



BANGLADESH EXPEDITION REPORT 2024

10-18 February 2024

BY MARK BEAMAN

Our first expedition to Bangladesh and its wonderful Sundarbans was an outstanding success. Not only did we enjoy no fewer than three great and prolonged encounters with Masked Finfoot in our five days in the Sundarbans (perhaps a record) but we also had three encounters with the very rare and sought-after White-eared Night Heron (a species only recently discovered to winter in the Sundarbans) and a very close encounter with the sometimes-tricky Cachar Bulbul at Satchari National Park! Bangladesh is not the place for a huge bird list but our total of 200 species recorded in just 9 days was more than respectable.

Before we headed into the Sundarbans, that vast area of tidally flooded mangrove forest at the mouths of the Ganges and Padma (or Brahmaputra) Rivers, we travelled to the northeastern region of Bangladesh to explore Satchari National Park. This small area of protected forest is situated just at the point where the plains give way to low hills, nowadays mostly converted to vast tea gardens.

Most of the birds found at Satchari are widespread Oriental species or winter visitors from the Palearctic Region, but there is one major exception, for this is just about the only easily accessible area where the range-restricted Cachar Bulbul can be seen. I need to stress 'can' as this is by no means an easy bird to see at Satchari. We soon realised it was thin on the ground and our first afternoon spent at the birds' favourite drinking pool drew a total blank. Oops! We were clearly going to have to devote more of our time to this sometimes tricky species.

At least we had the chance for an introduction to Satchari's birds, encountering such species as Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker, Greater Yellow-nape, Greater Flameback, Bronzed and Greater Racket-tailed Drongos, Black-naped Monarch, Rufous Treepie, Black-headed and Black-crested Bulbuls, Hill Blue Flycatcher, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird and Little Spiderhunter. Winter visitors included Yellow-browed, Greenish, Yellow-vented and Blyth's Leaf Warblers, Verditer, Blue-throated Blue, Little Pied and Taiga Flycatchers and a superb male Siberian Blue Robin.

Mercifully the pool session on our second day turned up trumps and we watched a nice pair of Cachar Bulbuls coming to drink at very close range, but this is a bird that some visitors to Satchari miss, so we counted ourselves fortunate!

White-cheeked Partridge occurs in the area and some of the group saw one that flushed from beside the trail, but we did not even hear a Blue-naped Pitta in spite of using playback in its favoured locations. It was unusually dry in the park during our visit, so that likely influenced responsiveness.

A tall tower proved a great place to spend the early morning and turned up good views of Vernal Hanging Parrots and also Golden-fronted Leafbirds and Hair-crested Drongos feeding on the red coral-tree flowers, as well as Capped Langur, Irrawaddy Squirrel, Northern Treeshrew, Green-billed Malkoha, Ashy-headed and Yellow-footed Green Pigeons, Green Imperial Pigeon, Asian Barred Owllet, Lineated, Blue-throated, Blue-eared and Coppersmith Barbets, Common Iora, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, Grey-backed Shrike, Ashy Drongo, Indian White-eye, Pin-striped Tit-babbler, Common Hill Myna, Chestnut-tailed Starling and Purple-rumped and Crimson Sunbirds.

Hanging around at the drinking pool or walking the forest trails turned up a noisy pair of Oriental Pied Hornbills, White-throated Bulbul, great views of Puff-throated and Abbott's Babbler, Green-crowned Warbler, White-rumped Shama, Snowy-browed Flycatcher and a wonderful, close performance by male and female Western Hoolock Gibbons.

With the Cachar Bulbul 'in the bag', we had time for a short visit to bird-rich Baikka Beel, a large wetland area further to the north. Lots of herons, ducks, shorebirds and other waterbirds were present, including large numbers of Glossy Ibises, Grey-headed Swamphens, Black-tailed Godwits, Pheasant-tailed Jacanas and Medium Egrets. Also present were Ferruginous Duck, Black-headed Ibis, Red-crested Pochard, Grey-headed Lapwing, Eastern Marsh and Pied Harriers, Brown Shrike, Striated Grassbird and Dusky Warbler. As we left, a big roost of Indian Pied and Jungle Mynas was building up.

We departed early the next day for the long drive to Khulna, our jumping-off point for the Sundarbans. Dhaka traffic is awful and the queues (and the totally beaten up, paint-scraped buses!) have to be seen to be believed. Luckily we could bypass most of the city so we only had to endure about an hour of crawling along.

Once at Khulna port, we were soon boarding our skiff for the short journey to our riverboat, the Bawali, our home for the next six nights. We soon made ourselves at home and after getting used to the cabins, dining area and the like, we made our way to the comfortable observation deck and our adventure began in earnest. At first, we travelled through the heavily populated lowlands of Bangladesh, but as the light faded we arrived in more sparsely inhabited areas and by late evening we had arrived at the edge of the famous Sundarbans. But in the meantime, we got to know our friendly crew and had our first opportunity to enjoy the delicious Bangladeshi cuisine that was a feature of our time aboard.

