

BHUTAN TOUR REPORT 2026

18 April - 6 May 2026

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An epic tour to Bhutan once again, with a grand total of 403 species recorded. The highlights included Satyr Tragopans, Himalayan Monals, White-bellied Herons, a male Ward's Trogon, Beautiful Nuthatch, Ibisbills, a kaleidoscope of Laughingthrushes and that all-important little Spotted Elachura. We also had superb encounters with Hill Partridge, Blood Pheasants, Tawny and Brown Fish Owls, Black-tailed Crake, lingering Black-necked Cranes, Yellow-rumped Honeyguide, Fire-tailed Myzornis, Long-billed Wren Babbler, and firsts for Bhutan in the demure form of a West Himalayan Bush Warbler, singing from the verge next to our camp, and the first Mongolian Short-toed Lark for the country. Memorable mammals were the superb Red Pandas, a triffecta of Langurs and a herd of Asian Elephants. And all this in the face of almost daily rain, thunderstorms and hail!

Our group gathered together at Paro, and we began our birding with a short walk from airport arrivals over to the adjacent river bank where a mother Ibisbill sat on a shingle bar, together with four fluffy chicks who were happily feeding for themselves while she kept watch. Also here we saw Himalayan Wagtails and Blue Whistling Thrush nest-building, Plumbeous Redstarts in display flights and a White-capped Redstart. All this before we set foot on our bus, the magic of Bhutan was already beginning to flow. We drove a few kilometres down the road to where a pair of Tawny Fish Owls sat roosting among the Blue Pines in the river valley, before moving on and up to our first mountain pass, the Dochu La at 3100m. Unfortunately shrouded in low cloud, we skulked around the back of the cafe and saw Black-faced, White-throated and Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrushes, White-browed Fulvetas and salmon-coloured Eurasian Jays. Some roadside stops produced Green Shrike Babbler and Green tailed Sunbird, but the cloud gave way to heavy rain so we headed further to the Puna Sang Chhu river at Wangdi. The sandbanks in the river were busy with wildfowl and shorebirds, grounded on their northward migration. We saw Ruddy and Common Shelducks, Bar-headed Geese, Red-crested Pochard, Falcated Duck, Garganey, Tibetan Sandplover, Kentish and Little Ringed Plovers, and Little and Temminck's Stint. In the surrounding fields and trees we saw Paddyfield Pipit, Tickell's Leaf Warbler and Eurasian Hoopoe. A fine haul, we travelled onwards to our hotel set on a hillside outside Punakha.

An early morning drive up to the forests above the Punakha valley met with a total of 24 *melanota* Kalij Pheasants scurrying from the roadsides. Walking on a quiet track at elevations of 2400 to 2600m in evergreen forest, we found Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon, Maroon Oriole, Striated Bulbuls, Himalayan and Large Hawk Cuckoo, Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike, Grey-sided Laughingthrush, and Brown-flanked Bush Warbler. We met our camp crew who had breakfast laid out for us under the trees, before continuing along the track. We heard a distant Ward's Trogon, saw Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Ashy-throated and Blyth's Leaf Warblers, Rufous-capped Babblers, Red-tailed, Blue-winged and Bar-throated Minlas, Rufous-winged Fulvetta, Pygmy and Ultramarine Flycatchers, Blue-fronted Redstart, White-browed and Green Shrike Babblers, Black and Mountain Hawk Eagles, White-tailed Nuthatch, Sikkim Treecreepers and Rufous-bellied Woodpeckers. In the afternoon we made our way back down the hill, picking up Slender billed Orioles in the pines along the way, plus Lesser Cuckoo and Himalayan Prinia, then sped along to Punakha Dzong for a cultural visit, our guide Kinley doing a fine job of guiding us around this beautiful and impressive building. Along the nearby river we saw two Ibisbills, many River Lapwings, Hodgson's Redstarts, Asian Koel and a smart pair of Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babblers.

Moving on the next morning, along the valley between Wangdi and Nobding we had multiple birding stops at various elevations, we saw Scarlet, Grey-chinned and Short-billed Minivets, Blue-capped Rock Thrushes, Great, Blue-fronted and Golden-throated Barbets, Black-chinned Yuhina, Indian White-eye, Black-throated Sunbird, and visited a collection of Giant Rock Bee nests where a Yellow-rumped Honeyguide was in attendance. We also found Black-eared Shrike Babbler, Black-faced Warbler, Fire-capped Tit, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Grey-bellied Tesia, Striated Laughingthrush, Blyth's Swifts and Himalayan Griffon Vultures. Driving higher, we found a lively flock with Hoary-throated Barwing, Lemon-rumped Warbler, Stripe-throated Yuhina, Rufous-vented Tits, Rufous-fronted Bushtit and Grey-

sided Bush Warbler. We crossed the Lawa La at 3300m and bumped our way down into the Phobjikha valley where hordes of Red-billed Chough swirled around. We had heard that two Black-necked Cranes had remained after the main wintering population had departed in March, and scanning across the valley it wasn't long before sharp eyes had located them out on the marsh. Hurrah! A write-in for this tour. Also we saw a distant Hen Harrier, and enjoyed close views of Oriental Skylarks before reaching our lodgings for the night. After dark we made a short foray to try and see a calling Himalayan Owl, but he wouldn't oblige us with a view.

We made a pre-dawn effort to find Wood Snipe, and despite being able to hear a couple calling in the misty darkness, they disappear as soon as its light enough to see! We saw a Black-crowned Night Heron, and the Black-necked Cranes were visible as the light came up. Leaving the valley we drove up to the Lawa La but made a rapid stop when we spotted a male Himalayan Monal feeding on a roadside slope. Stunning! Next we headed for the Pele La where our breakfast awaited, and we added Rusty-flanked Treecreeper, and a Scaly-breasted Cupwing singing away from a thicket. Also here were Himalayan Buzzard, Whistler's Warbler, Rufous-gorgetted and Dark-sided Flycatcher, and we had some good fortune when a flock of Fire-tailed Myzornis crossed our path. Moving onwards and eastwards we stopped by a roadside stream where we saw a fine Solitary Snipe, and dropping in altitude we found a party of Brown Parrotbill in a bamboo patch. A loud buzzing song heard from the bus stopped us once more, resulting in some superb views of a Russet Bush Warbler. Nepal House Martins had a colony of mud nests over the road, and by our picnic lunch under a grove of Oriental Alder, a Spotted Elachura sang but stayed hidden. Onwards via Tongsa and up over the Yutong La, we hit an epic hailstorm on the way into Jakar, before reaching our last hotel for a while.

