*.

Black-rumped Flameback *Dinopium benghalense*

Red-backed Flameback *Dinopium psarodes* At least six of these newly-split beauties were seen in Sri Lanka.

Greater Flameback (Malabar F) *Chrysocolaptes [guttacristatus] socialis* Several sightings of this potential split.

Crimson-backed Flameback (Sri Lanka F) *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi* A total of five birds seen in Sri Lanka.

White-naped Woodpecker *Chrysocolaptes festivus* A pair at the nest, and their pre-fledging juvenile at Tissa.

Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus* (NL) Helen got one with SK at Periyar.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* Just one seen briefly near Munnar.

Plum-headed Parakeet *Psittacula cyanocephala*

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* Small numbers on S Andaman.

Long-tailed Parakeet *Psittacula longicauda* Common on S Andaman. The endemic *tytleri* subspecies



Long-tailed Parakeet on S Andaman (Craig Robson)

Blue-winged Parakeet *Psittacula columboides* Common in S India.

Layard's Parakeet *Psittacula calthrapae* Common around Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* Widespread sightings.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Vernal Hanging Parrot *Loriculus vernalis*

Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot *Loriculus beryllinus* One of the commoner endemics.

Indian Pitta *Pitta brachyura* Three seen well and many heard in S India and Sri Lanka.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*

Malabar Woodshrike *Tephrodornis sylvicola* Nine seen well at Periyar.

Common Woodshrike *T. pondicerianus* Occasional individuals in S India. A recently fledged juv. at Mudumalai.

Sri Lanka Woodshrike *Tephrodornis affinis* A few in the Dry Zone woodlands.

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus* Just ten on wires at Thattekad.

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*

Marshall's Iora (White-tailed I) *A. nigrolutea* A bonus Indian Subcontinent endemic write-in: 2 males at Uda Walawe.

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei* Five seen on S Andaman (*andamana*), and one at Periyar (nominate).

Andaman Cuckooshrike *Coracina dobsoni* Nice looks at a couple of these smart endemics.

Black-headed Cuckooshrike *Coracina melanoptera* Just three in S India.

Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* Three on S Andaman.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* Widespread, in S Andaman, S India & Sri Lanka.

White-bellied Minivet *Pericrocotus erythropygius* A nice pair tracked down in scrubby woodland at Mudumalai.

Orange Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* Seen regularly in the forests of S India and Sri Lanka.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus* Frequently seen on S Andaman (race *andamanensis*).



Indian Pitta in a bamboo clump (Craig Robson)

Mangrove Whistler *Pachycephala cinerea* A pair seen well on S Andaman.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

Bay-backed Shrike *Lanius vittatus* In fairly good number around Mudumalai.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

Indian Golden Oriole *Oriolus kundoo* Scattered sightings in S Andaman and S India.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* 4 on S Andaman (*andamanensis*). Singles Jungle Hut and Periyar (*diffusus*).

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* Small numbers on S Andaman

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

White-bellied Drongo *D. caerulescens* A few in Tamil Nadu (nominate); more common in Sri Lanka (*leucopygialis*).

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*

Andaman Drongo *Dicrurus andamanensis* Rather common on S Andaman.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus* Regular sightings on S Andaman (*otiosus*), also at Mudumalai.

Sri Lanka Drongo *Dicrurus lophorinus* Seen only in the Wet Zone forests of Sri Lanka.

White-spotted Fantail *Rhipidura albogularis* A pair at Ranganathittu BS; and one or two at Kalhatti, near Ooty.

White-browed Fantail *Rhipidura aureola* Three in Sri Lanka (*compressirostris*).

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*

Indian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*



White-spotted Fantail (Craig Robson)

Sri Lanka Blue Magpie *Urocissa ornata* Around ten at Sinharaja.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* Regularly seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

White-bellied Treepie *Dendrocitta leucogastra* Not uncommon at Periyar, a real beauty!

Andaman Treepie *Dendrocitta bayleii* Rather common this year, with 20 noted.

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Eastern Jungle Crow *Corvus levaillantii* Frequent in small numbers on S Andaman.

Indian Jungle Crow *Corvus culminatus* Common to frequent in S India and Sri Lanka.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Cinereous Tit *Parus cinereus* Not uncommon in S India, and a single in Sri Lanka (*mahrattarum*).

Indian Black-lored Tit *Machlolophus aplonotus* An excellent family group near Munnar (*travancoreensis*).

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix griseus* Just a few at Bundala Salt pans.