Setting off while it was still dark the next morning we were all excited by the prospect of maybe seeing a Masked Finfoot but at that stage, as our skiff left Bawali behind and we headed off up a mangrove-lined channel, we had no idea what an amazing, indeed awesome first day in the Sundarbans we would all enjoy!

Our first highlight of the day was a Buffy Fish Owl out hunting by the channel side that gave wonderful close-up views. As it got light and the sun rose, typical Sundarbans scenery started to appear, with long mud-fringed channels lined by extensive mangrove forests. Along the channels the big, range-restricted Brown-winged Kingfisher proved to be common and there were also many smart Black-capped Kingfishers and smaller numbers of White-throated and Common Kingfishers. Our first encounter with the delightful Asian Small-clawed Otter was yet another highlight.

As the tide slowly fell and more and more mud was exposed we scanned carefully in the hope of seeing a Masked Finfoot foraging on the mud, but at first, there was nothing. Then the shout went up, "finfoot, finfoot!" and there was a male walking along on a mudbank (or was it wading, given the thick mud?) and then hurrying for cover in the forest! Damnation! But we pulled the boat over and waited and after a time the finfoot emerged and started going about its business, becoming less wary of us and eventually giving a prolonged period of observation lasting over an hour and a half! It was fun to watch it using its broad, lobed toes to walk on the mud without sinking as it picked tiny crabs, small mudskippers and no doubt other prey from the newly uncovered mudbanks. After a time it crossed the river not far from us and started exploring the other bank before finally disappearing into the forest. What a brilliant start to our Sundarbans adventure!

After lunch and a break, we headed out again on our traditional wooden skiff, known as a 'country boat' in Bangladesh. It was fascinating to come across some Tiger pugmarks on both sides of a channel, demonstrating how freely Tigers swim from one area to another in the Sundarbans. They are only rarely seen by visitors, however, as they are both shy and mostly nocturnal owing to ongoing illegal persecution by humans. Our guide from Bawali, who had spent over 200 weeks in the Sundarbans in total, had only seen Tiger four times during all that time! They seemed to have plenty of food available as Chital (or Spotted Deer) is numerous throughout the area.

We finally caught up with Collared Kingfisher (one of the less numerous kingfishers in this part of the world) and then, deep in a side channel, we enjoyed a fantastic close encounter with a beautiful Ruddy Kingfisher.

Soon dusk fell and we got the spotlight out and started to look for mammals. Rats were everywhere! Black Rats seemed to be the common species but there could have been other species present. And then came the first of two amazing sightings. A heron could be seen crossing the channel ahead of us and as we got closer and closer it was clearly a night heron... And then, closer still, it could be identified as the rare White-eared Night Heron, an Endangered species breeding in southern China and vicinity that has only recently been found to winter in the Sundarbans. Once the light went on it could be seen in all its glory, but soon it was flying off along the channel and we headed for Bawali and our supper.

But our amazing day was not yet over. As we neared the main channel where Bawali was anchored, a Mainland Leopard Cat was sitting watching us from a fallen tree and it allowed us to get closer and closer and take great photos before it decided to head off into the forest.

What a first day in the Sundarbans!!!

Over the following days, we explored the area thoroughly, getting another prolonged encounter with a Masked Finfoot and seeing a wide selection of Sundarbans birds including two more White-eared Night Heron encounters (!), more Buffy Fish Owls, a rather fleeting view of a Dusky Eagle-Owl after tracking it down by its distinctive call, Red Junglefowl feeding on the mudbanks, two wintering Brown-headed Gulls, Streak-breasted Woodpecker at the limits of its distribution and smart wintering 'Chinese Golden Orioles'. Mangrove Pitta tormented us by calling regularly but never responding to playback. Even here in the Sundarbans, the forest was unusually dry.

Other additions or highlights included some great encounters with Ospreys and Crested Serpent Eagles, Slaty-breasted Rail, Rufous Woodpecker, Black-rumped Flameback, Small Minivet, Black-hooded Oriole and Purple Sunbird.

New mammals included Wild Boar and both Ganges River Dolphins and Irrawaddy Dolphins (the Ganges often breaching in their entirety). Huge Saltwater Crocodiles and some very large (2.5 metres long) Asian Water Monitors added to the variety of Sundarbans creatures we encountered.

Exploring a new area with an ancient Hindu Temple dating from the 16th century, now largely swallowed by the jungle, turned up trumps in the form of a wonderful encounter with very obliging Asian Small-clawed Otters that fished right in front of us and noisily chewed on their mudskipper prey. Even this wildlife encounter was soon overshadowed by our best Masked Finfoot encounter, a female watched for nearly an hour that became so used to us that she foraged for crabs on the mudbanks or swam in the channel within 15 metres of us. Finally, she even walked right down to the channel side only about 10 metres away before we watched her swim away upstream and we decided to let her be!