Leaving our hotel in darkness we continued eastwards, and we climbed towards the Sheltang La as the light dawned. First Pheasant was a male Himalayan Monal coming off the roadside, followed by a pair, then upon hearing a Satyr Tragopan calling we eventually had views of a male sat on a stump in a misty wood. Further along the road we met another male Satyr Tragopan calmly feeding on the roadside in front of our bus, eventually it ran towards us unbidden before diverting into the forest. Yup, that's the magic of Bhutan for you! We saw another two males and a female during the course of the day, plus our first Grey Crested Tits, Himalayan Bluetails, Slaty-blue Flycatcher, Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch and Black-rumped Magpies around the high pastures. We headed on to the Thrumsing La, the highest pass so far at 3720m. Here a stunning Fire-tailed Sunbird showed well, plus a White-browed Bush Robin, and as we dropped into forest with a thick bamboo understorey we had the great fortune to find a lovely Red Panda, lurking in a thicket. Heavy rain started so we headed for our camp at Sengor, perfectly positioned with a view of the high ridges. Once the rain stopped and the skies cleared we could see fresh snow covering the Thrumsing La! After dark a Grey Nightjar called around the camp, plus a Spot-bellied Eagle Owl was heard in the small hours.

Early birding close to camp produced great views of Himalayan Shortwings, and a surprise of two male Crimson-browed Finch and a male Golden-naped Finch feeding together on a wet rock. Later we headed back up towards the Thrumsing La, we saw Hume's Bush Warbler, Chestnut-headed Tesia, White-throated Needletails, and found yet another Red Panda! This time we had stunning views as it dozed and stretched on a branch in full view below the road. So gorgeous! A Himalayan Thrush sang loudly and flew back and forth, a tricky ID confirmed with sound recordings and several quick views. We also found three Blood Pheasant that posed on a bank before scooting across the road. In the afternoon we drove further down the Lingmethang Road to another nice bamboo patch where we saw Scaly and Bhutan Laughingthrushes, Scarlet Finch, a lovely flock of Black-throated Parrotbills and Golden-breasted Fulvettas, a cute Little Forktail and a Blue-fronted Robin that sang beautifully from a hidden perch.

Pre-breakfast birding near our camp found Spot-winged and Collared Grosbeaks, Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush and the amazing Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler. Moving lower we saw Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker, and a confiding Lark feeding on the roadside allowed extensive study, later confirmed to be the first confirmed record of Mongolian Short-toed Lark for the country! In the middle altitudes we saw Broad-billed Warblers, White-spectacled Warbler, and lower down nearer to Yongkola we finally saw Spotted Elachura, a happy moment for the family collectors. Also we met White-breasted Parrotbill, Rusty fronted Barwing and Golden Babblers, before reaching our next camp.

Yongkola camp is an excellent base for our explorations in the surrounding forests, however with another round of road-widening this year we had only just enough room for our tents on the remaining flat ground! Our indefatigable camp crew made a big effort to keep us comfortable, and keep us dry despite the continuing rain.

We began searching the lush gullies along the roadsides, finding a fine Rufous-throated Wren Babbler, Himalayan Cutia, Lesser Yellownape, a Rufous-necked Hornbill, Black-crowned Scimitar Babbler, Yellow-throated Fulvetta and White-gorgetted Flycatcher. As the

weather brightened up we were very fortunate to find Beautiful Nuthatches high in big epiphyte-cloaked trees, smart White-naped Yuhinas, Sultan and Yellow-cheeked Tits, Little Pied Flycatcher, and a Spotted Elachura that showed well. A thunderstorm rolled in with hail and biblical rainfall, so we headed for our camp which amazingly was still intact.

As the rain abated we saw Rufous-necked Laughingthrush at camp, Streaked Spiderhunter and some endearing Russet Sparrows. Down a nearby track we found a bird flock with Maroon Oriole, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Greater Yellow-nape, Yellow-vented Warbler, Blue-winged Minla and White-bellied Erpornis, plus a Plaintive Cuckoo. Returning to the main road we found a Long-billed Wren Babbler in a dense thicket, and a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo flew overhead. The rain returned in the evening, with a loud thunderstorm right over our camp.

Attempting to reach the best area for Ward's Trogon, last night's heavy rain had caused some big landslides that blocked the road and our access. The upside of this was that we enjoyed an almost traffic-free morning as we worked our way through the roadside forests, finding Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo, Himalayan Cutia, Pygmy Cupwing, a friendly male Small Niltava, Black-throated Sunbirds, Rufous-necked Hornbills, Asian Emerald Cuckoo, and we heard a Purple Cochoa but he didn't want to stay and meet us. The continuing rain wiped out the afternoon, and after dinner we tried to see a vocal Hodgson's Frogmouth near our camp, without success.

A final effort near our Yongkola camp provided some Common Green Magpies and White-crested Laughingthrushes, plus a pair of super Red-faced Liocichlas coming to grain spread by a local house. We hurried away, to get through tiresome roadworks and impending road closures at the very bottom of the Lingmethang Road, crossing the Kurichu bridge only just in time. We headed south through spectacular gorges and dry hillsides, finding Himalayan Bulbuls and Blue Rock Thrush, emerging lower down in lush habitats where we saw Great Hornbills, Great Myna, Crested Serpent Eagle, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater and White-throated Bulbuls. We paused at our lowest elevation of the day of 220m, and had lunch accompanied by a delightful quartet of Bronzed Drongo chicks being fed by their parents. Climbing up onto the southernmost ridge of hills overlooking Assam, in rich forest a random stop produced a Rufous-backed Sibia, Grey-headed Parrotbills, Sultan Tit, and a Speckled Piculet almost sitting on our heads. We bumped our way along to Panbang, scattering a few Red Junglefowl off the road, reaching our lodgings for the next two nights as dusk fell.

