

INDIA

and

NEPAL

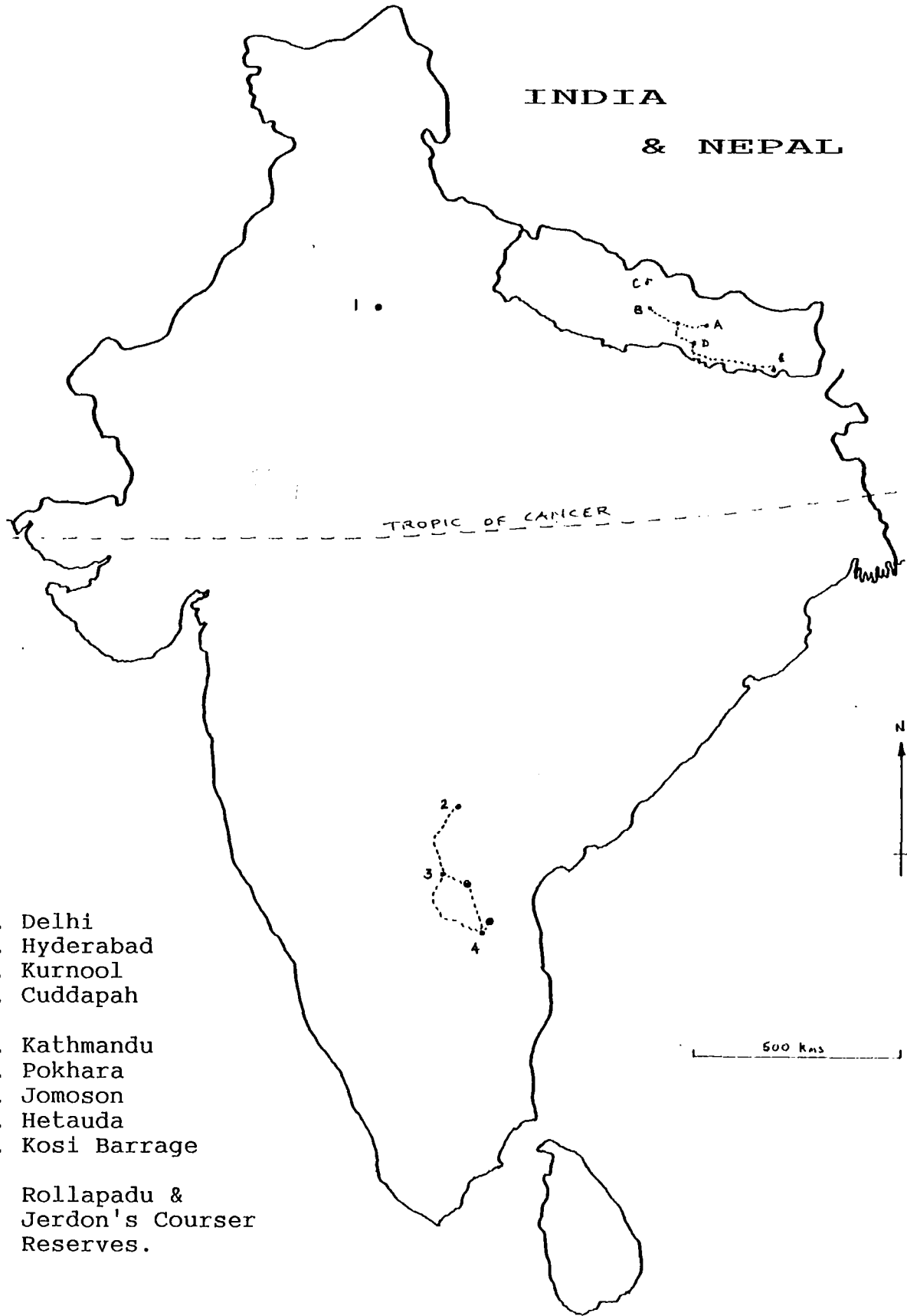
5th - 23rd February 1997 (part)



A further quest for waders

by David Rosair and Don Taylor

INDIA  
& NEPAL



- 1. Delhi
- 2. Hyderabad
- 3. Kurnool
- 4. Cuddapah

- A. Kathmandu
- B. Pokhara
- C. Jomoson
- D. Hetauda
- E. Kosi Barrage

⊗ Rollapadu &  
Jerdon's Courser  
Reserves.

## INDIA

6th-10th and 22nd February

### ITINERARY SUMMARY

- 6th - Arrived at Delhi airport at 0830 and taken by Edgar of 'Indian Experience' to the Centaur Hotel. Birdwatched at the Tughlakabad Ruins between 1030-1400. Flight delay. Flew from Delhi to Hyderabad between 2115-2250. Met by Joseph, also of 'Indian Experience', who introduced us to our driver and took us to the Green Park Hotel.
- 7th - Left the Green Park Hotel at 0615 for our 400 km drive to Cuddapah. Occasional brief stops to bird, arriving Cuddapah at 1530. Visited the Malleswara Reserve, where we planned to see the Jerdon's Courser, met Aithana, but he had no instructions about our visit! Eventually managed to arrange a visit for the following evening. Returned to the Blue Diamond Hotel around 2000.
- 8th - In the morning birdwatched along the Penner River and in the afternoon the area to the north of Cuddapah. Met Aithana at his house at 2030, but it was around 2200 before we actually entered the Reserve to search for our target species. Had a rest between 2330-0030.
- 9th - Left the Reserve around 0200, reaching our Hotel at 0315. Arranged for our driver to commence the drive north at 1030, but he didn't appear until 1100, so it was 1115 before we started our long drive to the Rollapadu Grasslands. Our driver took a devious route and got thoroughly lost, so we didn't reach the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary until after 1730, with very few stops to bird! Left the Sanctuary at 1840 and reached our Hotel in Kurnool at 2000.
- 10th - Left the Hotel at 0510 and arrived at the Wildlife Sanctuary at 0630, where we met our guide and an English speaking research student. We worked the Reserve and were entertained by the staff until nearly 1200, when we left for our long drive back to Hyderabad. Reached Kurnool by 1300 and Hyderabad Airport at 1815, with a few brief stops to bird. Took off at 2015 and touched down in Delhi at 2200. Booked in at the International Inn and were ready for bed by 2300.
- 11th - Flew from Delhi to Kathmandu between 1110-1220.
- 22nd - Arrived in Delhi from Kathmandu at 1010. Birdwatched in the Zoological and Archeological Gardens from 1300-1750, based at the International Inn.
- 23rd - Left the International Inn at 0130 for our flight from Delhi to Dubai, taking off at 0425, thence to Heathrow between 0820-1140 (local times - there is a five-and-a-half hour time difference).

**Weather:** During the six days spent in India the weather was settled, with hazy blue skies and temperatures at times reaching the mid-high 20s centigrade.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

Nomenclature essentially as in *A Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World* by Howard and Moore. The number in brackets indicates the number of days on which the species was recorded (maximum 6). An \* indicates a new species for DWT. A # shows a species only seen in India - not recorded during the Nepal section of the trip.

**Little Grebe** *Podiceps ruficollis capensis* (2)

One was seen on a small lake north of Kurnool on the 10th and at least five were present on a marshy lake outside the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**Little Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax niger* (3)

Six were present along a river north of Cuddapah on the 9th, a similar number were seen on Maddigundam Cheree - a lake near the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary the next morning, and on the 22nd at least three were seen on a marshy lake adjacent to the Zoological Gardens in Delhi.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* (4)

At least five were seen during the drive from Hyderabad - Cuddapah on the 7th, with just one-two on the next three days around Cuddapah and on the return journey north.