Our final birding in the Sundarbans was at a forest station at its northern edge. We had to start early on the boardwalk here to avoid the crowds of locals on day boats who thronged the area later. A few additions came our way in the form of Asian Brown Flycatcher, Forest Wagtail and Orange-bellied Flowerpecker at the edge of its range. As usual, a Mangrove Pitta called from the forest but refused to show itself. Not far away, a visit to a channel, village and paddy area turned up two Jungle Cats, migrant Richard's Pipit and 'Himalayan' White Wagtails, as well as typical rural birds like Jungle Babbler, Baya Weaver, Indian Silverbill and White-rumped Munia.

The next morning it was time to leave the Bawali and its special crew behind and return to Dhaka at the end of our adventure, but birding was not yet done. After a brief stop for Bank Mynas at the eastern edge of their distribution (yes, imagine actually having to seek out this usually numerous species!), we made a long stop at the wide Padma (or Brahmaputra) River, here three or four kilometres (around two miles) wide. It proved a good move as key finds included Red-necked Falcon, Bengal Bushlark, Baikal Bush Warbler, Striated Babbler, White-tailed Stonechat and Blyth's Pipit, while other new birds included Plaintive Cuckoo, Asian Koel, Hen Harrier, Watercock, Grey-throated Martin, Delicate Prinia, Bluethroat, Siberian Rubythroat, Siberian Stonechat, Chestnut Munia and Citrine Wagtail (of both types).

After that, it was a case of enduring the endless Dhaka traffic jams on the way to a celebratory dinner and the first chance in 9 days to enjoy a cold beer!

TOP BIRDS & MAMMALS OF THE EXPEDITION

1st Masked Finfoot

2nd Mainland Leopard Cat

3rd White-eared Night Heron

4th Cachar Bulbul

5th= Buffy Fish Owl

5th= Asian Small-clawed Otter

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE EXPEDITION

Bird species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g., it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows Gill, F., Donsker, D., & Rasmussen, P.(Eds). **2023. IOC World Bird List (v13.2)** (this was the current version when the checklist for the tour report was created).

BIRDS

- Garganey** *Spatula querquedula* 3 at Baikka Beel.
- Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata* 10 at Baikka Beel.
- Gadwall** *Mareca strepera* Numerous at Baikka Beel.
- Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* Very numerous at Baikka Beel.
- Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca* Common at Baikka Beel.
- Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* A male at Baikka Beel.
- Ferruginous Duck** *Aythya nyroca* 20 at Baikka Beel.
- White-cheeked Partridge** ♦ *Arborophila atrogularis* One seen when flushed by some of the group.
- Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus* Small numbers recorded at Satchari and in the Sundarbans.
- Large-tailed Nightjar** *Caprimulgus macrurus* Heard-only in the Sundarbans.
- Asian Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus balasiensis* Widespread and fairly common.
- House Swift** *Apus nipalensis* Small numbers during our drives.
- Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis* Fairly common in the Sundarbans and at the Padma.
- Green-billed Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus tristis* Three at Satchari.
- Asian Koel** *Eudynamys scolopaceus* Several recorded.
- Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus* One at the Padma.
- Rock Dove** *Columba livia* Feral birds were common or numerous in urban areas or near villages.
- Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis* Widespread and often common.
- Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* Widespread and often common.
- Red Collared Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica* Fairly common in more open areas.
- Spotted Dove** *Spilopelia chinensis* Common and widespread.
- Ashy-headed Green Pigeon** *Treron phayrei* Three at Satchari.
- Yellow-footed Green Pigeon** *Treron phoenicopterus* Three at Satchari.
- Green Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula aenea* Two at Satchari.
- Masked Finfoot** ♦ *Heliopais personatus* We were fortunate to enjoy three prolonged sightings in our five days in the Sundarbans, involving two different adult males and an adult female. Awesome close views of a female just 10 metres from us!
- Slaty-breasted Rail** *Lewinia striata* One in the Sundarbans.
- Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* Small numbers at Baikka Beel and at the Padma.
- Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra* Very numerous at Baikka Beel.
- Grey-headed Swamphen** *Porphyrio poliocephalus* Very numerous at Baikka Beel.
- Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea* One at the Padma.
- White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Scattered records of up to three.
- Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Common at Baikka Beel.
- Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius* A single at Baikka Beel and two in the Sundarbans.

Grey-headed Lapwing ◊ *Vanellus cinereus* Five records of up to 30 at a time.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Numerous at Baikka Beel.

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus* Four at Baikka Beel and one at the Padma.

Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* Six in the Sundarbans.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Numerous at Baikka Beel.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* Numerous at the Padma and in addition a single at Baikka Beel.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Common in the Sundarbans.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* 10 at Baikka Beel.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Numerous at Baikka Beel and common at the Padma.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* One in the Sundarbans.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* 12 at Baikka Beel.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax* 20 at Baikka Beel.

Brown-headed Gull ◊ *Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus* Two adults in the Sundarbans.

Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans* 50 at Baikka Beel and five more en route to Khulna.

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* Five at Baikka Beel.

Little Cormorant *Microcarbo niger* Common in freshwater wetlands.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* Common in freshwater wetlands.

Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* 15 at Baikka Beel.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* Around 1000 at Baikka Beel and 200 near Dhaka.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Fairly widespread and sometimes common.

White-eared Night Heron ◊ *Oroanassa magnifica* Three encounters with adults in the Sundarbans, probably involving two or three different individuals.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata* Common in the Sundarbans.

Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* Common and widespread.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Fairly common away from the Sundarbans.

Great Egret [Eastern Great Egret] *Ardea [alba] modesta* Common in all wetland areas, with 300 at Baikka Beel.

Medium Egret *Ardea intermedia* Common at Baikka Beel and two at the Padma.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Common at Baikka Beel and one at the Padma.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* Common in the Sundarbans.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Two en route to Khulna and three at the Padma.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* Widespread and fairly common.

Shikra *Accipiter badius* Common in the Sundarbans.

Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* Two at Baikka Beel.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* A female at the Padma.

Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* An adult male at Baikka Beel.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Widespread and often common.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Widespread and locally common.

Spotted Owlet *Athene brahma* One near Satchari.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* Seen and heard at Satchari.

Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* Two heard in the Sundarbans.

Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia* Heard at Satchari.

Buffy Fish Owl ♦ *Ketupa ketupu* Common by voice in the Sundarbans and three sightings.

Dusky Eagle-Owl ♦ *Ketupa coromanda* One in the Sundarbans.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* Just a couple of singles in open country areas.

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris* A noisy pair at Satchari.

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis* One en route to Khulna.

Brown-winged Kingfisher ♦ *Pelargopsis amauroptera* Positively common in the Sundarbans. Wonderful views.

Ruddy Kingfisher ♦ *Halcyon coromanda* A cracking, very close encounter in the Sundarbans!

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* Common and widespread.

Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* Common in the Sundarbans.

Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris* Fairly common in the Sundarbans.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Common and widespread.

Asian Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis* Scattered records of up to six.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti* Small numbers at Satchari.

Lineated Barbet *Psilopogon lineatus* Two seen at Satchari and another heard at the Padma.

Blue-throated Barbet *Psilopogon asiaticus* Small numbers away from the Sundarbans.

Blue-eared Barbet *Psilopogon duvaucelii* A single at Satchari.

Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephalus* Three at Satchari.

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominata* One in the Sundarbans.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus canicapillus* Small numbers at Satchari and in the Sundarbans.

Greater Yellownappe *Chrysophlegma flavinucha* Small numbers at Satchari and in the Sundarbans.

Streak-breasted Woodpecker *Picus viridanus* One in the Sundarbans. This is the only part of the Indian subcontinent in which it occurs.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* One in the Sundarbans.

Common Flameback *Dinopium javanense* A pair in the Sundarbans.

Black-rumped Flameback *Dinopium benghalense* Fairly common in the Sundarbans.

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes guttacrastatus* Widespread and fairly common.

Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus* Fairly common in the Sundarbans.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* A single at the Padma.

Red-headed Falcon *Falco chicquera* A hunting individual passed close by us at the Padma.

Blossom-headed Parakeet *Psittacula roseata* Four at Satchari.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* Common at Satchari.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* Scattered records of up to five.

Vernal Hanging Parrot *Loriculus vernalis* Common at Satchari.

Mangrove Pitta ♦ *Pitta megarhyncha* In spite of plenty of effort we only managed to hear this species. It was bone dry during our visit and they seemed very unresponsive.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus* Two in the Sundarbans.

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus* Not uncommon in the Sundarbans.

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia* Common and widespread.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* Widespread and fairly common.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Lalage melaschistos* Three at Satchari.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus* Widespread and fairly common.

Black-naped Oriole [Chinese Golden Oriole] \diamond *Oriolus [chinensis] diffusus* Multiple sightings of this distinctive form in the Sundarbans. A likely future split.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus* Widespread and fairly common.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus* Common and widespread.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus* Common at Satchari and a few in the Sundarbans.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* Two at Satchari.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* Common and widespread.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis* Two at the edge of the Sundarbans.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* Widespread in small numbers.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* Scattered records of small numbers.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* Common in open country. The form in Bangladesh is *tricolor*.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus* One at Satchari.

Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis* Heard both days at Satchari but we were too intent on seeing Cachar Bulbul to chase it up!

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda* Widespread in small numbers.