We returned to the Panbang-Nganglam Road in the morning, birding in the richest forest at 500m. We found Indian and Chestnut-winged Cuckoos, Mountain Imperial Pigeon, Pin-tailed Green Pigeons, Pin-striped Tit Babbler, Long-tailed Sibilas, Black-chinned and White-naped Yuhinas, Long-tailed Broadbills, Rufous-faced Warbler, while Ruddy Kingfisher and Grey Peacock Pheasants called from a distant slope. In the afternoon we took a track that runs through Royal Manas NP, and saw Wreathed Hornbill, Asian Fairy Bluebird, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Black-crested and White-throated Bulbul, and White-rumped Shama.

We returned to the richest forests in the early morning, in a short window before the rain returned we saw Red-headed Trogon, Silver-eared Mesia, Lesser Yellow-nape, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo and Black-backed Forktails. Our camp crew came and served us breakfast, but rain persisted throughout the whole morning, and walking in the rain which didn't produce much. We continued with our journey towards Tingtibi, and as the rain stopped we saw Crested Serpent Eagle, Kalij Pheasants, Crested Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Warblers, Mountain Bulbuls, Rufous-necked Laughingthrush, Sultan Tits, some fine Golden Langurs and many superb butterflies. We reached our camp near Tingtibi and settled in to this well-appointed location overlooking the river lined with bamboo thickets.

The rain returned the next morning, but luckily it wasn't heavy enough to stop the birds. Just across from our camp, a casual scan across the river revealed a large Heron flying down towards us, landing on a shingle beach. White-bellied Heron! OMG! We enjoyed a good long look as it slowly worked its way along the shallow edge, catching fish as it went. That set the day up nicely, and we went on to find Pale headed Woodpeckers, White-hooded Babblers, Crimson Sunbird, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Pin-tailed Green Pigeon, Slaty-backed Forktail and White-breasted Parrotbill. After a dry spell the rain returned, and we dodged showers through the afternoon, adding Blue-bearded Bee-eaters.

A last look in the bamboo adjacent to our camp provided Pale-billed Parrotbills, while White-hooded Babblers showed well along with their rufous-headed juveniles. We packed up and headed out, up the hill towards the Tama La. Arriving on the top to find Grey-winged Blackbirds, after a short while we heard a calling Ward's Trogon and excitedly set about trying to lure it. Before long, sharp eyes found a male perched silently nearby, which then proceeded to come ever closer and give the best possible views. Wow! So lucky. From here we continued downhill, found a Yellow-rumped Honeyguide perched near a large concentration of bee hives, then at a bridge we saw a Spotted Forktail hopping on the rocks. We saw Large Niltava and some delightful Yellow-throated Fulvettas, and a demure Tickell's Thrush. After some lunch in a traditionally decorated gazebo we headed down across yet another roadblock, then made several stops in

rich forests. We found a very lively Beautiful Nuthatch that showed very well, before dropping all the way down to Gelephu. We sped along to the sewage ponds for some final birding, however our visit was cut short due to a thunderstorm and heavy rain. Despite this we added Red-wattled Lapwings, Eurasian Hobby, Little Egrets and Indian Pond Heron, Citrine Wagtail, Pin-tailed Snipe and White-breasted Waterhen. We retreated to our first hotel in ten days and enjoyed its creature comforts for a night.

Dawn over the lowlands of Gelephu was calm and dry, and the birds started coming early. We saw Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker and Jungle Babbler next to our hotel, and as soon as we left the outskirts of town the birds began to flow. We saw Indian Peafowl, Wreathed and Oriental Pied Hornbill, Indochinese Roller, Cinerious Tit, a couple of Collared Falconet buzzed over, and we came upon a wonderful matriarchal group of 15 Asian Elephants, including a couple of babies although they were hard to see among the tight herd. A great sight, and the first ever on this tour. Continuing westwards along the border with India, we paused for breakfast where we found our camp crew. A surprise Common Woodshrike appeared, and a Brown Fish Owl was found roosting above the road. Blue-naped Pittas were heard calling in several places yet despite getting frustratingly close to one, the vegetation was just too thick to see it. We also saw Thick-billed Warbler, Violet Cuckoo, Crested Kingfisher, Asian Barred Owllet, Black-backed Forktail, migrating flocks of Crested Honey Buzzard, Eurasian Hobby and a Black Stork, Red-breasted Parakeet, Thick-billed Green Pigeon, Black-hooded Oriole, and Oriental Cuckooshrike. We drove up the road from Sarpang in rain and fog, and once another roadblock opened to let us through, we headed to some rich hill forest close to tonight's camp at Darachu. The fog cleared and some late afternoon birding was productive with Red-faced Liocichla, Silver-eared Mesia, Grey-winged Blackbird, Black-faced Warbler, Ferruginous Flycatcher and Mountain Imperial Pigeons. Our bijou campsite was somewhat unique as it was set among the chortens and prayer flags on the pass itself, an auspicious location for our last night 'under canvas'.

At dawn a Brown Wood Owl was heard among the cacophony of several species of Cuckoo, and close to camp we saw Chestnut-crowned and Bhutan Laughingthrushes, and Rusty fronted Barwings. An insect-like sound caught my attention, and investigating further we found ourselves looking at a Locustella warbler. After initial thoughts of Spotted Bush Warbler, it became clear it was a West Himalayan Bush Warbler – first record for Bhutan! Hurrah! Once again the Birdquest tour adds a species to the national list. It sat and sang in view for quite a long time, allowing for photos and videos to document the encounter. We explored the lush forest further, seeing Red-billed Leiothrix, Silver-eared Mesia, Rosy and Olive-backed Pipits, a Slaty-bellied Tesla that showed finally, Red-faced Liocichlas, and a furtive Blue-winged Laughingthrush. We left this hill and headed down past Tsirang. It was hot in the lower elevations, a welcome change for this tour! We met the Sunkosh river, and followed it upstream, first stopping to watch some super Great Hornbills in a roadside tree, then to look at a wardened nest of White-bellied Heron far below in the valley. Both adults were present plus a single chick in the nest, clearly visible from our position above them. Pressing onwards, we reached Wangdi and our pleasant riverside hotel.