**Great Egret** *Egretta alba* (2)

At least three were seen in or near the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, with one at the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* (5)

Commonly seen between Hyderabad and Cuddapah during the 7th-10th, with day totals of 100+. One was also seen on a marshy lake adjacent to the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis coromandus* (6)

An extremely common and widespread species, with day totals of 500+ between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, and several hundreds on the 22nd near the Zoological Gardens in Delhi.

**Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeol grayii* (5)

A commonly seen species, with day totals of 20-50+ between Hyderabad and Cuddapah during the 7th-10th.

**\*# Painted Stork** *Mycteria leucocephala* (3)

One was seen between Kurnool and Cuddapah on the 7th and four were present along the Penner river the next day. However, it was the breeding colony and the 100s of birds associated with it on the 22nd, in the Delhi Zoological Gardens, that provided the most impressive sight.

**Asian Openbill Stork** *Anastomus oscitans* (1)

A distant flock of about 40 thermalling storks north of Cuddapah on the 8th were, on distribution and abundance, virtually certain to be this species.

**Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* (2)

One was seen along the Penner River on the 8th, with a group of five on the 10th within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

**# Black-headed Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephalus* (1)

A group of five was seen on the 7th, in flooded fields with numerous egrets, between Hyderabad and Kurnool.

**# Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia episcopus episcopus* (1)

Three individuals were seen within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**# Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* (1)

One was seen at Maddigundam Cheree - a lake near the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* (2)

Two groups of four were seen along the Penner River on the 8th, with two on Maddigundam Cheree - a lake near the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Teal** *Anas crecca* (1)

A total of about 20 was noted on the 10th, at lakes near and in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

**Spot-billed Duck** *Anas poecillorhyncha* (2)

At least 30 were seen on the 10th on lakes within and near the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, and on a roadside pool between Kurnool and Hyderabad, while 10+ were noted in the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula* (1)

A lone drake was seen on the 10th on a roadside lake between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

**Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata* (2)

Three were present on Parmanchala Cheree - a lake within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina* (1)

A lone drake was seen on the 10th on a roadside lake between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

**Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus govinda* (4)

At least 10 were noted during the drive between Hyderabad and Cuddapah on the 7th, with just two-three on each of the next three days.

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* (6)

In and around Delhi on the 6th at least 50 were noted, with day totals in excess of 10 during the 7th-9th, between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, while on the 10th a flock of about 50 was seen over the river in Kurnool. However, possibly 1,000+ were seen on the 22nd,

the most impressive numbers being associated with the Zoological Gardens in Delhi, particularly late in the day when huge thermals were seen in the sky over the city.

**# Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus* (2)

Singles were seen well over the Penner River on the 9th and over a roadside pool the next day between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

**\*# Grey-headed Fishing Eagle** *Ichthyophaga achthyaetus* (1)

One was seen flying low overhead towards the harrier roost in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 9th.

**Long-billed Vulture** *Gyps indicus* (1)

Of large numbers of Vultures over the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd a few, showing no white on their backs, were considered to be of this species. Relatively few upperpart views were obtained and numbers of the following species may also have been present.

**# Oriental White-backed Vulture** *Gyps bengalensis* (2)

Singles were identified, when white backs were noted, over the Tuglakhabad Ruins in Delhi on the 6th and over the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* (3)

One (carelessly misidentified initially!) was seen near the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th. Over open grassland north of Cuddapah two plus one were seen on the 8th, while at least three were seen over the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**\*# White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa* (2)

One was seen perched near Nandyal on the 9th and in flight over the Rollapadu Wildlife Sannctuary on the 10th.

**# Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* (3)

An adult male was seen on the 7th between Hyderabad and Kurnool, but the evening of the 9th produced a staggering sight, when some 500 harriers homed in on a roost in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary. Local information suggests about 85% are the following species, but we were happy that we had seen at least 100 Pallid's! Though only one male was noted the next morning, there were probably others.

**Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygarrus* (3)

On the 8th an adult male and two ringtails were seen in the Penner River area, near Cuddapah. As mentioned above there may well have been around 400, or more, flying to roost in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 9th and about 20 were noted the next day.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* (2)

A male and two female birds were seen near Nandyal on the 9th and another male was seen within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, where this species is reportedly scarce, the next morning.

**# Shikra** *Accipiter badius* (1)

One was seen well on the 10th in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

**(Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* (1)**

An accipiter seen over the Penner River on the 8th, may have been of this species, but attention was concentrated on the Steppe Eagle with which it was initially flying.)

**Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis* (2)**

One was first seen along the Penner River on the 8th and two more circled over open savanna north of Cuddapah the next day.

**Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* (4)**

Day totals of just one-two were noted on the 6th-8th, with at least five on the 10th, including three in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

**\*# Grey Francolin *Francolinus pondicerianus* (1)**

Two small groups totalling a minimum of five birds were seen at the roadside east of Cuddapah on the 7th.

**\*# Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* (1)**

A single cock bird was seen in the vicinity of the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**White-breasted Waterhen *Amourornis phoenicurus* (2)**

One was seen near Nandyal on the 9th and about five were present within the vicinity of Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* (1)**

About ten were seen within the vicinity of Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Coot *Fulica atra* (1)**

Three were seen on a small pool north of Kurnool on the 10th.

**Wader species**

A total of 18 was recorded during the Indian section of the trip, including two new for DBR - Jerdon's Courser and Little Pratincole - and four new for DWT.

**# Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* (5)**

Quite commonly seen between the 7th-10th, with 50+ noted on the 8th along the Penner River and in flooded rice paddies near Cuddapah. About 60 were seen on the 10th, some within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and others at roadside pools and rice paddies between Kurnool and Hyderabad. Two were also seen within the vicinity of Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**# Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus indicus* (1)**

Two were present, with a flock of 13 Red-wattled Lapwings, in a large open enclosure in the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd. They were free-winged and preening in a grassy area, under a tree in an otherwise bare, stoney area.

**\*# Indian Courser *Cursorius coromandelicus* (3)**

In an area of dry open savanna north of Cuddapah on the 8th, three birds were seen extremely well, both on the ground and in flight. DBR glimpsed another the next day within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, where two more were seen well on the 10th.

This must be one of the most attractive of the coursers, as my slides show.

**\*# Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* (1)**

DBR saw a pair briefly on the ground within the Reserve, but my views were even briefer (my blood sugar level was getting low) and I only glimpsed one on the ground and momentarily saw the white underwing in flight. It was extremely frustrating not having control of the torchlight beam!

**\* Little Pratincole *Glareola lactea* (2)**

The first three were seen on the 8th along the Penner River, however, on the 10th, at Maddigundam Cheree - a lake just outside the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, a flock of at least 300 was present, providing an unexpected amazing spectacle!

At one stage they were seen flying low over the water, either drinking or picking insects from the surface. They are a splendid, tiny pratincole. Calls heard included a shrill, tremulous trill and a single 'pwueep'.

**\*# Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* (3)**

A total of five was present in a partially cultivated open area of land opposite the Tuglakhabad Ruins, on the outskirts of Delhi, on the 6th. On the 8th, this time associated with damp pits created by soil extraction, a total of ten birds was present, providing even closer views. Two more were seen at the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, with another four by a roadside pool between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

A most attractive *Vanellus* species, as my slides show. The call was noted as having a Grey Plover-like rhythm, but being relatively quiet and more squeaky, compared with the raucous calls of Red-wattled Lapwings.

**Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus* (6)**

Seen in widespread localities and extremely catholic in choice of habitat - the first were seen on short grass at the Centaur Hotel in Delhi on the 6th. A total of 10 was noted on the 8th in the Cuddapah area, including the Penner River valley, while 17 were seen at the Delhi Zoological Gardens, including one flock of 13.