House Crow *Corvus splendens* Numerous in urban and village areas and quite often seen in open country.

Eastern Jungle Crow *Corvus levaillantii* Common and widespread.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* Small numbers at Satchari.

Cinereous Tit *Parus cinereus* Fairly widespread in small numbers.

Bengal Bush Lark \diamond *Mirafra assamica* Five seen at the Padma where we had superb views.

White-throated Bulbul *Alphoixus flaveolus* Fairly common at Satchari.

Cachar Bulbul \diamond *Iole cacharensis* This one made us sweat (quite literally) but eventually, a pair came to drink right next to us. Phew!

Black-headed Bulbul *Brachypodius melanocephalus* A few at Satchari.

Black-crested Bulbul *Rubigula flaviventris* Common at Satchari.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* Very common and widespread.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* Very common and widespread.

Grey-throated Martin *Riparia chinensis* Five at the Padma.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Widespread and locally very common.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* Scattered records of small numbers.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* Widespread and fairly common.

Green-crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus burkii* Small numbers at Satchari.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Common and widespread.

Yellow-vented Warbler \diamond *Phylloscopus cantator* A single at Satchari.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* Two singles at Satchari.

Baikal Bush Warbler or Baikal Grasshopper Warbler ♦ *Locustella davidi* One at the Padma. Two other *Locustella* were seen but not identified.

Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris* Common at Baikka Beel and at the Padma.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* Four at the Padma.

Delicate Prinia *Prinia lepida* Five at the Padma.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* Common at the Padma and also two at the edge of the Sundarbans.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* Common and widespread.

Dark-necked Tailorbird *Orthotomus atrogularis* Heard-only at Satchari.

Indian White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus* Common and widespread.

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler *Mixornis gularis* Widespread and fairly common.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps* Small numbers at Satchari.

Abbott's Babbler *Malacocincla abbotti* Small numbers at Satchari.

Jungle Babbler *Argya striata* A group of six at the edge of the Sundarbans.

Striated Babbler ♦ *Argya earlei* Common at the Padma.

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus pectoralis* Heard-only at Satchari.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* A pair in the Sundarbans.

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* Six at Satchari.

Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus* Fairly widespread and sometimes numerous.

Bank Myna ♦ *Acridotheres gingianus* Two between Khulna and Dhaka.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* Widespread and often numerous away from the Sundarbans.

Indian Pied Myna *Gracupica contra* Widespread and often numerous away from the Sundarbans. A roost of 1000 or more at Baikka Beel.

Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnia malabarica* Widespread and locally common.

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis* Common and widespread.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* A female at Satchari.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* One at the northern edge of the Sundarbans.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus* Scattered records of ones and twos.

Hill Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis whitei* A male at Satchari.

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* A female at Satchari.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* A male at the Padma.

Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope* A male at the POadma.

Siberian Blue Robin *Larvivora cyane* A smart adult male at Satchari.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra* One at Satchari.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni* One at Satchari.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* Scattered records of small numbers.

White-tailed Stonechat ♦ *Saxicola leucurus* Common at the Padma.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus* Three at the Padma.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons* Fairly common at Satchari and in the Sundarbans.

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trigonostigma* A nice male in the Sundarbans. Another species that just creeps into the Indian subcontinent in Bangladesh.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum* Not uncommon in the Sundarbans.

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird *Chalcoparia singalensis* A male at Satchari.

Purple-rumped Sunbird *Leptocoma zeylonica* Scattered records of small numbers.

Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus* Common in and around the Sundarbans.

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* Fairly common at Satchari and in the Sundarbans.

Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra* Small numbers at Satchari.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Common in urban areas and around villages.

Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* Common at the edge of the Sundarbans and at the Padma.

Indian Silverbill *Euodice malabarica* Small numbers at the edge of the Sundarbans and at the Padma.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lochura punctulata* Five at the Padma.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* Small numbers at the fringes of the Sundarbans.

Chestnut Munia *Lonchura atricapilla* Numerous at the Padma.

Forest Wagtail ♠ *Dendronanthus indicus* One in the Sundarbans, where they overwinter.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* Common at the Padma and also one near Khulna.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* Very numerous at the Padma where we had both the nominate form and the Tibetan Plateau race *calcarata*.

White Wagtail [Himalayan Wagtail] *Motacilla [alba] alboides* Small numbers at the edge of the Sundarbans and at the Padma.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* One in fallow paddies at the edge of the Sundarbans.

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus* Small numbers at the edge of the Sundarbans and at the Padma.

Blyth's Pipit ♠ *Anthus godlewskii* One at the Padma.

MAMMALS

Jungle Cat *Felis chaus* Two different individuals at the edge of the Sundarbans.

[Tiger *Panthera tigris* Pug marks seen on several occasions where Tigers had swum the channels in the Sundarbans.]