The next morning we found Grey-bellied Cuckoo and Himalayan Prinia a little way along the road, and a return visit to the river at Bajo turned up Common and Red-crested Pochard, Wood Sandpiper and Crested Kingfishers. Heading uphill, we paused for Long-tailed Shrike and Slender-billed Oriole, and found a Barred Buttonquail that flew out of the roadside artemesia. Breakfast was waiting in a patch of lush forest where a Spotted Elachura sang lustily but never showed. We saw Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and Ultramarine Flycatcher, and climbing up higher we found Fire-capped Tit and some friendly Yellow-billed Blue Magpies. At the top of the Dochu La we embedded ourselves in a quiet corner of forest where we found Chestnut-crowned and Black-faced Laughingthrushes, our first Spotted Laughingthrush, confiding Scaly-breasted Cupwings, Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler, Whistler's Warbler, White-tailed Robin, and had stunning views of a gorgeous Hill Partridge that gave up trying to hide and started feeding in plain sight in front of us! In the afternoon we headed back to the Paro valley, revisiting the roosting Tawny Fish Owl, and finding Ibisbills, Brown Dipper and River Lapwings along the Paro river itself. At a small swamp we had good looks at Black-tailed Crake, plus a surprise view of a Ruddy-breasted Crake that strutted across the road and nearly got run over! Quite a busy day!

One last early start, to ascend the forest road up to the Chele La, the highest pass of the tour at 3780m. En route to the top we saw Kalij Pheasants, a male Satyr Tragopan, numerous Blood Pheasants and some lovely Red-headed Bullfinches. Arriving on the pass we were greeted by a male Himalayan Monal, Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch, Alpine Accentors and Himalayan Bluetail. We met our final field breakfast a little below the pass where we saw a female Himalayan Monal, many White-winged Grosbeaks, Collared Grosbeak and Blue-fronted Redstarts. During the course of the morning we saw a Long-tailed Thrush singing away from the top of a conifer, and four more male Monals in flight over the slopes. We found a Scaly Thrush that played hide and seek in a damp thicket, and bizarrely another was seen as it flew across in front of the bus. We saw a flock of Snow Pigeons on a cliff, a Goldcrest and a Hodgson's Treecreeper, before having a final lunch with our esteemed camp crew. Their efforts had been excellent throughout the tour, and we were blessed with

having an excellent chef who provided tasty food. We enjoyed a warm afternoon walking downhill, were teased by furtive Indian Blue Robins and finished up with a fine display by a pair of Spotted Laughingthrush. A lovely end to a great day and a great tour.

A special thanks to our excellent young guide Kinley with whom it was a pleasure to bird alongside, and our tireless driver Namgay, who despite long hours never flagged. This was my 22nd visit to the country, my 17th Bhutan Birdquest tour, my highest ever species total at 403, we found two national firsts, had 19 write-ins and a whole load of thrills.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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 **AviList v2025** (AviList Core Team. 2025. *AviList: The Global Avian Checklist, v2025*).

Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* Always good to get 'Sheet 1 number 1', we saw many at Gelephu sewage works.

Bar-headed Goose ◊ *Anser indicus* A couple of wintering birds lingering at Bajo.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* Four with the following species at Bajo

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* Still a good number of these winterers hanging on for us at Bajo, ca.70 counted.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* Up to nine seen at Bajo on our first visit.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* A single male at Bajo.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* A couple seen at Bajo.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula* Eight seen at Bajo.

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* A single at Bajo.

Falcatid Duck *Mareca falcata* A drake and two duck at Bajo.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* A single female at Bajo.

Hill Partridge ◊ *Arborophila torqueola* Stunning views of one feeding on the Dochu La, this came second in 'Bird-of-the-trip'.

Rufous-throated Partridge ◊ *Arborophila rufogularis* Heard-only.

Blood Pheasant ◊ *Ithaginis cruentus* Superb looks at some of the *thibetanus* subspecies at Thrumsing La, and many of the nominate subspecies seen at Chele La.

Satyr Tragopan ◊ *Tragopan satyra* Our 'Bird-of-the-trip', and rightly so! Seven seen on the tour, at times very close and not timid when feeding on the roadsides.

Himalayan Monal ◊ *Lophophorus impejanus* Stunning views of our first on the Lawa La, another three seen en route to the Sheltang La, and six seen on the Chele La. The most ever seen on the tour!

Kalij Pheasant ◊ *Lophura leucomelanos* Many sightings, starting with 24 near Punakha of the *melanota* subspecies, and further east we met the white-backed *lathamii* subspecies.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* Available in the border-lands.

Grey Peacock-Pheasant ♦ *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* Heard-only, cackling away from a hillside at Panbang.

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* Quite numerous along the Nganglam-Panbang road.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis* Seen in the lowlands near Gelephu, also heard around Wangdi.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* A write-in, near Gelephu.

Green-billed Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus tristis* A couple in the Panbang area.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* A singing bird seen at Panbang.

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopaceus* Seen at Bajo and Gelephu.

Asian Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx maculatus* Several sightings, a perched male at Yongkola and a female near the Tama La.

Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* A single fly-over near Gelephu.

Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii* Heard-only.

Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* Seen well at Yongkola, also seen at Bajo.

Grey-bellied Cuckoo ♦ *Cacomantis passerinus* One seen well at Wangdi.

Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris* Widespread, common and noisy at Tingtibi.

Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* True to form, common and widespread by call, but just a single seen near Punakha.

Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo ♦ *Hierococcyx nisicolor* A vocal bird flew overhead near Yongkola.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* Several heard, seen well at Panbang.

Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Barred Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia unchall* A single fly-by near Nobding.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Red Collared Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* A few seen near Gelephu, a write-in surprisingly.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Snow Pigeon ♦ *Columba leuconota* A flock of 12 seen on a cliff near the Chele La.

Rock Dove (introduced) (Feral Pigeon) *Columba [livia] var_ domestica*

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* Several encounters at lower elevations, some atypically confiding.

Thick-billed Green Pigeon *Treron curvirostra* Two near Gelephu.

Pin-tailed Green Pigeon ♦ *Treron apicauda* Quite a few at Panbang, also seen at Tingtibi.

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenurus* A few encountered in mid-elevation forests.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia* Seen at lower elevation forests at Panbang and Tingtibi.

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis* For the first time ever on this tour, an adult and immature bird remained on the marsh at Phobjika after the main flock had departed.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* Two seen, both arrested on their northward migration.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Ruddy-breasted Crake *Zapornia fusca* At Paro, one seen running across a busy road showed once more in a rushy swamp.