**LR Plover *Charadrius dubius* (3)**

Quite commonly seen at a range of suitably wet sites, with a day total of 50+ on the 8th, along the Penner River and other localities in the Cuddapah area. Some questions were asked on the 8th, when an adult or two clearly showed bright yellow legs.

**Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* (2)**

A day total of 100+ was noted for the 8th, mainly along the Penner River near Cuddapah, with just one in a river valley the next day.

**# Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* (1)**

Two were seen at a roadside pool between Kurnool and Hyderabad on the 10th.

**# Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* (3)**

Five were present on flooded rice paddies north of Cuddapah on the 8th, one was glimpsed the next day by DBR and two were seen on a lake within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.



**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* (2)

About five were seen on the 8th, along the Penner River and on flooded rice paddies north of Cuddapah. DBR also saw two on the 10th on a roadside pool between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* (5)

Small numbers were seen in widely scattered localities, with a day total of 10+ on the 7th, between Hyderabad and Cuddapah. About 20 were noted the next day along the Penner river and flooded rice paddies north of Cuddapah, with a similar number on the 10th, from the lakes in and around the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary to the roadside pools between Kurnool and Hyderabad. One was also seen within the vicinity of Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* (2)

One flooded area of rice paddies to the north of Cuddapah on the 8th attracted 100+ birds and on the 10th about 10 were present at a lake within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, with others on roadside pools between Kurnool and Hyderabad.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* (3)

A day total of about 15 was noted on the 8th, along the Penner River and flooded rice paddies north of Cuddapah, with just one-two on the 9th and 10th.

**Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura* (1)

A small marshy area, within an essentially dry savanna habitat north of Cuddapah on the 8th, produced three birds which called and provided excellent flight views. Two more were seen distantly, feeding in a flooded rice paddy.

**# Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* (2)

A day total of about 50 was noted on the 8th, with about half along the Penner River and the other half in flooded rice paddies north of Cuddapah. About 20 were noted at various localities on the 10th, between the lakes around the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and roadside pools north to Hyderabad.

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* (2)

At least five were seen at various localities around Cuddapah on the 8th, with a total of up to 20 on the 10th at the lakes around and within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and roadside pools en route to Hyderabad.

**Brown-headed Gull** *Larus brunnicephalus* (1)

At least 20 were present at the Parmanchala Cheree - a lake within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chilodrias hybrida indica* (1)

Three were present at Maddigundam Cheree - a lake just outside the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\* River Tern** *Sterna aurantia* (3)

The first was seen by DBR along the Penner River on the 8th, followed by another along a river north of Cuddapah on the 9th and about 15 at the lakes both nearby and inside the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\*# Black-bellied Tern *Sterna melanogaster***

Four were seen well along the Penner River on the 8th, with singles at another river north of Cuddapah on the 9th and at Maddigundam Cheree - a lake just outside the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**# Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles exustus hindustan* (1)**

On the 10th, mainly within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, a total of about 20 was noted, most being seen in flight, as the drinking 'holes' were being visited by locals fetching water, by the time we got there!

**Rock/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* (6)**

Commonly seen, though mainly associated with inhabited areas.

**Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (5)**

Commonly seen in widespread localities.

**# Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* (2)**

About five were seen on the 7th *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, with two more between Cuddapah and Nandyal on the 9th.

**Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* (1)**

At least five were seen in the Delhi area on the 6th.

**# Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* (6)**

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with a noted day total of about 50 on the 8th in the Cuddapah area.

**Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* (6)**

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with regular day totals of 10+ and at least 50 on the 22nd in the vicinity of the Zoological Gardens in Delhi.

**Common Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus varius* (1)**

One, considered to be of this species, was seen near the Penner River on the 8th.

**Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis parroti* (3)**

One-two were seen daily during the 7th-9th between Hyderabad and Cuddapah.

**# Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* (3)**

At least one-two were seen on the 7th and 8th, *en route* to and around Cuddapah, with at least five on the 10th, mainly in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

**# Spotted Owlet *Athene brama* (1)**

One was seen briefly, but well, in the grounds of the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\*# Indian Nightjar *Caprimulgus asiaticus* (1)**

One was seen after dark not far from Cuddapah on the 9th. It landed in the road beside our car, which was pulling in at the time, giving brief but reasonable views.

**# Asian Palm Swift** *Cypslurus batasiensis* (3)

One-five or more were seen daily between the 7th-9th, en route to and around Cuddapah.

**House Swift** *Apus affinis* (1)

About 10 were seen towards dusk on the 22nd, over the Archeological Gardens in Delhi.

**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis leucomelanura* (3)

One-two were seen daily between the 8th-10th in the Cuddapah area.

**River Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis taprobana* (2)

One was seen between Kurnool and Cuddapah on the 7th and another in the vicinity of the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 10th.

**Smyrna Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* (4)

Quite commonly seen in widespread localities, with a day total of 10+ on the 7th between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, and up to 5+ between the 8th-10th.

**Little Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis* (5)

Up to three or more were seen daily between the 7th-9th, with at least 10 on the 10th, including a few within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary. On the 22nd two more were seen within the vicinity of the Zoological Gardens in Delhi.

**# Blue-tailed Bee-eater** *Merops (superciliosus) philippinus* (1)

Two were seen well north of Cuddapah on the 8th, feeding over flooded rice paddies.

**# Indian Roller** *Coracias benghalensis* (4)

Seen quite frequently en route between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, with about 20 on the 7th, and at least eight in the Cuddapah area the next day.

**# Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* (4)

About five were seen at the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, with about 10 in the vicinity of the Zoological and Archeological Gardens, again in Delhi, on the 22nd. Otherwise just singles were seen near the Penner River on the 8th and within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\*# Large Green Barbet** *Megalaima zeylanica* (1)

At least two were seen and others heard in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\*# Indian Red-winged Bush Lark** *Mirafra erythroptera* (1)

Two pairs were identified within the Tuglakhabad Ruins, on the outskirts of Delhi, on the 6th.

**# Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla* (1)

Calls were clearly heard from at least five birds flying overhead, within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, and DBR estimated he saw about 30.

**\*# Sykes' Crested Lark *Galerida deva* (2)**

DBR identified one along the Penner River, near Cuddapah on the 8th, and at least two were seen well within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

Distinctly different, the plumage having an overall rufous brown hue.

**\*# Small (Oriental) Skylark *Alauda gulgula* (1)**

One was seen extremely well, as it sang within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, when DBR saw at least another five.

**\*# Rufous-tailed Finch-Lark *Ammomanes phoenicurus* (3)**

DBR identified two on the 7th *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, at least three were seen on the 9th, the first in song north of Cuddapah and others in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, while 20+ were noted on the 10th, mostly within the Sanctuary.

**\*# Ashy-crowned Finch-Lark *Eremopterix grisea* (3)**

At least 20 were noted on the 8th, with the first along the Penner River near Cuddapah, and a flock of 17 males along wires north of the town. About 100 were noted for the 9th and 200+ for the 10th, large numbers occurring within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary.

The males apparently return before the females - which explains these concentrations (Pers comm).

**Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola* (1)**

Two were seen in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**# Dusky Crag Martin *Hirundo concolor* (2)**

All records were confined to the Delhi area, with at least two at the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th and 10+ at the Zoological and Archeological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (6)**

Small numbers were noted quite frequently, with a day total of 100+ in the Cuddapah area on the 8th.

**Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* (4)**

During the 7th-9th up to five were seen daily at quite widespread localities. However, at the Headquarters of the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary at dawn on the 10th, there was a gathering of at least 500 birds on wires - an amazing sight.