Singing Bush Lark *Mirafra cantillans* (NL) One was noted along the Mysuru ring-road.

Jerdon's Bush Lark *Mirafra affinis* Common at our stop along the Mysuru ring-road and in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* Four on the salt pans at Bundala.

Malabar Lark *Galerida malabarica* A flock of 16 eventually flew in at Murugan Temple Hill, Mudumalai.



Red-whiskered Bulbul (Craig Robson)

Grey-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus priocephalus* Heard at Periyar, then about eight seen well at Thattekad.

Andaman Bulbul *Pycnonotus fuscoflavescens* Not uncommon in the forests of S Andaman.

Black-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus* A few of these handsome birds seen in Wet Zone Sri Lanka.

Flame-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus gularis* Eight at Periyar, and four at Thattekad.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*

Yellow-throated Bulbul *P. xantholaemus* Four at Ramdevara Betta VS, and some nice views in the end.

Yellow-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus penicillatus* A gorgeous bulbul seen well in highland Sri Lanka.

White-browed Bulbul *Pycnonotus luteolus* Not uncommon in dry country in S India and Sri Lanka.

Yellow-browed Bulbul *Acritillas indica* Some nice examples at Periyar, many more seen in Sri Lanka.

Square-tailed Bulbul *Hypsipetes ganeesa*

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Just a couple on S Andaman.

Hill Swallow *Hirundo domicola* A small number seen in upland parts of S India and Sri Lanka.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* This beauty was seen at Allalasandra Kere, Bengaluru, and Ranganathittu BS.

Dusky Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne concolor* A few seen near Bangalore and near Munnar.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* A few seen in S India.

Sri Lanka Swallow *Cecropis hyperythra* Not uncommon in Sri Lanka, being recorded on five dates.

Streak-throated Swallow (Indian Cliff S) *Petrochelidon fluvicola* An excellent breeding colony at Ranganathittu BS.



Yellow-browed Bulbul (Craig Robson)

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* A few seen on S Andaman.

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis* A dozen around Ooty.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* One seen & several heard S Andaman; one heard Jungle Hut.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* Singing and calling on S Andaman; two seen.

Green Warbler *Phylloscopus nitidus* Common in Sri Lanka, and in small numbers in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Quite common in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* A single calling bird at Mannarghat Nursery, S Andaman.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *P. magnirostris* Many heard and several seen in S India & Sri Lanka, mainly in highlands.

Western Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus occipitalis* One in a bird flock near Munnar.

Clamorous Reed Warbler (Indian R W) *Acrocephalus [stentoreus] brunescens* One S Andaman; several Tissa.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* Common in S India; less so in Sri Lanka.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* One at Ograbranj, S Andaman. Heard at Chidiyatapu.
Sri Lanka Bush Warbler *Elaphrornis palliseri* One performed admirably at Horton Plains.
Broad-tailed Grassbird *Schoenicola platyurus* One popped up at Rajamala, but unfortunately only for Craig & SK!
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*
Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsonii*
Jungle Prinia *Prinia sylvatica* In good number in Dry Zone Sri Lanka.
Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis*
Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*
Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*



Indian Scimitar Babbler at Mudumalai (Craig Robson)

Indian Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii* Several good looks in S India.
Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus melanurus* Several at scattered locations in Sri Lanka; seen very well.
Tawny-bellied Babbler *Dumetia hyperythra* 3 Kalhatti, Ooty (*albogularis*); nest-building pairs Uda Walawe (*phillipsi*).
Dark-fronted Babbler *Rhopocichla atriceps* Frequent at Periyar (*bourdilloni*), and in Wet Zone Sri Lanka (*nigrifrons*).
Brown-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe poioicephala* A few seen at Jungle Hut, and heard en route to Thattekad (*brucei*).
Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps* One seen at Jungle Hut; heard elsewhere S India (*olivaceum*).
Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscicapillus* A brilliant reactive pair at Kitulgala.
Large Grey Babbler *Turdoides malcolmi* Four seen just before reaching Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary.
Rufous Babbler *Turdoides subrufa* Great views of a small group at Periyar (*hyperythra*).

Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striata* Scattered sightings in S India (*malabarica*).

Orange-billed Babbler *Turdoides rufescens* Rather common in the Wet Zone forests of Sri Lanka.

Yellow-billed Babbler *Turdoides affinis* Common in S India (nominata) and much of Sri Lanka (*taprobanus*).