Black-tailed Crake ♦ *Zapornia bicolor* At least two seen on a wetland near Paro.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Eight at Bajo was unexpected.

Ibisbill ♦ *Ibidorhyncha struthersii* A superb introduction to the country, with a pair plus chicks adjacent to the airport. Also found at Punakha, and again on our return to Paro.

Little Ringed Plover *Thinornis dubius* A single at Bajo.

River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii*

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*

Tibetan Sand Plover *Anarhynchus atrifrons* A small flock at Bajo was noteworthy.

Kentish Plover *Anarhynchus alexandrinus* A half-dozen with the above.

Wood Snipe ♦ *Gallinago nemoricola* Heard-only. Despite our valiant pre-dawn effort, a couple of calling birds at Phobjika vanished as soon as it was light enough to see.

Solitary Snipe ♦ *Gallinago solitaria* A single bird seen well near the Pele La.

Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura* Three flushed at Gelephu sewage ponds.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* A single at Bajo.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* A single at Bajo.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* A surprise find near Wangdi.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* A migrating bird seen near Gelephu.

Little Cormorant *Microcarbo niger*

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A vocal bird flew by in near-darkness at Phobjika.

Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii*

Great Egret *Ardea alba* A write-in – a single at Bajo.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Ardea coromanda*

White-bellied Heron ♦ *Ardea insignis* One of the wonders of Bhutan, with just an estimated 27 birds in the country, of a world population of 200. We had great looks down onto a nest with a chick plus the attendant parents, along the Sunkosh river, however the big thrill came when we spotted one flying towards us at our Tingtibi camp, which then proceeded to fish along the shallow river's edge.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus jotaka* Heard-only. Vocal but invisible around our Sengor camp.

Hodgson's Frogmouth ♦ *Batrachostomus hodgsoni* Heard-only. A vocal two birds near our Yongkola camp stayed hidden.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* Nice views of several groups of these along our route.

Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis* Three at Panbang around Betel nut palms.

Fork-tailed Swift ♦ (Blyth's S) *Apus [pacificus] leuconyx*

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*

Collared Owlet *Taenioptynx brodiei* Heard-only.

Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* Two birds flushed by a bridge near Gelephu.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*

Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus* Heard-only.

Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* A splendid roosting bird near Gelephu.

Tawny Fish Owl *Ketupa flavipes* A pair seen at roost on our first morning near Paro.

Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl ♦ *Ketupa nipalensis* Heard-only, at Sengor from my tent.

Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica* Heard-only, by Darachu camp.

Himalayan Owl ♦ *Strix nivicolum* Heard-only. Alas, not seen despite searching at Phobjika and Sengor.

Crested Honey Buzzard (Oriental H B) *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Himalayan Vulture ♦ (H Griffon V) *Gyps himalayensis* Only seen at high elevation sites in the west such as Pele La and Phobjika.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis* Regular sightings and good views.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis*

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* A single migrant seen near Paro on the first day.

Crested Goshawk *Lophospiza trivirgata* A brief sighting at Tama La.

Shikra *Tachyspiza badia* A single sighting en route to Nganglam.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* A distant ringtail at Phobjika.

Black Kite *Milvus [migrans] govinda* One at Gelephu appeared to be of the resident Indian subspecies.

Himalayan Buzzard ♦ *Buteo refectus* Just two seen, around the higher passes.

Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus* A pair seen at Panbang just before the rain...

Ward's Trogon ♦ *Harpactes wardi* Hurrah! After failing to find it in traditional areas, we found a *very* confiding male on the Tama La.

Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* Some lovely encounters at lower elevations, with a memorable pair in a fruiting tree by the Sunkosh river.

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris* Two seen near Gelephu.

Rufous-necked Hornbill ♦ *Aceros nipalensis* Frequent sightings of this splendid bird from Yongkola, Panbang and up to Tingtibi.

Wreathed Hornbill *Rhyticeros undulatus* Three seen in Royal Manas, three seen near Gelephu.

Indochinese Roller *Coracias affinis*

Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctornis athertoni* A pair seen in bamboo by our Tingtibi camp.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti*

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Black-backed Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx erithaca* Two seen in flight in the Panbang and Manas area.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris* Several seen well on big rivers.

Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda* Heard-only. A couple heard at Panbang remained unseen,

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

Blue-eared Barbet *Psilopogon cyanotis* One seen briefly in Panbang.

Great Barbet *Psilopogon virens*

Lineated Barbet *Psilopogon lineatus* Heard at Panbang, several sightings around Gelephu.

Golden-throated Barbet *Psilopogon franklinii*

Blue-throated Barbet *Psilopogon asiaticus*

Yellow-rumped Honeyguide ♦ *Indicator xanthonotus* Two seen, attending bees nests near Nobding, and also near the Tama La.

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus* One seen too close to focus! Near Nganglam.

Pale-headed Woodpecker ♦ *Gecinulus grantia* A sneaky pair in the bamboo at Tingtibi.

Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus*

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*

Greater Yellownape *Chrysophlegma flavinucha* A couple seen at Yongkola.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus* Two furtive birds glimpsed near Gelephu.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus canicapillus*

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus* Quite a few of these lovely birds seen.

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos macei* A confiding example in the garden of our Gelephu hotel.

Darjeeling Woodpecker ♦ *Dendrocopos darjellensis*

Crimson-naped Woodpecker ◊ *Dryobates cathpharius*

Collared Falconet *Microhierax caerulescens* Two in flight near Gelephu – another write-in.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* One at Gelephu sewage ponds, then many more migrating over the foothills near Gelephu.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* One over Yongkola camp, another along the Kuri Chhu.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri* A handful seen in lowlands near Gelephu.

Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae* Seen well at Panbang.

Blue-naped Pitta ◊ *Hydrornis nipalensis* Heard-only. At least five heard, lurking in thickets near Gelephu.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*

Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus* Seen at higher elevations than the others, such as in the grounds of the Olathang Hotel..

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* Not uncommon. Nest-building observed at Tingtibi.

Oriental Cuckooshrike *Coracina javensis* The bird seen near Gelephu appears to belong to this taxon and not Indian Cuckooshrike *C. macei*.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Lalage melaschistos* Frequent in the hill forests.