**(Indian Cliff Swallow *Hirundo fluviicola* (1)**

Several birds seen from the car during the drive south from Hyderabad were thought to be of this species, but none was seen during the short stops.)

**Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* (4)**

One, seen near the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th, showed characteristics of the Black-headed race *M.f.melanogrisea*. Another north of Cuddapah on the 8th looked more like *M.f.beema*, as did 10+ the next day and most of the ten or so seen on the 22nd in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi.

**Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* (1)**

Just one was seen in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba* (4)

One-two were seen between the 8th-10th, with at least 20 on the 22nd in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi.

**White-browed Wagtail** *Motacilla maderaspatensis* (5)

There were daily sightings of one-three between the 6th-10th, apart from a total of at least ten on the 8th in the Cuddapah area.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae* (2)

Very large numbers were present towards dusk and at dawn, on the 9th and 10th respectively, in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary. However, there were few opportunities to study plumage detail closely.

**# Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris* (3)

Two were seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th, with at least three in the Cuddapah area on the 8th and at least one in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th. Doubtless there were others in the roost there with the previous species.

**# Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* (1)

DBR heard good numbers coming into roost in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 9th.

**\*# Large Cuckoo Shrike** *Coracina novaehollandiae* (1)

Two were seen and heard calling from wires at the Headquarters of the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary early on the 10th. It was a clear two-note whistling call, the second descending then ascending again at the end.

**# Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus* (1)

One was seen in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**White-cheeked Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucogenys* (1)

At least three were seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th.

**Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer* (5)

Quite commonly seen in widespread localities, with day totals of 20+ on the 6th and 7th, in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi and *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah respectively.

**\*# White-browed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus luteolus* (1)

A harsh GS Woodpecker-like call attracted our attention and a brief glimpse noting the short supercilium and white around the eye, greenish uppers and yellow underparts confirmed the identification.

**# Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* (1)

Two different individuals were seen well within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**Rufous-backed Shrike** *Lanius schach erythronotus* (1)

One was seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th. A different race from Black-headed Shrikes *L.s.tricolour* seen in Nepal.

**# Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor pallidirostris* (4)

One was seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th. Three were seen in the Cuddapah area on the 8th, with at least two *en route* between Cuddapah and the Rollapadu Grasslands on the 9th. The next day a total of five was noted a few within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and others *en route* to Hyderabad.

The first bird was considered to have a large all dark bill, as confirmed on my slide.

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecicus* (2)

All three were seen in the Delhi area, with the first in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th and two singles within the vicinity of the Zoological and Archeological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis* (2)

DBR noted two *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah on the 7th and at least three were seen within the vicinity of the Zoological and Archeological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Pied Bushchat** *Saxicola caprata* (2)

A male was seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th and a female was present in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\*# Brown Rockchat** *Cercomela fusca* (2)

At least 10 were seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, with another near the Penner River on the 8th.

**# Indian Robin** *Saxicoloides fulicata* (5)

First seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, when at least 10 were noted. About five were recorded on the 7th at various stops between Hyderabad and Cuddapah, with two more on each of the 8th and 9th. Finally, a female was seen in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\*# Common Babbler** *Turdoides caudatus* (3)

About 10 were seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th. DBR saw two more in the Cuddapah area on the 8th and at least five were present in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\*# Large Grey Babbler** *Turdoides malcolmi* (2)

Small flocks totalling 15+ birds were noted between Cuddapah and the Rollapadu Grasslands on the 9th and again on the 10th within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and northwards to Hyderabad.

**\*# Jungle Babbler** *Turdoides striatus* (1)

At least 20 were seen within the vicinity of the Zoological and Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\* Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* (3)

The first was eventually identified satisfactorily following a roadside stop between Kurnool and Cuddapah on the 7th, when a *Hippolais*-like warbler was studied for some time. At least five were seen the following day in the Cuddapah area, with another in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 9th.

The *Hippolais*-like appearance, long undertail coverts, short primary projection, short supercilium and the frequent tail-

fanning, along with the scratchy, grating call with Wren-like qualities, all helped to confirm the identification.

David made a good point regarding concentrating on structure rather than apparent plumage colouration - the first bird, seen in green foliage - appeared to me to be an *Hippolais* green!

**# Booted Warbler** *Hippolais caligata* (1)

At least five were seen within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, most being identified by the grating 'churrk' call.

**# Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* (2)

At least five were noted in the Cuddapah area on the 8th and good views were obtained of one in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th.

**\* Ashy Prinia** *Prinia socialis* (5)

At least three were seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, with singles between Kurnool and Cuddapah on the 7th, near the Penner river on the 8th and in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, and at least three more in the Delhi Zoological and Archeological Gardens on the 22nd.

**# Plain (Tawny-flanked) Prinia** *Prinia subflava* (3)

DBR identified four in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, at least one was seen in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th, and another was present in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius* (1)

At least two were seen in the Delhi Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybitus* (1)

At least three were seen in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\*# Smoky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fulgiventis* (1)

In the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, a small *Phylloscopus* warbler showed the following plumage details: uppers generally quite dark greyish; underparts dull yellowish, with greyish areas on sides of neck and breast; pale pinkish legs; base of lower mandible pale; call a hollow 'tuc'; is considered to be of this species.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* (1)

At least one was heard calling in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd, but good views were not obtained.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (1)

At least three were identified in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**# (Hume's) Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca minula* (2)

In the Delhi area one was seen in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the 6th and at least two in the Zoological Gardens on the 22nd.

**# Purple Sunbird** *Nectarinia asiatica* (5)

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with a male and two females in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th, at

least five *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah on the 7th, about 10 in the Cuddapah area on the 8th, at least five in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th and at least three in the Zoological and Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* (6)

Commonly seen in widespread localities, but invariably associated with human habitation.

**Red Munia** *Amandava amandava* (1)

At least 10 were seen in the Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd, causing a little confusion by the wide range of plumages - amazing variation between sexes and ages.

**\*# White-throated Munia (Indian Silverbill)** *Lonchura malabarica* (4)

First identified satisfactorily north of Cuddapah on the 8th, when three were seen. DBR noted another 10 on the 9th, at least three were seen on the 10th in the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary and five or more in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**# Spotted Munia** *Lonchura punctualata* (1)

At least three were seen in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**\*# Brahminy Myna (Black-headed Starling)** *Sturnus pagodarum* (4)

Two were noted daily between the 6th-8th, with the first in the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi. Four were again seen in the Delhi area on the 22nd, in the Archeological Gardens with several other Myna species.

**\*# Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus* (1)

An adult was seen briefly north of Cuddapah on the 8th.

**# Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* (1)

A flock of about 50 was seen near the Tuglakhabad Ruins on the outskirts of Delhi on the 6th.

**Pied Myna (Asian Pied Starling)** *Sturnus contra* (2)

In the Delhi area one was seen on the 6th in the Tuglakhabad Ruins, with 10+ in the Zoological and Archeological Gardens on the 22nd.

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* (6)

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with day total estimates of 50+.

**# Bank Myna** *Acridotheres ginginianus* (1)

Commonly seen in the Zoological and Archeological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd, when time was found to look closely at the different plumages of the Myna species present.

**# Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus* (2)

Two were seen *en route* between Hyderabad and Cuddapah on the 7th, and two males were present in trees in the 'high street' of Cuddapah on the 9th.



**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* (6)

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with daily total estimates of 50+ during 7th-10th inclusive, essentially between Hyderabad and Cuddapah.

**# Red-billed Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* (1)

One was seen in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**Indian Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda* (1)

One was seen well, and heard to call, in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens* (6)

Commonly seen in widespread localities, with day total estimates of 100+ on several dates.