Ashy-headed Laughingthrush *Garrulax cinereifrons* 20+ in mixed-species feeding flocks at Sinharaja.

Wynaad Laughingthrush *G. delesserti* A tour highlight at Periyar; a group of 6+, to the sound of feeding elephants!

Nilgiri Laughingthrush *Montecincla cachinnans* Some cracking and confiding birds at Ooty.

Palani Laughingthrush *Montecincla fairbanki* Quite common around Munnar, and similarly confiding at times.



A key bird-wave endemic in Sri Lanka: Ashy-headed Laughingthrush (Craig Robson)

Hume's Whitethroat *Sylvia althaea* One at its regular wintering spot in Uda Walawe NP, Sri Lanka.

Yellow-eyed Babbler *Chrysomma sinense* Scattered in dry scrubby woodland of S India & Sri Lanka.

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus* S Andaman (*nicobaricus*); W Ghats (*nilgiriensis*); Sri Lanka (*egregius*).

Sri Lanka White-eye *Zosterops ceylonensis* Good numbers around Nuwara Eliya.

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella* Seen and heard often on S Andaman (*andamanica*), also some in S India.

Indian Nuthatch *Sitta castanea* A small number encountered in the Jungle Hut area.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*

Sri Lanka Hill Myna *Gracula ptilogenys* At least 12 in the Sinharaja area, and some close views.

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* 11 logged for S Andaman (*andamanensis*).

Southern Hill Myna *Gracula indica* Noisy and obvious in certain well-wooded parts of S India and Sri Lanka.

Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus*

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Daurian Starling *Agropsar sturninus* Four seen going to roost at Garacharma, S Andaman, with a male scoped.

Chestnut-tailed Starling (Grey-headed S) *Sturnia malabarica* 300 at Allalasandra Kere, Bengaluru; 3 at Thattekad.

White-headed Starling *Sturnia erythropygia* 40 logged for S Andaman.

Malabar Starling *Sturnia blythii* 25 logged at Periyar; mainly standing on exposed perches in early morning.

Brahminy Starling *Sturnia pagodarum* Numerous in the dry country of the Mudumalai/Jungle Hut area.

White-faced Starling *Sturnornis albofrontatus* Three scoped near the entrance to Sinharaja Forest Reserve.

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* Typically random: one at Allalasandra Kere, and five at Uda Walawe, Sri Lanka.



A pair of White-headed Starlings (Craig Robson)

Pied Thrush *Geokichla wardi* Three superb males in Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya.

Orange-headed Thrush *Geokichla citrina* Two on S Andaman (*andamanensis*), and three at Jungle Hut (*cyanotis*).

Spot-winged Thrush *Geokichla spiloptera* Many seen in the Wet Zone forests of Sri Lanka.

Nilgiri Thrush *Zoothera neilgherriensis* One was scoped in a bamboo clump at Jungle Hut. Mega!
Sri Lanka Thrush *Zoothera imbricata* A great encounter with this formerly tricky species at Sinharaja.
Indian Blackbird *Turdus simillimus* Obvious & confiding around Ooty (nominate); 2 at Eravikulam NP (*bourdilloni*).
Indian Robin *Copsychus fulicatus*
Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*
White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* Two at Jungle Hut, and one at Udawattekele.
Andaman Shama *Copsychus albiventris* Not uncommon on S Andaman.
Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*
Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* Frequently seen, in S India and Sri Lanka.



Male Nilgiri Flycatcher (Craig Robson)

White-bellied Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis pallipes* Nice views of a male at Periyar.
Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*
Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* A couple of males at Kuttikkanam, en route to Thattekad.
Dull-blue Flycatcher *Eumyias sordidus* A confiding male at Horton Plains, Sri Lanka.
Nilgiri Flycatcher *Eumyias albicaudatus* A few seen around Ooty, and particularly Munnar.
Indian Blue Robin *Larvivora brunnea* Several sightings in S India and Sri Lanka, where it winters.

