

16th January 1993

MURPHY, C. (1993)
PART



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Dear Carol.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Please find enclosed Cygnus Nepal trip report and log - I'm sure Paul would have no objections. I'll ask him! Having your books on the country to refer to was a boon. Now looking forward to the fieldguide...

Some of the records/observations/comments below may be of interest. They include one or two tiny typographical errors in the second edition - hope you don't mind my pointing them out; no doubt you spotted them long ago.

Great Crested Grebe - One in summer plumage spent three days on the second of the Gokyo lakes catching flies from the water's surface, 28-30 May 1992

WHITE STORK at KOSI TAPPU, 13 Nov 92 - 5th record? (Cliff Waller)

Indian Griffon Vulture, page 110, an alternative name for Eurasian Griffon - I thought it was an alternative name for Gyps indicus, Long-billed Vulture?

SHORT-TOED EAGLE - at least 4 at Kosi Tappu on 12 Nov. with 2 plus, on 11th and 13th

MONTAGU'S HARRIER - male at Chitwan on 7 Nov

CHANGEABLE HAWK EAGLE - two birds scoped on successive days at Chitwan; one straightforward, the other we would have called a Mountain Hawk Eagle going by the identification piece and illustration by Dave Mills but for its very short crest. (An all black eagle gliding over treetops at Chitwan, seen only briefly, may have been a Changeable Hawk Eagle.)

KESTREL - I mentioned to you that Cliff and several others (not me) saw about 300 kestrels which Cliff believes were virtually all Greater Kestrels; no Amurs or Hobbies and only one Lesser Kestrel. Strange?

IBISBILLS - I think present near Hetaura from mid- (not late-) November; we saw some on 13th.

AVOCET - 1 at Kosi Barrage on 12 Nov.

JACK SNIFE - 1 in rice-paddy, Chitwan. (He gets a pair of bins!) says it was his third at Chitwan.

Black-tailed Godwit - 1 at Kosi Tappu on 11th - first Nov. record this century?

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL 1 adult at Kosi Tappu on 11th. (hanghni)

Slaty-headed Parakeets - 6, Chitwan on 17th very low altitude?

EAGLE OWL - 1 at Kosi Tappu on 11, 12, 13 Nov " " "

Collared Owllet - 1 near Machan, on the north side of the east-west highway; also at a very low altitude?

White-throated Needletail - is a record of one as high up as Thore Pati in May 1986 of any interest?

Little Swift - I think present in Kathmandu beyond mid-Nov as still plenty (100 plus) over Phulchowki on 21 Nov.

Coppersmith Barbet - you say is a summer visitor to Kathmandu; I saw one there in mid December 1978.

Wryneck - One by the Manora river on 8 Nov - first Nov record for the valley?

Grey-crowned Pygmy Woodpecker - you say is an uncommon s.v. to K'du valley; was one at Gokarna on 9 Nov simply late leaving?

STATUS OF WAGTAILS:

	Your opinion	Mine
Yellow Wagtail	Occasional; fairly common at Chitwan	Fairly Common; common at Chitwan and Kosi
Citrine Wagtail	Occasional; fairly common at Chitwan and Kosi	Locally common in Kathmandu Valley, Chitwan and Kosi; occasional elsewhere
Grey Wagtail	Common	Fairly common
White Wagtail	Common	Very common

SHORT-BILLED MINIVET - 2 males in forest above Fishtail Hotel, 20 Nov - a new site?

BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL - 2 on Phulchowki, one low down (5,500ft) on 21 Nov, the other seen only by one of the clients at the high altitude of 8,000 - 8,300 ft on 9 Nov. It was with some Striated Bulbuls feeding on a fruiting tree (with Himalayan barbets, grey-winged and white-collared blackbirds also in vicinity). The observer, Duncan Woodhead is reliable: his convincing description is attached.

WHITE-THROATED BULBUL - three bulbuls feeding c15ft up in fairly dense forest in that excellent Phulchowki ravine described in your guide (a few bends up from the quarry at c.5,500ft) I was able to scope one of the birds that was momentarily in the open (range c.60 metres at times 20) and could clearly see all the salient plumage features to enable an immediate identification. Main points were large, clean white throat patch contrasting with

pale yellow breast and belly; dull greenish-brown upperparts and floppy crest. I was the only one in the group to see this individual well. Cliff, Bijay, Duncan and others in the group were of the same opinion as me that all three birds were probably White-throated Bulbuls but I can only vouch for the bird scoped. An hour later I saw about six Mountain Bulbuls in the same ravine. While superficially similar these birds differed in having rufous, not yellow, underparts; their pale throats were obviously streaked with grey and were not nearly so white nor as contrasting as that of the White-throated Bulbul(s).

Alpine Accentor - you say "occasional". I would say "fairly common", at least in Khumbu.

Gould's Shortwing - I like Richard's drawings alot but he (or the reproduction process) hasn't done justice to one of Nepal's gems.

White-browed Bush Robin - Singing male at Thyangboche, Everest National Park, May 1992.