**Jungle Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos* (2)

About 10 were seen within the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary on the 10th and two were seen in the Zoological Gardens in Delhi on the 22nd.

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**NEPAL**

**11th-22nd February**

**ITINERARY SUMMARY**

- 11th - Arrived Kathmandu around 1230 and booked in at the Hotel Marsyangdi Mandala in the Thamel district. Hired a taxi to visit a traditional Grey-headed Lapwing site along the Bagmati River for an hour.
- 12th - Caught the 0700 tourist bus for Pokhara, which stopped a number of times *en route*, arriving at 1430. Booked in at the Gauri Shankar Guest House and managed some forest birding around the Fishtail Lodge between 1600-1800.
- 13th - Took a Royal Nepal flight from Pokhara to Jomson between 0730-0750. Two porters 'found' us and we headed north at 0925, reaching Eklobhatti at 1200 and Kagbeni at 1330 where we stayed in the Hotel Shangrila. During the afternoon birdwatched around the village.
- 14th - Early morning birding around Kagbeni, from which we moved on east around 0915, heading for Jharkot and Muktinath. Booked in at the Hotel Sumini in Jharkot at 1400, then headed for the Solitary Snipe site at Muktinath. Returned to the Hotel by 1800.
- 15th - Early morning birding around Jharkot, which we left by 0930. Reached Eklobhatti around 1200 and Jomson by 1530, where we booked into Motel Xanadu.

- 16th - Although the Everest Air flight came and went, the Royal Nepal plane apparently turned back! Booked in at a more comfortable and less expensive lodge - the Marco Polo. Explored valleys to the east of Jomson and some of the pine forest below Nilgiri between 0930-1800. David worked the local area and visited the Museum.
- 17th - The Royal Nepal flight departed at 0805 and we touched down in Pokhara at 0825. Returned to the Gauri Shankar Guest House, where we arranged a bus, had a shower and ate a quick breakfast. Caught the 1030 bus for Hetauda, reached Naryangarh at 1430 and Hetauda at 1715, where we booked in at the Manakamana Rest House. Then managed a little birding along the Rapti River until dark, returning to our room around 1900. Walked to the Motel Avocado for an evening meal and met the owner, Bhagirath Shama, who is an orchid specialist and knew where to see Ibisbills - upstream from the road bridge!
- 18th - Bhagirath joined us at 0630 and we birded down the Rapti River to the suspension bridge and back by 1500. Met him again at the Motel Avocado at 1630 and he showed us his 'local patch' stretch of the Rapti River until 1800. Collected our bags from the Manakamana Rest House and caught the overnight bus to Kosi Barrage, leaving around 2200.
- 19th - Arrived at Kosi Barrage at 0500, were greeted by a local customs official and taken to Motya Mahila's Rest House, where we rested for a short while, getting up around 0700. Birded along the east bank of the Kosi Barrage during the morning, then the pools to the east in the afternoon. Returned to the rest house around 1800 to find that Suresh Shakya had arrived.
- 20th - Hired a boat and went upstream from the east bank during the morning, with Suresh, and worked the west bank during the afternoon from 1330-1600. Returned to the rest house, packed and caught an overnight bus to Kathmandu at 1715.
- 21st - Arrived Kathmandu at 0515 and returned to the Hotel Marsyangdi Mandala, where we slept until around 0900. Enjoyed a large breakfast, then visited the bank for some cash and the airline offices to check flight arrangements. Caught a local bus to Dakshinkali at 1515 and alighted south of the Cement Factory along the Bagmati River. Birded the area between 1630-1800, then returned to our Hotel.
- 22nd - Took the Royal Nepal flight to Delhi, taking off at 0845.

**Weather:** It was virtually dry throughout, with periods of sunshine. Nights were cold at the high altitudes, where strong winds built up during the day. Daytime temperatures were usually comfortably warm.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

Nomenclature essentially as in *A Guide to the Birds of Nepal* by Carol and Tim Inskipp. The number in brackets indicates the number of days on which the species was recorded (maximum 11). An \* indicates a new species for DWT. A # shows a species additional to ones seen in India.

**Little Grebe** *Podiceps ruficollis* (2)

One was seen on the Phewa Tal, Pokhara on the 12th, with an estimated day total of 50+ along the east bank at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**# GC Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus* (2)

Seen only at Kosi Barrage with estimates of about 20 for both the 19th and 20th.

**# Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo* (4)

One was seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th, with four on the Marsyandi River on the 17th, followed by day total estimates of 20 and 100+ at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th respectively. Some of these showed characteristics of *P.c.sinensis*.

**Little Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax niger* (2)

There were day total estimates of 100+ at Kosi Barrage on both the 19th and 20th.

**# Oriental Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster* (1)

Two were seen near Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**# Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* (1)

Three were seen at the man-made lake near the Royal Palace in Kathmandu on the 21st.

**# Striated Heron** *Butorides striatus* (1)

Three were present on the west bank at Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii* (7)

Seen commonly in widely scattered lowland sites, with day total estimates of 100+ at Kosi Barrage on both the 19th and 20th.

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* (7)

Commonly seen across suitable lowland habitats, with 100s flying to roost along the Bagmati River on the 21st.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* (6)

Commonly seen across suitable lowland habitats, with day total estimates of 100+ at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th.

**Great Egret** *Egretta alba* (2)

Only noted at Kosi Barrage, where there were day total estimates of about 10 for both the 19th and 20th.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* (2)

Only noted at Kosi Barrage, where there at least five on the 19th and two on the 20th.

# Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* (2)

As with the previous species only noted at Kosi Barrage, where there were four on the 19th and just one on the 20th.

Asian Openbill Stork *Anastomus oscitans* (2)

Only noted at Kosi Barrage, where there were about 10 on the 19th and seven on the 20th.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* (1)

One was seen at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

(# White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* (1)

One, seen from the bus somewhere north of Chitwan National Park on the 17th, was almost certainly this species, though it looked fairly pale the bill was not that of an Openbill.)

# Lesser Adjutant Stork *Leptoptilos javanicus* (2)

One was seen from the bus on the 17th, along the Rapti River west of Hetauda. DBR saw one along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th and another was seen well at Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

\*# Red-naped Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa* (3)

Five were seen downstream from the suspension bridge at Hetauda on the 18th, a flock of about 25 flew - calling attractively - to roost near Kosi Barrage on the 19th and a flock of nine was seen there on the 20th.

# Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (1)

One was seen at Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

# Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* (2)

Only seen at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th, when an estimate of 5,000 may be well below the true total present.

# Greylag Goose *Anser anser* (1)

DBR saw a flock of four at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

\*# Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus* (1)

A flock of seven was present at Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* (4)

Along the Rapti River at Hetauda three were seen towards dusk on the 17th, with a total of about 60 the next day. At Kosi Barrage about 20 were noted on the 19th, with about 100 on the 20th, when a boat took us upriver.

# Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (2)

DBR saw one on the 19th and two were present in the Kosi Barrage area on the 20th.

\*# Cotton Pygmy Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* (1)

A total of 19 was noted on the 19th, in the pools to the east of Kosi Barrage.

# Eurasian Wigeon *Anser penelope* (1)

About 20 were seen amongst the huge numbers of duck present near the Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**# Gadwall *Anser strepera* (2)**

Certainly 200+ were present amongst the huge numbers of duck present near Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th.

**Teal *Anser crecca* (2)**

Only about 20 were noted amongst the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th, with a few in the marshy areas.

**# Mallard *Anser platyrhynchos* (2)**

DBR sorted out four amongst the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and a similar number were seen the next day.

**Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* (1)**

Just two were seen along the east bank at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**# Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* (2)**

An estimate of 3,000+ at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th may be well below the total present - a magnificent sight.

**Garganey *Anas querquedula* (2)**

One pair was discovered amongst the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage on the 19th, with two pairs on the 20th.

**Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* (2)**

DBR discovered one drake on the 19th and further scanning on the 20th produced at least 10 amongst the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage.

**Pochard *Aythya ferina* (2)**

Totals of 11 and 20+ were noted for the 19th and 20th as a result of scanning through the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage.

**# Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (2)**

About 20 were discovered amongst the huge raft of duck at Kosi Barrage on both the 19th and 20th.

**# Goosander *Mergus merganser* (1)**

A total of about 20 was noted along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th. This included a flock comprising one drake and 11 duck.

**Black Shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* (2)**

One-two were seen along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th and another was present at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**Black Kite *Milvus migrans* (8)**

Over Kathmandu and along the Bagmati River 30+ were noted on the 11th. Between Kathmandu and Pokhara 10+ were noted on the 12th, with just one at Pokhara on the 13th. Between Pokhara and Hetauda 20+ were noted on the 17th, with about 10 along the Rapti River on the 18th. At Kosi Barrage about 10 were noted on the 19th, with just one the next day and there were about 10 again along the Bagmati River in Kathmandu on the 21st.

**Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* (1)**

One was seen between Pokhara and Damauli on the 17th.

**# Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus* (3)**

DBR saw one near Kagbeni on the 13th and one was present in much the same area the next day. On the 15th a total of four was noted in the Kali Gandaki valley between Eklobhatti and Jomoson.

**Oriental White-backed/Long-billed Vulture *Gyps bengalensis/indicus***

Thermals of vultures seen on the 20th to the east of Sapt Kosi ranged from 15-30 birds at different times. None of the former species was specifically identified.

**Long-billed Vulture *Gyps indicus* (3)**

Two between Pokhara and Damauli on the 17th were considered to be of this species, as were five at Kosi Barrage on the 19th, but others on the 20th in the same area, as mentioned above, were not specifically identified.

**# Himalayan Griffon Vulture *Gyps himalayensis* (4)**

In the Kali Gandaki valley DBR saw two near Kagbeni on the 13th, and the next day, between Kagbeni and Khinga two pairs and a single were noted. On the 15th, again along the Kali Gandaki valley a total of at least eight was recorded between Eklobhatti and Jomoson, including a thermal of six. On the 16th a pair was seen over Jomoson.

**# Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvous* (1)**

Four along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu on the 12th were considered to be of this species.

**# Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* (1)**

Two were seen in the Kali Gandaki valley between Eklobhatti and Jomoson on the 15th, with possibly one near Kagbeni on the 14th.

**Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (2)**

Only seen in the Kosi Barrage area, where there were at least five on the 19th and one the next day.

**Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* (1)**

An adult male was seen along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th.

**\*# Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucus* (2)**

In the Kosi Barrage area single adult males were seen on two occasions on the 19th and once on the 20th. A most attractive harrier.

**(# Northern Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* (1)**

An *Accipiter* west of Jarkhot on the 15th, seen to disturb a flock of Snowfinches, was considered to be of this species. Another along the Rapti River on the 18th may also have been and although photographed it is still difficult to confirm the identification.)

**# Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* (1)**

One was seen well near Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis* (5)**

Along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu one was seen on the 11th, with at least seven on the 21st. *En route* between Khatmandu

and Pokhara on the 12th at least three individuals were seen. On the 17th and 18th one was present in the Rapti valley at Hetauda.

**# Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos* (1)

An adult was seen near Jomoson on the 16th.

**# Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* (1)

One was seen near Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus* (4)

Comparatively few were noted, with singles on the 11th near the Bagmati River and on the 13th at Kagbeni in the Kali Gandaki valley. On the 18th two were seen along the Rapti valley near Hetauda and a total of four was noted in the Kosi Barrage area on the 20th.

**# Chukar Partridge** *Alectoris chukar* (2)

Two flocks totalling about 25 birds were seen near Kagbeni in the Kali Gandaki valley on the 19th. Others were heard calling the next morning.

**(Grey Francolin** *Francolinus pondicerianus* (1)

Although not supposedly present, my description of one seen briefly alongside the ponds east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th seems only to fit this species. Underparts barred black and white; upperparts finely barred with dark and pale browns; suggestion of orange on face pattern - possibly a broad supercilium.)

**White-breasted Waterhen** *Amourornis phoenicurus* (2)

One was seen on Phewa Tal, Pokhara on the 12th and DBR saw another at Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* (2)

Commonly seen at Kosi Barrage on the 19th, when 20+ were noted, but only two were seen the next day, when much of the time was spent on the river.

**# Purple Gallinule** *Porphyrio porphyrio* (1)

At least 20 were present in the reedbeds and pools to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th, including one flock of 14 birds.

**Coot** *Fulica atra* (2)

One and three were seen at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and 20th respectively.

**Waders**

A total of 20 species was recorded in Nepal, adding 10 to the 18 in India, bringing the trip total to an interesting 28, bearing in mind that no coastal sites were visited. DBR added his third new species - Solitary Snipe - and DWT another four to bring his new wader species total to eight.

**\*# Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* (2)

At least 15 were present on the pools to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th and one was seen to the west on the 20th. All were in non-breeding (without long tails) plumages.

In this plumage, when swimming at a distance, they look remarkably like Wilson's Phalaropes!

# **Bronze-winged Jacana** *Metopidius indicus* (2)

A total of eight, seen on the pools to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th, included one adult in full breeding plumage. Two non-breeding plumaged birds were seen to the west on the 20th.

# **Ibisbill** *Ibidorhynca struthersii* (1)

Along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th a flock of 12 was eventually discovered close to the suspension bridge – some 5 kms downstream from the road bridge – and in the late afternoon another four were seen about 2 kms upstream.

A splendid opportunity to see these rather special waders again, feeding, at rest and in flight, and also to hear them calling. It was interesting that we were only aware of six for much of the time, until I waded across the river and disturbed twice as many!

**Little Pratincole** *Glareola lactia* (3)

A flock of about 12 was seen along the Rapti River at Hetauda at dusk on the 17th. At Kosi Barrage an estimated 400+ was noted on the 19th, with maybe 500+ the next day, when a boat trip took us closer to the main flock. On the 20th small numbers were also seen flying and presumably feeding over agricultural land.

A super small pratincole species, with its contrasting blacks, whites and greys, and delightful 'chatter' – a real delight. It is of interest to note that Tim Loseby only saw one in this same area two weeks earlier.

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus* (3)

One was seen along the Bagmati River on the 11th and four were present at Kosi Barrage on the 19th, with about 20 the next day.

# **Lesser Sandplover** *Charadrius mongolus* (1)

During the river trip from Kosi Barrage on the 20th, a flock of four was seen briefly and calls were heard. Later, better views were obtained of a single bird.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius* (5)

One was seen along the Kali Gandaki valley at Jomoson on the 13th. Three were present along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 17th, with possibly 25 pairs there, between the road and suspension bridges, the next day. Three were seen near the Kosi Barrage on the 20th, and one along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu on the 21st.

\*# **River Lapwing** *Vanellus duvaucelii* (4)

The first pair was seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th, followed by about 10 pairs along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th. At Kosi Barrage one was seen to the east on the 19th, with a single pair to the west on the 20th.

Another extremely attractive *Vanellus* species, particularly when 'bombing', as you get too close to their territories.

\*# **Grey-headed Lapwing** *Vanellus cinereus* (2)

A flock of five was discovered to the west of Kosi Barrage on the 20th, with a total of 52 along the Bagmati River – south of the Cement Factory – on the 21st.