Nilgiri Blue Robin *Myiomela major* One in the hotel garden at Ooty was a bit surprising, and the only one seen.
White-bellied Blue Robin *Myiomela albiventris* Seven in the Munnar area, showing very well at Rajamala.
Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush *Myophonus blighi* Very good views of a female near Nuwara Eliya; the male briefly.
Malabar Whistling Thrush *Myophonus horsfieldii* Many sightings in S India.
Rusty-tailed Flycatcher *Muscicapa ruficauda* Seen well in S India, where it winters; 5 logged.
Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* A few on S Andaman.
Kashmir Flycatcher *Ficedula subrubra* A superb male at Pattipola and another bird at Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya.
Black-and-orange Flycatcher *Ficedula nigrorufa* Seen well at Doddabetta Pk, Ooty; also near Munnar. Gorgeous.
Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
Blue-capped Rock Thrush *Monticola cinclorhynchus* Two singles near Munnar.
Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata*
Jerdon's Leafbird *Chloropsis jerdoni* Just one at Mudumalai.
Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*
Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile* A couple briefly en route down from Ooty.
Legge's Flowerpecker *Dicaeum vincens* A pair performed at Sinharaja.
Pale-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*
Nilgiri Flowerpecker *Dicaeum concolor* More widespread than its name suggests.
Andaman Flowerpecker *Dicaeum virescens* Not uncommon on S Andaman.
Purple-rumped Sunbird *Leptocoma zeylonica* This beauty was common in S India and Sri Lanka.
Crimson-backed Sunbird (Small S) *Leptocoma minima* Scarce: 5 at roadside stop below Ooty, and 1 at Thattekad.
Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus*
Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis* A few seen on S Andaman (endemic race *andamanicus*).
Loten's Sunbird *Cinnyris lotenius* Occasional in S India and Sri Lanka.
Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra* One seen and several heard at Periyar.
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Yellow-throated Sparrow *Gymnoris xanthocollis* Just a few seen at Mudumalai/Jungle Hut.
Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*
Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava* About ten at Ramdevvara Betta Vulture Sanctuary.
Indian Silverbill *Euodice malabarica* Just five at the vulture sanctuary.
White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* Occasional throughout. Endemic race *fumigata* on S Andaman.
Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*
Black-throated Munia *Lonchura kelaarti* A pair nest-building, plus one, at Sinharaja. Tough.
Tricolored Munia *Lonchura malacca* A few seen well at Uda Walawe and Tissa.
Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* Seen well on S Andaman, and at Jungle Hut & Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya.
Western Yellow Wagtail (Grey-headed W) *Motacilla [flava] thunbergi* A few in Sri Lanka.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* The commonest form on S Andaman.
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla maderaspatensis* A small number seen in S India.
Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*
Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* Great views of one at Murugan Temple Hill, Mudumalai.
Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* Two along the Mysuru Ring-road.
Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 20+ on S Andaman, mainly at Sippighat.
Nilgiri Pipit *Anthus nilghiriensis* Excellent views of six in the Munnar area.
Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* Several at Jungle Hut and Ooty. A surprising write-in.

MAMMALS

Asian Elephant (Indian E) *Elephas maximus* A good spread of sightings in S India and Sri Lanka .

Bonnet Macaque *Macaca radiata* Common in S India.

Toque Macaque *Macaca sinica* Common and fairly widespread in Sri Lanka

Southern Plains Grey Langur *Semnopithecus dussumieri* Numerous in drier parts of S India.

Tufted Grey Langur *Semnopithecus priam* Plenty seen in the south of Sri Lanka.

Nilgiri Langur *Trachypithecus johnii* Many good encounters in the Western Ghats.

Purple-faced Langur *T. vetulus* 25 in Sri Lanka. Kitulgala (*nestor*); Sinharaja (nominate); Nuwara Eliya (*monticola*).



Purple-faced Langur at Sinharaja (Craig Robson)

Indian Hare (Black-naped H) *Lepus nigricollis* Nice views of several at Jungle Hut and Bundala NP.

Indian Crested Porcupine *Hystrix indica* Two during our night-drive at Mudumalai.

Common Palm Squirrel (Three-striped P S) *Funambulus palmarum*

Five-striped Palm Squirrel (Northern P S) (introduced) *Funambulus pennantii* Introduced to S Andaman.

Dusky-striped Squirrel *Funambulus sublineatus* Occasional in S India and Sri Lanka.

Large Brown Flying Squirrel *Petaurista philippensis* Nice views in the spotlight at Mudumalai.

Indian Giant Squirrel *Ratufa indica* 14 noted in S India. Mudumalai & Ooty (nominate); Munnar & Periyar (*maxima*).

Grizzled Giant Squirrel (Grizzled Indian S) *R. macroura* 1 Chinnar (*dandolena*); Kitulgala & Sinharaja (*melanochra*).

Indian Grey Mongoose (Common M) *Herpestes edwardsii* One at Jungle Hut.

Indian Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* Several I Sri Lanka, including habituated ones at a lunch-stop.