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus*

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*

Common Woodshrike *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* A surprise write-in, one at our breakfast stop near Gelephu.

Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis virgatus* A couple seen in the Panbang area.

White-browed Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus*

Green Shrike-babbler ◊ *Pteruthius xanthochlorus* A couple of high elevation sightings early in the trip.

Black-eared Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius melanotis* A smart addition to bird flocks in hill forest.

White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca*

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus* A couple seen in flight near Gelephu.

Slender-billed Oriole ◊ *Oriolus tenuirostris* Great views of this pine specialist near Punakha and Wangdi.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus* Commonly encountered at lower elevations, with a fledged brood of four being noteworthy.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer*

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus* A single at Panbang.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus* A small number seen at lower elevations.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* A single, near Gelephu.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* Three or four in the Wangdi area, all of the black-headed *tricolor* subspecies.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* A single close to our Panbang camp.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*

Red-billed Chough *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*

Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis* Good views of a couple at Yongkola, another seen in the street at Nganglam!

Yellow-billed Blue Magpie ♦ *Urocissa flavirostris*

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* A few of the distinctive salmon-coloured *interstinctus* subspecies.

Black-rumped Magpie *Pica bottanensis* Only found at Ura and Sengor.

Southern Nutcracker *Nucifraga hemispila* Frequent sightings in higher elevation forests.

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Large-billed Crow (Eastern J C) *Corvus [macrorhynchos] levaillantii* Some obvious Jungle Crows at Gyelposhing near Mongar, clearly different from the previous taxon in bill size, jizz and call.

Yellow-bellied Fantail *Chelidorhynch hypoxanthus*

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher (G-h Flycatcher) *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Fire-capped Tit ♦ *Cephalopyrus flammiceps* One briefly near Nobding, a couple near the Dochu La on our return leg.

Yellow-browed Tit ♦ *Sylviparus modestus*

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea* A very striking bird, seen often in lower elevation forests.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*

Cinereous Tit *Parus cinereus* A single near Gelephu.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Machlolophus spilonotus* Only a couple of these handsome birds seen, in warm broadleaved forests.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Rufous-vented Tit ♦ *Periparus rubidiventris*

Grey-crested Tit ♦ *Lophophanes dichrous* A small number encountered in high elevation forests, on Thrumsing La and Chele La.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*

Mongolian Short-toed Lark *Calandrella dukhenensis* A confiding bird we found at the roadside near Sengor is identified as this species, showing a typical buffy-rufous wash to the breast. It is probably the first confirmed record for the country. It was split from Greater in 2016.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

Himalayan Prinia *Prinia crinigera* Seen in dry grassy habitats in the main river valleys.

Black-throated Prinia *Prinia atrogularis* Found along the roadsides at Yongkola.

Thick-billed Warbler *Arundinax aedon* A single seen at our breakfast stop near Gelephu.

West Himalayan Bush Warbler *Locustella kashmirensis* A thrilling plain-brown little bird! Our attention was first drawn to an insect-like sound, which developed into stunning close views of a showy and vocal vagrant example of one of these, the first record for the country! Breeding high in the Himalayas between the Annapurna range and Kashmir, it has a small wintering population in the Assam valley. It appears I saw this in Chitwan, Nepal, 25 years ago, when it was still lumped with Spotted Bush Warbler, however I discovered I had made some voice notes together with recordings, helpfully describing the unspotted plumage and yellow bill base!

Russet Bush Warbler ♦ *Locustella mandelli* Another loud insect-like song, one by the roadside near Tongsa that was curious and came close, giving us great views.

Scaly-breasted Cupwing *Pnoepyga albiventer* Great close looks at one on the Pele La, two confiding birds on the Dochu La.

Pygmy Cupwing *Pnoepyga pusilla* A couple seen at Yongkola

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Nepal House Martin ♦ *Delichon nipalense* Several honeycomb-like mud-nest colonies seen along the road cliffs.

Eastern Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Black-throated Bushtit (B-t Tit) *Aegithalos concinnus*

Black-browed Bushtit ♦ *Aegithalos iouschistos* Formerly known as Rufous-fronted Tit, before re-lumping. A small number encountered at higher elevations.

Grey-bellied Tesia ♦ *Tesia cyaniventer* One seen early on near Nobding, heard widely after that.

Slaty-bellied Tesia ♦ *Tesia olivea* Many unco-operative birds along our route, finally getting views at Darachu.

Grey-sided Bush Warbler ♦ *Cettia brunnifrons*

Chestnut-headed Tesia ♦ *Cettia castaneocoronata* One seen well on the Thrumsing La, others heard at higher elevations.

Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus supercilii* A couple in their favoured bamboo en route to Tingtibi.

Rufous-faced Warbler ♦ *Abroscopus albogularis* Singles seen at Panbang and Tingtibi.

Black-faced Warbler ♦ *Abroscopus schisticeps* A very cute bird, we saw several in mid-elevation forests.

Broad-billed Warbler ♦ *Tickellia hodgsoni* A lively pair found near Namling.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler (Strong-footed B W) *Horornis fortipes*

Hume's Bush Warbler ♦ *Horornis brunnescens* Seen in bamboo on the Thrumsing La.

Buff-barred Warbler (Orange-b Leaf-w) *Phylloscopus pulcher*

Ashy-throated Warbler (Grey-faced Leaf-w) *Phylloscopus maculipennis*

Lemon-rumped Warbler (L-r Leaf-w) *Phylloscopus chloronotus*

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis* A few of these mustard-coloured altitudinal migrants encountered along our route.

Green-crowned Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus burkii* A couple of birds seen early in the trip in mid-elevation forests

Grey-cheeked Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus poliogenys*

White-spectacled Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus intermedius* A single vocal bird seen well near Namling.

Whistler's Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus whistleri*

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Odd migrants seen along the way, also on territory on the Chele La.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus castaniceps*

Yellow-vented Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus cantator* Seen near Yongkola, heard often subsequently, at lower elevations.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*

Grey-hooded Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus xanthoschistos*

Black-crested Bulbul *Rubigula flaviventris* Seen at the lowest elevation forest in Royal Manas NP.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*

Himalayan Bulbul ◊ *Pycnonotus leucogenys* Found in drier habitat along the Kuri Chhu.