Another attractive *Vanellus* species with its Sabine's Gull-like upperwing pattern and subtle greys that blend in with the rock-strewn rivers.

**Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus* (4)

One was seen *en route* between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the 12th. In the Kosi Barrage area three were seen on both the 19th and 20th, and two were seen along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, on the 21st.

**# Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* (3)

At Kosi Barrage a flock of 18 on the 19th was eclipsed by a flock of at least 130 on the 20th. Five were also seen with the Grey-headed Lapwings along the Bagmati River on the 21st.

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* (2)

A total of at least 15 was noted along the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th, including one flock of seven. A total of at least 20 was noted at Kosi Barrage on the 20th, which also included two similar sized flocks.

**(Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* (1)

A flock of 30 snipe, seen to land in the reedbeds to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th, probably comprised this species - the trailing edge appeared to be white, but the views were too limited to be 100% sure about the identification.)

**Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura* (2-3)

One was seen well along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, on the 11th. Four plus two were present amongst the reedbeds and pools to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th, while two more, seen feeding distantly in the wet fields to the west on the 20th, may also have been of this species.

**\*# Solitary Snipe** *Gallinago solitaria* (2)

On the 14th, in a reedy pool well below the Muktinath Temple, a total of eight was noted. They provided an excellent opportunity to study behaviour and plumage detail. They were seen to 'bob' while they fed - as the Jack Snipe does.

The next morning two more were seen in similar habitat at Jharkot and after a freezing night their backs were frost covered. On this occasion one, which was studied at very close range, was also seen well in flight and calls were heard. I noted the call as a Common Snipe-like 'shreep', but less harsh.

An elongated snipe, with a long bill - possibly 2x head length, which showed a paler basal end - and a noticeable tail extension, with an obvious orange sub-terminal bar. At times a very grey appearance was apparent and the pale grey face very obvious. There was a thin, dark loreal stripe and eyeline, and a thin horizontal cheek bar. Two white lines along the mantle and upper scapular edges stood out prominently. The tertials were clearly marked with alternating brown and white triangles. At rest it was difficult to determine the covert feather patterns, as the whole area appeared to have wave-like parallel lines of black, white and reddish brown. The white supercilium broke into spots, almost meeting on the nape. The gingery brown wash across the breast is a plumage feature I've not noted on any other snipe. When two flew, alighted and then ran in front of us, the bright yellow legs showed

well. In flight they appeared heavy and long winged, showing a greyish wing panel and a very narrow white trailing edge to the secondaries.

**# Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata orientalis* (2)

At Kosi Barrage on the 19th DBR noted a flock of about 150 and the next day about 250 were present on a sandy island upriver from the barrage.

The markedly white underwings indicated that these were birds of the eastern race *orientalis*.

**# Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus* (1)

One was seen along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* (5)

On the 17th two were seen towards dusk along the Rapti River at Hetauda. The next day a total of about 15 was noted along the river valley. In the Kosi Barrage area between 30-50 were noted on the 19th and about 30 on the 20th. One was also seen on the Bagmati River just south of Kathmandu on the 21st.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* (4)

Along the Rapti River near Hetauda two were seen towards dusk on the 17th and a total of at least 20 was noted on the 18th. One was seen on the 20th in the flooded fields to the west of Kosi Barrage and on the 21st about 10 were present along the Bagmati River, south of the cement factory.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* (1)

Three were present in the flooded fields west of Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* (6)

Along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu at least three were seen on the 11th, with eight south of the cement factory on the 21st. Along the Rapti River near Hetauda five were seen towards dusk on the 17th, with about 30 the next day. In the Kosi Barrage area about five were seen on both the 19th and 20th.

**# Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* (2)

A near adult in winter plumage was seen at Kosi Barrage on the 19th and the next day, presumably the same bird as well as one in 1st winter plumage were present.

**Brown-headed Gull** *Larus brunnicephalus* (1)

Three adults were seen near Kosi Barrage on the 20th, two in summer plumage and one in winter.

**# Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia* (2)

One was present near Kosi Barrage on the 19th and a total of six was noted there the next day.

**River Tern** *Sterna aurantia* (2)

At least 20 were present in the Kosi Barrage area on both the 19th and 20th.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus* (1)

Two were seen feeding over the flooded fields to the west of Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**Rock/Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia* (7)

Flocks noted high in the Himalayas, between Jomson and Muktinath during the 13th-17th were considered to be pure Rock Pigeons. Feral birds, when noted, were invariably linked with well established habitations.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* (1)

Three were seen near Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**# Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica* (1)

One was seen along the Bagmati River, south of the cement factory, on the 21st.

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis* (3)

Day totals of up to 10 were noted for the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and 20th, with at least two along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu on the 21st.

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula kramari* (4)

Small flocks continually flew to roost in Hetauda towards dusk on the 17th, totalling 80+ at the very least. Smaller numbers were seen the next morning. Three were also seen in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and two along the Bagmati River on the 21st.

**Common Hawk-Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx varius* (2)

This species caused some confusion, inevitably giving the initial impression of being an *Accipiter*. The flight, however, was subtly different, flapping deeply before gliding on slightly downcurved wings. One seen perched in a tree on the marshes at Kosi Barrage on the 19th, was largely obscured by leaves. Another was seen there the next day.

**Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis* (2)

Two were seen on both the 19th and 20th in the Kosi Barrage area.

**# Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* (1)

Two (DBR) plus one were seen over the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th.

**House Swift** *Apus affinis* (1)

Three were seen towards dusk along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu on the 21st.

**Smyrna Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* (7)

Quite commonly seen across the lowland areas, particularly the tarai, with 10+ noted during the bus journey from Kathmandu to Pokhara on the 12th. One-two were seen along the Bagmati River on the 11th and 21st, with up to five or more daily along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 17th and 18th, and in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and 20th.

**\*# Stork-billed Kingfisher** *Halcyon capensis* (1)

One was seen well on the 20th, in the trees by the pools to the east of Kosi Barrage.

**River Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis* (4)

One was seen by DBR at Phewa Tal on the 12th. During the 18th-20th two were seen daily, firstly along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th and then in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and 20th.

**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* (3)

Three were seen along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th, with two in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th, followed by at least five the next day.

**Little Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis* (1)

Two were present to the west of Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

**\*# Indian Grey Hornbill** *Tockus birostris* (1)

One was seen well by the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 18th.

**# Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens* (1)

One was heard calling clearly from the forest beside Phewa Tal, Pokhara, on the 12th.

**\*# Sand Lark** *Calandrella raytal* (2)

At least five pairs were seen along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th and probably 10+ were also seen north of Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

This species caused some initial confusion, when seen closely showing the fine breast streaking of Lesser Short-toed Lark, but with different overall colouration and different call and song. Going to press I still haven't seen a good illustration or read a detailed description!

**Brown-throated Sand Martin** *Riparia paludicola* (3)

On the 12th a few were seen along the Trisuli River, during the journey between Kathmandu and Pokhara, and in the evening 100+ assembled over Phewa Tal before going to roost. Along the Rapti River at Hetauda some 10+ were seen towards dusk on the 17th, with about 50 there the next day.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* (5)

Probably 20+ were noted *en route* from Pokhara to Hetauda on the 17th, with 50+ along the Rapti River the next day. Up to 25 or more were noted in the Kosi Barage area on the 19th and 20th, and another 10+ along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu on the 21st.