Mainland Leopard Cat *Felis bengalensis* A brilliant encounter with one at night in the Sundarbans.

Small Indian Mongoose *Urva auropunctata* One at the Padma.

Golden or Common Jackal *Canis aureus* Singles near Sree Mangal, at Baikka Beel and at the Padma.

Asian Small-clawed Otter *Aonyx cinerea* Up to four regularly observed in the Sundarbans in the course of a day.

Eurasian Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* One in the Sundarbans.

Chital or Spotted Deer *Axis axis* Common in the Sundarbans.

Ganges or South Asian River Dolphin *Platanista gangetica* Locally common in the Sundarbans.

Irrawaddy Dolphin *Orcaella brevirostris* A total of three in the Sundarbans.

Indian Flying-fox *Pteropus giganteus* Scattered singles.

Assamese Macaque *Macaca assamensis* An adult male at Satchari.

Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta* Common and widespread.

Capped Langur *Trachypithecus pileatus* Three at Satchari.

Western Hoolock Gibbon* *Hoolock hoolock* A close male and female at Satchari.

Northern Treeshrew *Tupaia belangeri* Three at Satchari.

Irrawaddy (or Hoary-bellied) Squirrel *Callosciurus pygerythrus* A few at Satchari.

Black or House Rat *Rattus rattus* Very common and active in the Sundarbans at night.

REPTILES

Saltwater Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* A few in the Sundarbans. One or two were huge!

Common House Gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus* Living onboard the Bawali as well as ashore!

Oriental Garden Lizard *Calotes versicolor* One at the edge of the Sundarbans.

Keeled Indian Mabuya or Common Keeled Skink *Eutropis carinata* Two at Satchari.

Asian Water Monitor *Varanus salvator* Two singles in the Sundarbans, both of which appeared to be around 2.5 metres in length! This is the world's heaviest reptile after the Komodo Dragon.



Asian Small-clawed Otters (image by Mark Beaman)



Asian Small-clawed Otter (image by Mark Beaman)



Wild Boar (image by Mark Beaman)



White-throated Bulbul (image by Mark Beaman)



White-tailed Stonechat (image by Mark Beaman)



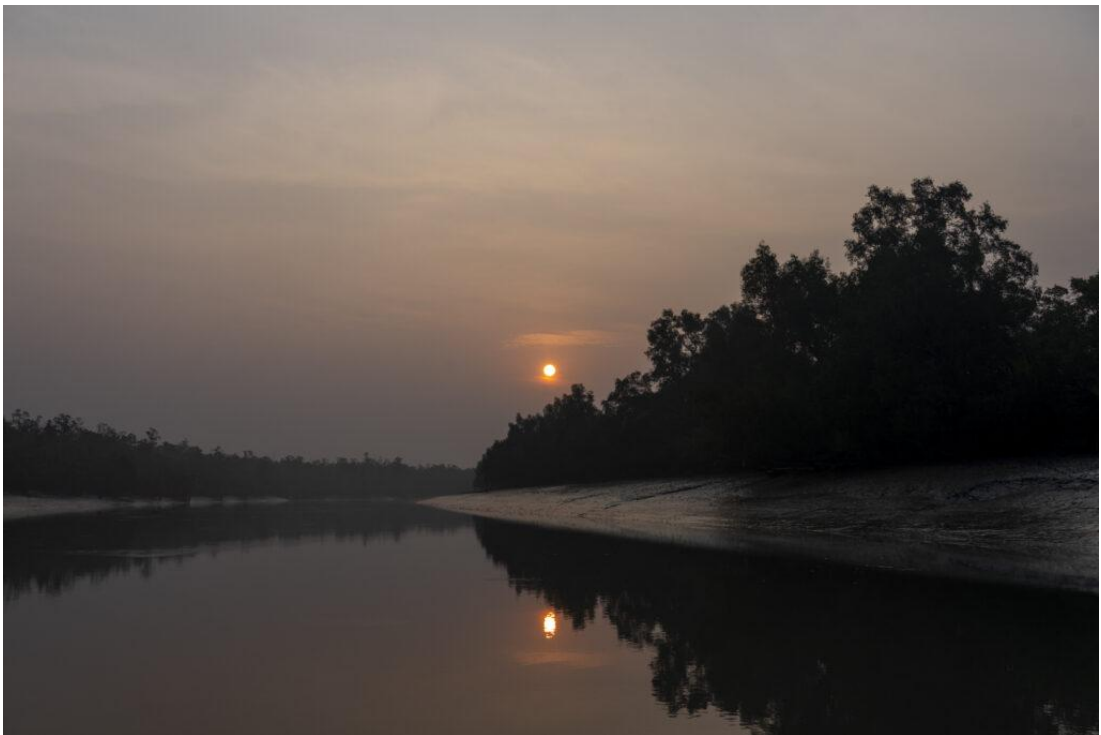
Water Monitor (image by Mark Beaman)