White-throated Bulbul ◊ *Alophoixus flaveolus* 'Lemon meringue Bulbul', seen in low elevation forests.

Striated Bulbul *Alcurus striatus*

Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flavala*

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos maclellandii*

Black Bulbul (Himalayan B B) *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

Fire-tailed Myzornis ◊ *Myzornis pyrrhoura* It was a thrill to find a small flock of these in the rhododendrons on the Pele La.

Golden-breasted Fulvetta ◊ *Lioparus chrysotis* A trio of these gems in the bamboo near Namling.

White-browed Fulvetta ◊ *Fulvetta vinipectus*

Brown Parrotbill ◊ *Paradoxornis unicolor* Seen in bamboo at a roadside stop en route to Tongsa.

Grey-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis* A trio in a mixed flock near Nganglam.

White-breasted Parrotbill ◊ (Greater Rufous-headed P) *Paradoxornis ruficeps* Many sightings, at Yongkola, Tingtibi and the Tama La.

Fulvous Parrotbill ◊ *Suthora fulvifrons* A glimpse of one at the Thrumsing La.

Black-throated Parrotbill ◊ *Suthora [nipalensis] humii* A lovely little flock in the bamboo near Namling.

Pale-billed Parrotbill ◊ (Lesser Rufous-headed P) *Suthora atosuperciliaris* It took a while, but we found two or three in the bamboo by our Tingtibi camp.

Striated Yuhina *Staphida castaniceps*

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta* Seen at lower elevations, at Panbang and Tingtibi.

Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis*

White-naped Yuhina ◊ *Yuhina bakeri* Small flocks seen at Yongkola and Panbang.

Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis*

Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis* Like the above, restricted to the higher elevation forests.

Indian White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler *Mixornis gularis* A couple at Panbang.

Golden Babbler *Cyanoderma chrysaeum*

Rufous-capped Babbler *Cyanoderma ruficeps*

Rufous-throated Wren-Babbler ♦ *Spelaornis caudatus* Great views of a vocal sprite near Yongkola.

Black-crowned Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Pomatorhinus ferruginosus* Seen on one morning in the forest near Yongkola.

Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Pomatorhinus superciliosus* Some good looks at this special fellow near our Sengor camp, plus another on the Dochu La on our return leg.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

White-browed Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus schisticeps* Good views of a preening pair in the bamboo at Tingtibi.

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Erythrogonys erythrogonys*

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*

White-hooded Babbler ♦ *Gampsorhynchus rufulus* Great looks at a party of these in the bamboo at Tingtibi.

Yellow-throated Fulvetta ♦ *Schoeniparus cinereus* Delightful and co-operative little gems, seen in several places.

Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Schoeniparus castaneiceps*

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps* Heard-only.

Long-billed Wren-Babbler ♦ *Napothera malacoptila* Just one seen, at the roadside near Yongkola. Lovely if brief.

Nepal Fulvetta ♦ *Alcippe nipalensis*

Striated Laughingthrush *Grammatoptila striata*

Himalayan Cutia ♦ *Cutia nipalensis* Only seen on two days in the Yongkola forests.

Scaly Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron subunicolor* A lovely-looking bird, we saw a pair (twice) near Namling.

Blue-winged Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron squamatum* Elusive to the end, some glimpses at Darachu.

Bhutan Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron imbricatum* Like a giant Dunnock...

Black-faced Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron affine*

Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron erythrocephalum*

Long-tailed Sibia ♦ *Heterophasia picaoides* Some nice examples at Panbang.

Rufous Sibia ♦ *Heterophasia capistrata*

Hoary-throated Barwing ♦ *Actinodura nipalensis* Several sightings in higher elevation forests.

Blue-winged Minla *Actinodura cyanouroptera*

Bar-throated Minla (Chestnut-tailed M) *Actinodura strigula*

Rusty-fronted Barwing ♦ *Actinodura egertoni*

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea* Finally gave themselves up at Darachu.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris* Best show at Darachu, also seen at Panbang.

Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta* An attractive bird, we only saw them near Punakha and at Yongkola.

Rufous-backed Sibia *Leioptila annectens* A single singing bird near Nganglam showed well.

Red-faced Liocichla ♦ *Liocichla phoenicea* Great views of a pair in the early morning at Yongkola, also good looks at Darachu.

Jungle Babbler *Argya striata*

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax monileger*

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*

Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush ♦ *Ianthocincla rufogularis* One seen at Yongkola and another sat up nicely next to our Tingtibi camp.

Spotted Laughingthrush ♦ *Ianthocincla ocellata* A bit scarce this year; we saw it on the Dochu La, and on the Chele La road on our last afternoon.

Rufous-necked Laughingthrush ♦ *Pterorhinus ruficollis* Great views in many places, especially around some of our camps.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus albogularis*

Grey-sided Laughingthrush ♦ *Pterorhinus caerulatus* Seen well in the hill forest near Punakha.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* A single seen near the Chele La, *sikkimensis* subspecies.

Beautiful Nuthatch ♦ *Sitta formosa* A personal favourite, we saw three near Yongkola, and a very co-operative in the hills above Gelephu.

White-tailed Nuthatch ♦ *Sitta himalayensis*

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta cinnamoventris*

Hodgson's Treecreeper ♦ *Certhia hodgsoni* A single seen well on the Chele La. Formerly lumped in Eurasian Treecreeper.

Rusty-flanked Treecreeper ♦ *Certhia nipalensis* A good view of one on the Pele La. Often missed.

Sikkim Treecreeper ♦ *Certhia discolor* Regular encounters with this long-tailed fellow in mid-elevation forests.

Spotted Elachura ♦ *Elachura formosa* A lot of intent focussed on this little fellow now he is in his own family. As is typical, we had to try a few until we saw one well, at Yongkola. Heard in many places this year.

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* Several seen in fruiting trees near Gelephu.

Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnia malabarica*

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Great Myna (White-vented M) *Acridotheres grandis* Small groups seen en-route to Nganglam, also near Gelephu.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*

Long-tailed Thrush ♦ *Zoothera dixonii* One singing from the top of a conifer on the Chele La.

Himalayan Thrush *Zoothera salimalii* A bold songster on the Thrumsing La gave us some short views and a real earful!