Ruddy Mongoose *Herpestes smithii* Singles near Munnar and at Uda Walawe.

Masked Palm Civet *Paguma larvata* One seen on the road at night near Chidiyatapu, S Andaman (endemic *tytleri*).

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

Chital (Spotted Deer) *Axis axis*

Northern Red Muntjac (Indian M) *Muntiacus vaginalis* Surprisingly scarce, with only one or two noted.

Sambar *Cervus unicolor*

Gaur (Indian Bison) *Bos gaurus* A good show this year: 10 at Cairnhill , near Ooty and 14 in Chinnar WS.

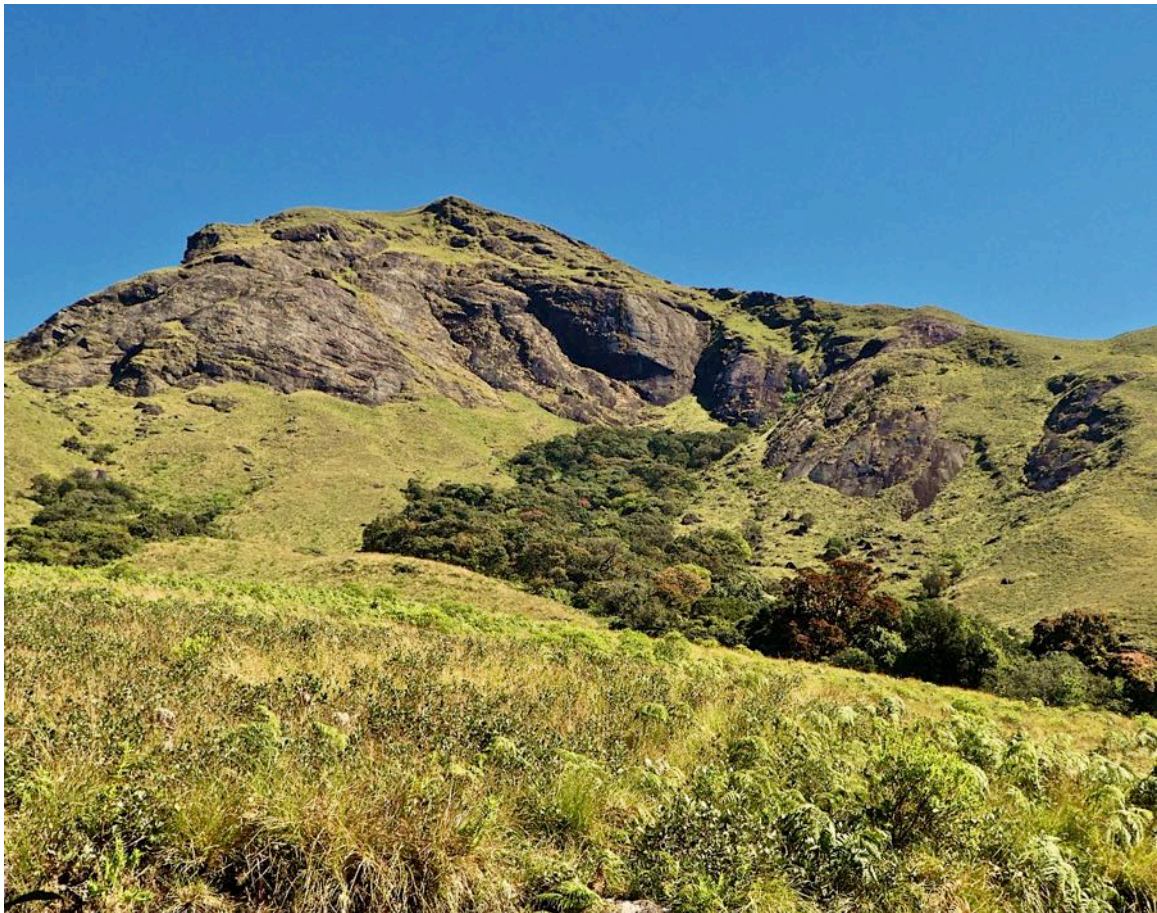
Nilgiri Tahr *Hemitragus hylocrius* Seven seen well at Eravikulam NP.

Indian Flying Fox *Pteropus giganteus* Many in big roosts, particularly in Sri Lanka.