Tickell's Thrush - two seen at Gokarna in December 1978. I would describe it as "occasional" rather than "fairly common".

Chestnut-crowned Bush Warbler - one at Kosi Barrage on 11 February 1979.

PRINIAS - BELATED THANKS FOR UNTANGLING FLEMMING!

Plain Prinia - these were common in the reeds at Kosi in April 79

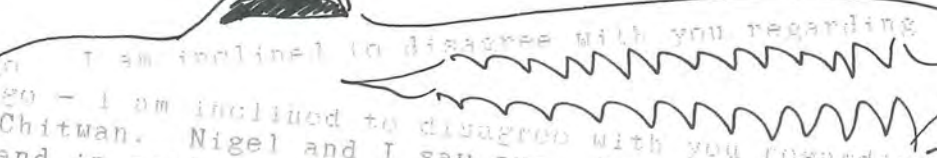
TICKELL'S WARBLER - race P.a. arcanus (Buff-bellied Warbler), two at Kosi Barrage on 18 April 1979. I was just back from six weeks in Thailand and had no difficulty sorting out this form (I considered it a species then - P. subaffinis) from P. affinis. The yellowish-buff "upperparts" referred to in the description of P. arcanus on page 71 should of course be "underparts". (Three other typographical errors I noticed are the missing "e" in "ar" on the 6th line from the bottom of the Greenish Warbler description. Sarus Crane, p 138, 8 lines up from the bottom and Rufous-necked Snowfinch, p. 356 second line - one "one" too many. Not exactly earth-shattering!

Grey-faced Leaf Warbler - One at Chitwan on 17 Nov and one in forest above the Fishtail Hotel, Pokhara on 20 Nov; low altitude records.

Grey-cheeked Warbler - One on Phulchowki with Black-throated Parrotbills and other small jobs in small ravine c. 6,300 ft. on 6th June 1992.

Green Shrike Babbler - Breeding confirmed on Sheopuri, fledgling-juvenile there in early June 1988.

Bar-tailed Treecreeper - the map indicates an extreme eastern record for P6 square not referred to in text??


I am inclined to disagree with you regarding
Crow-billed Drongo - I am inclined to disagree with you regarding
its status at Chitwan. Nigel and I saw our first Crow-billed
Drongos in Thailand in early April '79; then at Dharan we saw two
on 20 April; walking from Gitanager (south of Bharatpur) to
Debendrapur on the southern edge of Chitwan we saw 12 Crow-
billed, next day (spent mostly in the forest around Debendrapur
memorable for our first Indian Pittas and my greatest ever
first) we saw just two, while according to my notes Black Drongos
were common; none on the 13th in the same area but it was
"common" on 14 April in Chitwan between Debendrapur and Sauraha.

Grey Treepie - At least 4 at Chitwan on 17 November were
no other species at an unusually low altitude - what's going on in
the hills?

Tree Sparrow - 6 on 11th Nov at Kosi Tappu where normally only
recorded between January and May?

Black-headed Bunting - 6 in reeds at Kosi Tappu, 13 Nov.

chestnut-eared Bunting - One at Kosi Tappu on 11, 12 & 13 Nov.
so one lovely male spent the whole of 29 May 1992 hopping
around the rocky shores of Gekyo Lake (c. 5,000 metres).

Sorry about the printing, the paper was
at an end.

Will ~~Hope~~ to see you in March. If you have
a moment to make any comments on
the above records prior to my writing
it up for Nepal B. Club I would be
grateful. Hello to Tim.

Chris

SPECIES: BLACK CRESTED BULBUL

DATE: 9. 11. 92

SPECIMENS: 8 x 40 OPTOLYTH.

SITE: PUSHPHORI, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

ACCOUNT:

First noticed by movement of ~~medium sized~~ bird half observed by net. Insects of a ~~troubled~~ ~~species~~ with blowers I could see the underside of the bird flew vent up to the lead. The vent to chin was a striking brilliant yellow with no streaking. The lead and chin were black with an obvious crest.

The bird continued to feed on the far side of the bird, occasionally appearing in view, but only ever showing the ~~underside~~ and lead. It was seen briefly through foliage

iff and several
iff believes we
Hobbies and only

strange?

IBISRUIC

SPECIES: BLACK CRESTED BULBUL

DATE: 9. 11. 92

BINOCULARS: 8x40 OPTOLUX IV.

SITE: PULCHOWATEL, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

ACCOUNT:

First noticed by movement of a medium sized bird high obscured by the trunk of a tree. On focusing with binoculars I could see the underside of the bird for vent up to the head. The rest of the bird was a striking brilliant yellow with no streaking. The head and chin were black with an obvious crest.

The bird continued to feed on the side of the trunk, occasionally coming in view, but only ever showing the underside and head. It was seen briefly through telescope

but in charging over viewing the
along cliff to see the bird it
disappeared.

No other plumage contours
were seen.

Duncan Woodhead
Cygnus Nepal

Between 8,000' and 8,300'