Tiger pug marks in the Sundarbans (image by Mark Beaman)



Waterbirds at sunset (image by Mark Beaman)



The Sundarbans at sunrise (image by Mark Beaman)



The Sundarbans (image by Mark Beaman)



Striated Babbler (image by Mark Beaman)



Chital or Spotted Deer (image by Mark Beaman)



Speckled Piculet (image by Mark Beaman)



Shikra (image by Mark Beaman)



Satchari National Park (image by Mark Beaman)



Ruddy Kingfisher (image by Mark Beaman)



Ruddy Kingfisher (image by Mark Beaman)



Rhesus Macaques (image by Mark Beaman)



Pheasant-tailed Jacana (image by Mark Beaman)



The Padma River (image by Mark Beaman)



Masked Finfoot male (image by Mark Beaman)



Masked Finfoot female eating a tiny crab (image by Mark Beaman)



Masked Finfoot female (image by Mark Beaman)



Masked Finfoot female (image by Mark Beaman)



Masked Finfoot female (image by Mark Beaman)



Mainland Leopard Cat (image by Mark Beaman)



Indian Silverbill (image by Mark Beaman)



An ancient Hindu temple swallowed by the jungle (image by Mark Beaman)



Hair-crested Drongo (image by Mark Beaman)



Grey-headed Lapwing (image by Mark Beaman)



Grey-headed Lapwing (image by Mark Beaman)



Grey-backed Shrike (image by Mark Beaman)



Greater Flameback (image by Mark Beaman)



Golden-fronted Leafbird (image by Mark Beaman)



Chairs and tea were brought for us. Bangladesh sure is a friendly place! (image by Mark Beaman)



Eastern Marsh Harrier (image by Mark Beaman)



Dusky Warbler with spider (image by Mark Beaman)



Delicate Prinia (image by Mark Beaman)



Crested Serpent Eagle (image by Mark Beaman)



Life in the Sundarbans (image by Mark Beaman)



Cachar Bulbul (image by Mark Beaman)



Cachar Bulbul (image by Mark Beaman)



Buffy Fish Owl (image by Mark Beaman)



Buffy Fish Owl (image by Mark Beaman)



Brown-winged Kingfisher (image by Mark Beaman)



Brown-headed Gulls (image by Mark Beaman)



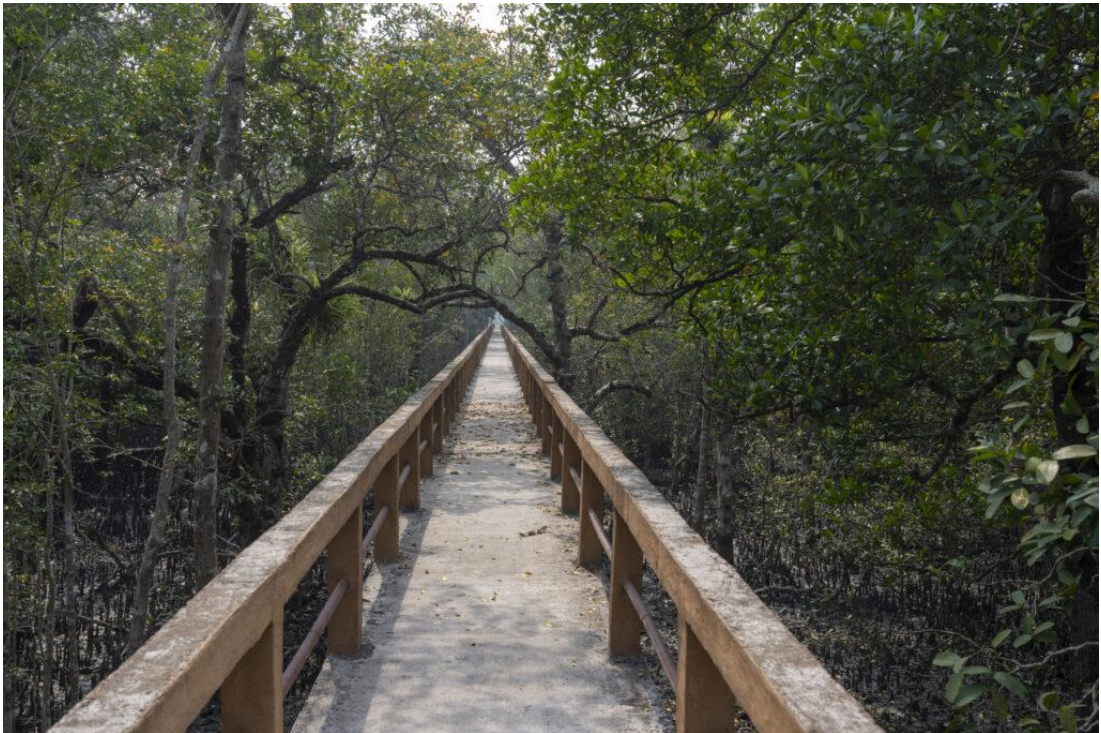
Brown-headed Gull (image by Mark Beaman)