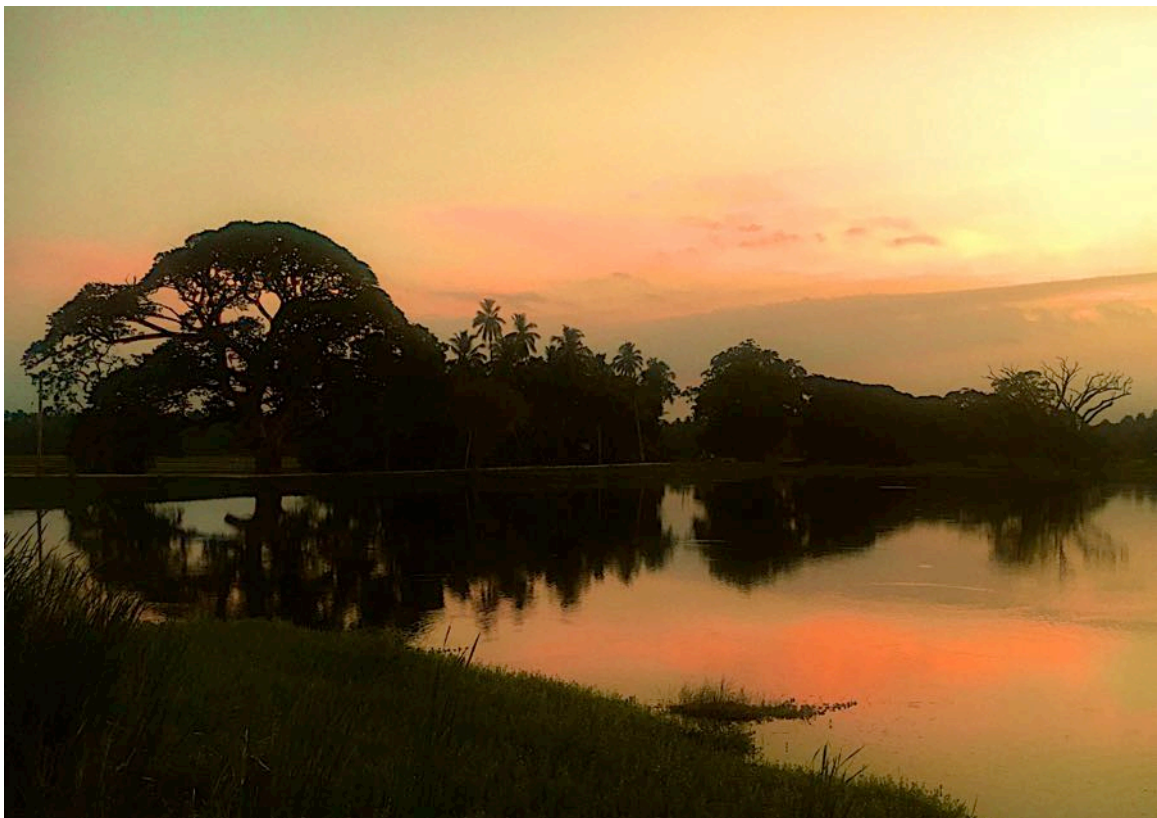
Blyth's Flying Fox *Pteropus melanotus* A handful seen on S Andaman.



Gaur at Ooty (Craig Robson)



View towards Rajmala, Eravikulam NP (Craig Robson)



Tissa sunset (Craig Robson)

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus [cirrhatus] limnaeetus*

Many authors treat this form and the nominate form as distinct species: Crested Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus cirrhatus* and Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus limnaeetus*.

Legge's Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus kelaarti*

This recently recognized S India and Sri Lanka endemic was formerly lumped in Mountain Hawk-Eagle *N. nipalensis*.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*

Some authors lump this species (and the extralimital Japanese Buzzard *B. japonicus*) in Common Buzzard *B. buteo*.

Lesser Sand Plover (Tibetan P) *Charadrius [mongolus] atrifrons*

The *atrifrons* group of subspecies may in the future be split off as a separate species, Lesser Sand (or Tibetan) Plover *C. atrifrons*. The *mongolus* group would then be renamed Mongolian Plover *C. mongolus*. It is thought that only *atrifrons* has been recorded on this tour.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Some authors have suggested that the eastern form, *melanuroides*, is better considered a distinct species, Eastern Black-tailed Godwit *L. melanuroides*. The residual *L. limosa* would then be renamed Western Black-tailed Godwit. It is not certain which forms have been observed on this tour.