Long-billed Thrush ♦ *Zoothera monticola* Heard-only, from our Sengor camp.

Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma* Rarely seen, we had partial views on the Chele La of a bird hiding down a slope, then remarkably another flew across the front of the bus a short while after!

Purple Cochoa *Cochoa purpurea* Heard-only, at Yongkola.

White-collared Blackbird ♦ *Turdus albocinctus*

Grey-winged Blackbird ♦ *Turdus bouboul* Found locally, around the Tama La and Darachu.

Tickell's Thrush ♦ *Turdus unicolor* A single at the roadside on the way down from the Tama La.

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*

Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea* A couple seen in mid-elevation forests.

Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*

Large Niltava *Niltava grandis* A good view of a male near the Tama La.

Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae* Excellent looks at a bold male at Yongkola.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus*

White-gorgeted Flycatcher ♦ *Anthipes monileger* One at Yongkola showed briefly.

Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor*

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura* A male seen briefly on the Dochu La.

Little Forktail ♦ *Enicurus scouleri* Nice views of one on a roadside waterfall at Namling.

Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculatus* Hard to find this year, after a couple of glimpses of shy birds we saw one on a river bed near the Tama La.

Black-backed Forktail ♦ *Enicurus immaculatus* Only at the lowest elevations, we saw them at Panbang and near Gelephu.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus* Of several seen, best views were at Tingtibi.

Blue-fronted Robin ♦ *Cinclidium frontale* Heard-only, as is typical. A beautiful song coming from the thicket near Namling, also heard at Darachu.

Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* The daily bird!

Indian Blue Robin *Larvivora brunnea* A late arrival, we had some brief views on the Chele La road.

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophris* Heard-only.

Himalayan Shortwing ♦ *Brachypteryx cruralis* Surprisingly co-operative along the roadsides at Sengor.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*

Pygmy Flycatcher (P Blue F) *Ficedula hodgsoni* One showed well in hill forest near Punakha.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophinata*

Sapphire Flycatcher ♦ *Ficedula sapphira* A male showed well along the Lingmethang Road.

Ultramarine Flycatcher ♦ *Ficedula superciliaris* Several seen in the early part of the tour.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*

Himalayan Bluetail *Tarsiger rufilatus*

White-browed Bush Robin ♦ *Tarsiger indicus* A singing male on the top of the Thrumsing La.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis* Found at high elevation such as Chele La, plus some females at lower levels.

White-capped Redstart (River Chat) *Phoenicurus leucocephalus*

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Phoenicurus fuliginosus*

Hodgson's Redstart ♦ *Phoenicurus hodgsoni* Several females seen along the riverside by Punakha Dzong.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Blue-capped Rock Thrush ♦ *Monticola cinclorhyncha* A handsome summer visitor, common along certain roadsides.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* A couple seen on the road from Kurichu.

Grey Bush Chat *Saxicola ferreus*

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*

Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker ♦ *Pachyglossa melanozantha* A female seen well near Sengor.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*

Fire-tailed Sunbird ♦ *Aethopyga ignicauda* Splendid males seen on the Thrumsing La.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*

Green-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga nipalensis*

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* Two seen at Tingtibi.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons* A few encountered in low elevation forests.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella*

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* A couple seen on grassy roadsides at Tingtibi.

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* Two shuffling about on the Chele La.

Rufous-breasted Accentor ♦ *Prunella strophiatea* Only a couple seen, at high elevations.

Russet Sparrow *Passer cinnamomeus* A pleasing feature around hill villages and some of our camps.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* Nominate forms seen at Bajo and Gelephu, and a black-backed *calcarata* at Bajo.

White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla maderaspatensis* Seen at Bajo with accompanying juvenile, also

White Wagtail (Masked W) *Motacilla [alba] personata* Two at Bajo was a write-in

White Wagtail (Baikal W) *Motacilla [alba] baicalensis* A single at bajo.

White Wagtail (Himalayan W) *Motacilla [alba] alboides*

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*

Collared Grosbeak ♦ *Mycerobas affinis* Two near Sengor alongside the following species, also seen on the Chele La.

Spot-winged Grosbeak ♦ *Mycerobas melanozanthos* Two near Sengor was our only sighting.

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes* Good numbers around the Chele La.

Scarlet Finch ♦ *Carpodacus sipahi* Stunning males seen in several locations.

Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch ♦ *Carpodacus pulcherrimus* Only seen at Ura, both sexes.

Dark-rumped Rosefinch ♦ *Carpodacus edwardsii* A good view of a female near the Thrumsing La.

Crimson-browed Finch ♦ *Carpodacus subhimachalus* Two males seen at Sengor.

Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch ♦ *Carpodacus thura* Good views of males at Pele La and Chele La.

Red-headed Bullfinch ♦ *Pyrrhula erythrocephala* Two pairs seen on the Chele La.

Golden-naped Finch ♦ *Pyrrhoptes epauletta* A male seen at Sengor.

Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*

Yellow-breasted Greenfinch *Chloris spinoides*

MAMMALS

Asian Elephant *Elaphus maximus* A splendid matriarchal group of 15 including some small juveniles near Gelephu.

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* Non-leader, at Phobjika.

Western Red Panda *Ailurus fulgens* Glorious views of this big prize, and we even saw it on two consecutive days on the Thrumsing La.

Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula* Four individuals seen at scattered locations.

Northern Red Muntjac *Muntiacus vaginalis*

Brown Goral *Naemorhedus goral* A very relaxed looking fellow at Namling.

Assamese Macaque *Macaca assamensis*

Nepal Sacred Langur *Semnopithecus schistaceus* A nice troop of adults with young seen near the Pele La.

Golden Langur (Gee's G L) *Trachypithecus geei* Small groups in several places from Panbang up to Tingtibi. Endemic to Bhutan.

Capped Langur *Trachypithecus pileatus* Good views of this chap as well, at Yongkola and Panbang.

Moupin Pika *Ochotona thibetana*

Irrawaddy Squirrel (Hoary-bellied Himalayan S) *Callosciurus pygerythrus*

Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel *Dremomys lokriah*

Black Giant Squirrel (Malayan G S) *Ratufa bicolor* A couple of nice examples seen around Tingtibi.

Himalayan Striped Squirrel *Tamiops maclellandii*