A young Brahminy Kite eating a fish on the wing (image by Mark Beaman)



Brahminy Kite (image by Mark Beaman)



A mangrove boardwalk in the Sundarbans (image by Mark Beaman)



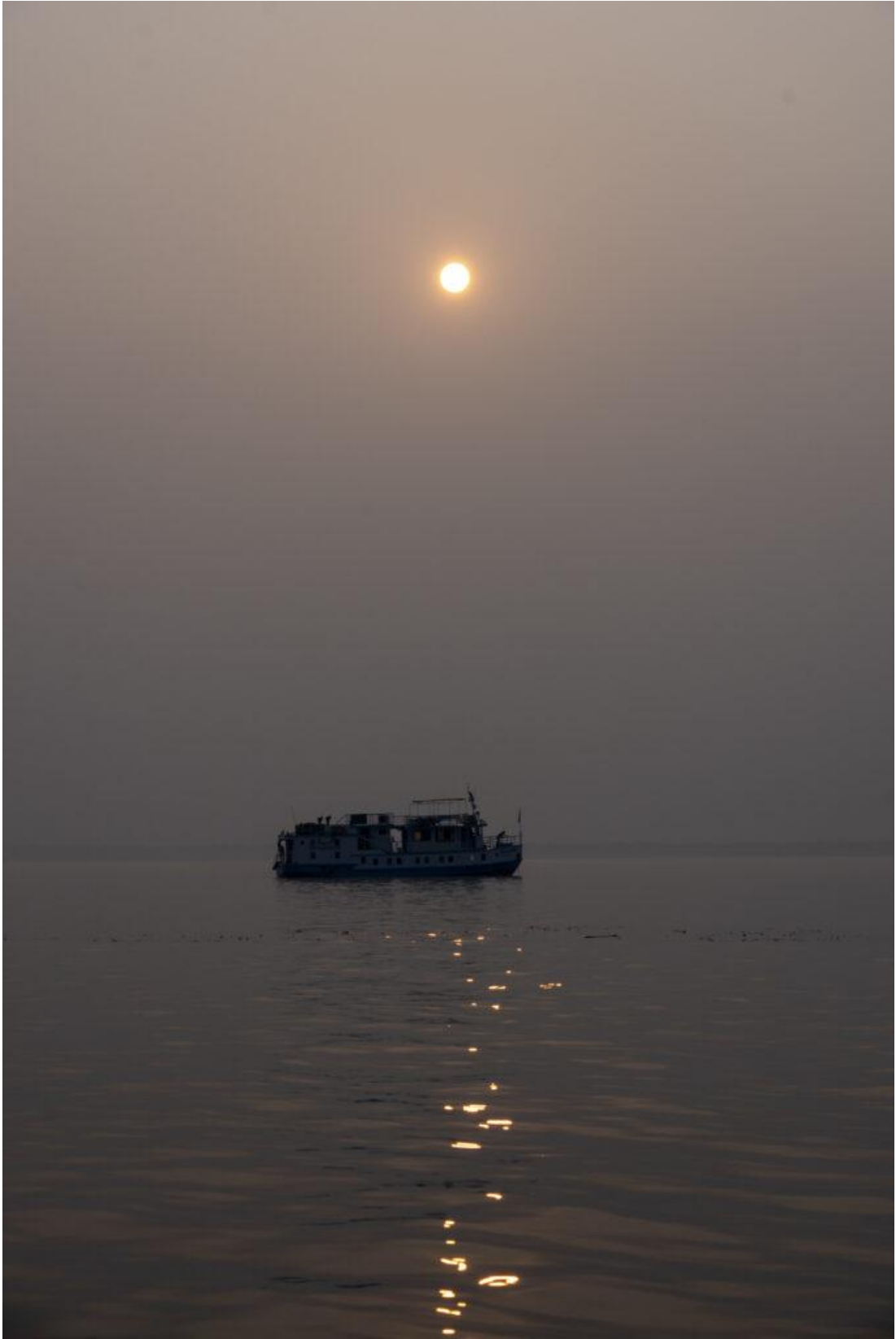
Black-capped Kingfisher (image by Mark Beaman)



Black-capped Kingfisher (image by Mark Beaman)



Bengal Bushlark (image by Mark Beaman)



The Bawali before sunset (image by Mark Beaman)



The Bawali at anchor (image by Mark Beaman)



Asian Openbill with pond snail (image by Mark Beaman)



Asian Barred Owlet (image by Mark Beaman)



White-eared Night Heron (image by 2024 group member Martin Gottschling)