Whimbrel (Eurasian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus*

Many authors split-off the New World form *hudsonicus* as a full species, Hudsonian Whimbrel *N. hudsonicus*, with the nominate form renamed Eurasian Whimbrel. The form seen on this tour, *variegatus*, is provisionally included in the latter.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

Some authors have suggested that the *parroti* subspecies, found from the southern margin of the Gangetic Plain south through peninsular India to Sri Lanka, may merit full-species status, but further study is needed. The name Southern Coucal may be used if the split is adopted.

Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanica*

Some authors lump Eastern Barn Owl in Western Barn Owl using the name Barn Owl *Tyto alba* for the enlarged species. The most recent studies, also suggest that the form *javanica* is best untied with this species, rather than with Western.

Oriental Scops Owl (Walden's S O) *Otus [sunia] modestus*

The IOC include this distinctive form in Oriental Scops Owl *O. sunia*, but it is likely that it will be split in the future.

Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher (Black-backed K) *Ceyx [erithaca] erithaca*

Some authors split off the Rufous-backed form as a separate species, under the name Rufous-backed Kingfisher *C. rufidorsa*. The residual black-backed *erithaca* is then renamed Black-backed Kingfisher.

Red-backed Flameback *Dinopium psarodes*

This distinctive Sri Lankan taxon has recently been split from Black-rumped Flameback *D. benghalense*.

Greater Flameback (Malabar F) *Chrysocolaptes [guttacristatus] socialis*

Some authors (including the IOC) include the distinctive SW Indian *socialis* race in Greater Flameback *C. guttacristatus*.

Crimson-backed Flameback (Sri Lanka F) *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi*

This very distinctive red-backed Sri Lankan endemic was formerly lumped in Greater Flameback *C. guttacristatus*.

Malabar Woodshrike *Tephrodornis sylvicola*

This species, which occurs in western peninsular India, was formerly lumped in Large Woodshrike *T. virgatus*.

Sri Lanka Woodshrike *Tephrodornis affinis*

This endemic species was formerly lumped in Common Woodshrike *T. pondicerianus*.

White-spotted Fantail *Rhipidura albogularis*

Formerly lumped in White-throated Fantail *R. albicollis*.

Indian Black-lored (or Indian Yellow) Tit *Parus aplonotus*

This species (which is endemic to peninsular India), was formerly lumped in Himalayan Black-lored Tit *P. xanthogenys*, under the common name Black-lored Tit.

Clamorous Reed Warbler (Indian Reed Warbler) *Acrocephalus [stentoreus] brunnescens*

Some authors (including the IOC) include this distinctive form in Clamorous Reed Warbler *A. stentoreus*, but there are apparently some major differences in morphology and song.

Nilgiri Laughingthrush (Black-chinned L) *Montecincla cachinnans*

Palani Laughingthrush (Kerala L) *Montecincla fairbanki*

The results of recent DNA-based studies (accepted by the IOC) show that there are four species in this group: Banasura Laughingthrush *M. jerdoni* (Brahmagiri and Banasura Hills, SW Karnataka), Nilgiri Laughingthrush *M. cachinnans* (Nilgiri Hills, NW Tamil Nadu), Palani Laughingthrush *M. fairbanki* (Palani and Anamalai Hills, E Kerala & W Tamil Nadu), and Ashambu Laughingthrush *M. meridionale* (Ashambu Hills, S Kerala & S Tamil Nadu, extreme S India).

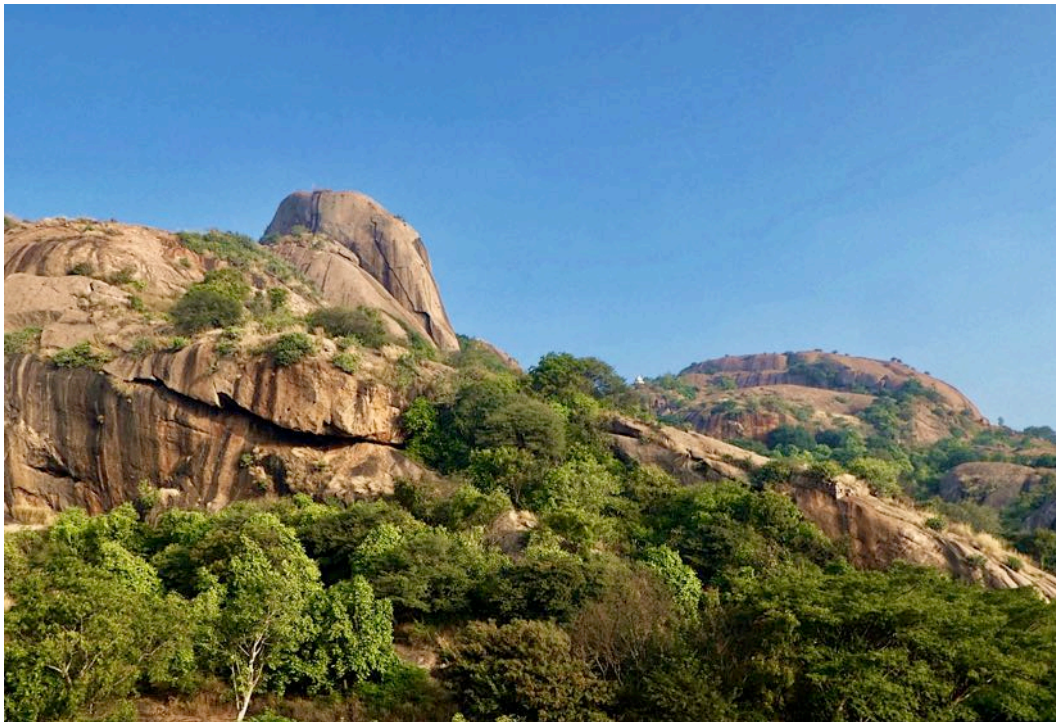
Malabar Starling (M White-headed S) *Sturnia blythii*

Formerly lumped in Chestnut-tailed (or Grey-headed) Starling *S. malabarica*.

Southern Plains Grey Langur *Semnopithecus dussumieri*

Tufted Grey Langur *Semnopithecus priam*

These species (along with many other closely related forms), were formerly lumped in Northern Plains Grey Langur *S. entellus*, with the name Hanuman (or Grey) Langur *S. entellus* applied to the enlarged species.



Ramdevvara Betta Vulture Sanctuary (Craig Robson)

APPENDIX - Other fauna & flora recorded

REPTILES

Green Vine Snake *Ahaetulla nasuta* Several at Sinharaja.

Green Bronzeback Tree Snake *Dendrelaphis tristis* One at Sinharaja.

Common Rat Snake *Ptyas mucosa* One at Sinharaja.

Garden Lizard *Calotes versicolor* Many sightings in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Kangaroo Lizard *Otocryptis wiegmanni* Kitulgala and Sinharaja.

Common Skink *Mabuya carinata* Several sightings in Sri Lanka.

Andaman Islands Day Gecko *Phelsuma andamanense* One seen on S Andaman.

Land Monitor *Varanus bengalensis* Several sightings in Sri Lanka.

Water Monitor *Varanus salvator* Several sightings in Sri Lanka.

Mugger Crocodile (Marsh C) *Crocodylus paluster* Several good sightings in S India & Sri Lanka.

Spotted Black Turtle *Melanochelys trijuga thermalis* A couple at Udawattekelle.



Green Vine Snake (Craig Robson)

BUTTERFLIES

Sri Lankan Birdwing *Troides darsius*

Common Rose *Pachliopta aristolochiae ceylonica* Sinharaja.

Common Mormon *Papilio polytes romulus* Tissa.

Blue Mormon *Papilio polymnestor parinda* Sri Lanka.

Tailed Jay *Graphium Agamemnon mendes* Sinharaja.

Common Bluebottle *Graphium sarpedon* Sinharaja.

Blue Glassy Tiger *Ideopsis similes exprompta* Sinharaja. The dangling caterpillars.

Psyche *Leptosia nina*

Sri Lanka Tree Nymph *Idea iasonia* Sinharaja.

Tawny Rajah *Charaxes psaphon* One on otter poo at Sinharaja.

Commander *Moduza procris calidasa* Sri Lanka.

Common Sailer *Neptis hylas varmoma* Sri Lanka.

Lemon Pansy *Junonia lemonias vaisya* Sri Lanka.

Tawny Coster *Telchinia violae* Sri Lanka.

Plum Judy *Abisara echerius prunosa* Sri Lanka.

Angled Pierrot *Caleta caleta* Two on otter poo at Sinharaja.

Pea Blue (Long-tailed B) *Lampides boeticus*

Nilgiri Tit *Chliaria nilgirica* Sinharaja.

BEETLES

False Lanternfly *Pyrops maculata* Sinharaja.



False Lanternflies (Craig Robson)