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica* (4)

About five were present along the Bagmati River south of Kathmandu on the 11th and about 10 were noted the next day *en route* between Kathmandu and Pokhara. At least 20 were seen along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 18th, with just two at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**# Asian House Martin** *Delichon dasypus* (1)

*En route* from Kathmandu to Pokhara on the 12th, somewhere near Naubise, a flock of 20+ was observed during a 30 minute stop. They appeared to show a small square white rump, all pale underparts - no dark throat - and greyish underwing coverts.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae richardii* (2)  
Birds, presumably of this race, were seen along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, with at least three towards dusk on the 17th and five or more the next day. The call was the typical harsh 'tshreep' of *A.n.richardii*.

**# Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* (3)  
Groups of three appear to be the norm! There was one group along the Rapti River on the 18th, another near Kosi Barrage on the 19th and a third by the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, on the 21st.

**# Rosy Pipit** *Anthus roseatus* (1)  
Some 50 or more pipits were seen along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 18th. The general impression was of greyish looking 'Water Pipits', but with pale legs and a subtly different call - presumably this species.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava* (2)  
About 12 were seen in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th (DBR) and two the next day showed characteristics of *M.f.beema*.

**# Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* (2)  
In the Kosi Barrage area about six were noted on the 19th, with at least 10 seen the next day.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea* (4)  
One was seen beside Phewa Tal, Pokhara, on the 12th and another near Jomoson the next day. At least 10 were seen along the Rapti River near Hetauda on the 18th, with about five in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba* (8)  
Little attention was paid to separating the different races present, but there was an amazing variety of plumages. Along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, about 10 were seen on the 11th, with 20+ on the 21st. Two were seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th and high at Jomoson there were four on the 13th and another two on the 16th. Probably in excess of 50 were seen along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 18th, but the highest numbers were noted in the Kosi Barrage area, with 200+ on the 19th and 500+ on the 20th many gathering on wires as we drove west.

**White-browed Wagtail** *Motacilla maderaspatensis* (3)  
Along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, about five were seen on the 11th. One was seen *en route* from Pokhara on the 17th and at least 10 were seen along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 18th.

**White-cheeked Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucogenys* (1)  
A group of nine was seen in the forest beside Phewa Tal, Pokhara, on the 12th.

**Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer* (5)  
At least two were seen on both the 12th and 17th *en route* to and from Pokhara. At least five were noted along the Rapti River, near Hetauda, on the 17th and in the Kosi Barrage area there were 20+ on the 19th and 10+ on the 20th.

**# Brown Dipper** *Cinclus pallasii* (2)

Singles were seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th and on the Kali Gandaki at Jomoson on the 16th.

**# Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes nipalensis* (3)

Singles were seen at Kagbeni on the 13th and 14th, and near Jomoson on the 16th.

**\*# Brown Accentor** *Prunella fulvescens* (4)

Commonly seen between Jomoson and Muktinath, with concentrations around the villages. On both the 13th and 14th day totals of 25+ were noted, mainly for the areas around Kagbeni. About 10 were seen between Jharkot and Jomoson on the 15th and up to 10 and five in the Jomoson area on the 16th and 17th respectively.

The 'Whinchat' of the Himalayas! Not only in size and appearance, with its dark ear coverts and white supercilium, but occasionally in its behaviour, when it sits on the tops of bushes.

**\*# Robin Accentor** *Prunella rubeculoides* (2)

Two were seen at Muktinath, just outside the temple wall, on the 14th and another was seen in Jharkot the next day.

**# Alpine Accentor** *Prunella collaris* (1)

One was seen well *en route* from Kagbeni to Jharkot on the 14th.

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* (1)

On the 19th three different birds were seen in the Kosi Barrage area.

**Asian Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis* (3)

At least five were seen *en route* between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the 12th. On the 19th three were seen in the Kosi Barrage area and another was present along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, on the 21st.

**\*# White-throated Redstart** *Phoenicurus schisticeps* (1)

Two pairs were seen in the vicinity of Kagbeni on the 14th.

**\*# Guldenstadt's Redstart** *Phoenicurus erythrogaster* (3)

A lone female was seen just below Eklobhatti on both the 13th and 15th. Two different males were seen on the 14th near Kagbeni and again at Muktinath, and another male was present near Jomoson on the 16th.

**# Plumbeous Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* (2)

On the 12th a pair was seen along the Trisuli River, with a female by Phewa Tal, Pokhara. A pair was also present along the Rapti River, upriver from the road bridge, on the 18th.

**# Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata* (7)

Only seen below 1,000 metres, with a total of about 10 on the 11th along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, where another was seen on the 21st. At least five were seen *en route* from Kathmandu to Pokhara on the 12th, with similar numbers between Pokhara and Hetauda on the 17th and along the River Rapti at Hetauda the next day. In the Kosi Barrage area at least 20 were noted on the 17th, with just one the next day.

**Pied Bushchat** *Saxicola caprata* (4)

Two males were seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th and another *en route* between Pokhara and Hetauda on the 17th, when two more were seen towards dusk by the Rapti River. About ten were seen along the river valley the next day. A female was also seen along the Bagmati River, south of Kathmandu, on the 21st.

**# White-capped River Chat** *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus* (1)

At least five were seen along the Rapti River on the 18th, upriver from the road bridge.

**# Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* (2)

A female was present along the Rapti River, Hetauda, towards dusk on the 17th and again the next morning.

**# Blue Whistling Thrush** *Myiophonus caeruleus* (3)

Singles were seen by Phewa Tal, Pokhara, on the 12th, near Kagbeni on the 14th (DBR) and by the Rapti River at Hetauda on the 17th (DBR).

**\*# Dark-throated Thrush** *Turdus ruficollis atrogularis* (2)

Two were present near Kagbeni on the 14th, when another was seen near Jharkot (DBR). One was also seen near Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

**\*# Red-throated Thrush** *Turdus ruficollis ruficollis* (1)

An adult of this race, showing a full reddish throat, was seen near Muktinath on the 14th.

**\*# Slaty-backed Forktail** *Enicurus schistaceus* (1)

One was seen extremely well by the Fishtail Lodge, Phewa Tal, Pokhara on the 12th.

**Ashy Prinia** *Prinia socialis* (1)

One was seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th.

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius* (1)

One was seen along the Trisuli River on the 12th.

**\*# Striated Marsh Warbler** *Megalurus palustris* (1)

One was seen well in the marsh along the east bank of Kosi Barrage on the 19th. Three others seen by DBR were probably also of this species.

**\*# Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* (1)

One was satisfactorily identified on the 19th along the east bank of Kosi Barrage. Two others may well have been of this species, having similar reddish brown uppers, warmer on the rump, a white throat, slight buffish hue on flanks, bold white supercilium, thin dark eyeline, short primary projection, brown tail feathers with reddish brown fringes and dark centred tertials. Call 'tsuck'.

**Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* (1)

One was seen along the west bank of Kosi Barrage on the 20th.

## Leaf Warblers

Relatively little time was spent trying to identify the many leaf warblers that were present, particularly in the Kosi Barrage and Rapti River areas. Regretably the summary that follows is somewhat thin.

### Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (2)

One was seen well and heard calling in the gardens of the Avocado Motel in Hetauda on the 18th, and a small flock of warblers in the Kosi Barrage area the next day contained at least three.

### Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* (1)

One was glimpsed and heard calling in the gardens of the Avocado Motel in Hetauda on the 18th.

### # Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (2)

Good numbers appeared to be present in the Kosi Barrage area during the 19th and 20th, with day total estimates of 20+ and 10+ respectively. Most were identified by the obvious clean 'tek' call-note.

### Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* (2)

In the Kosi Barrage area two were noted on the 19th, with one the next day, but undoubtedly much commoner than these few sightings suggest.

### \*# Stoliczka's Tit-Warbler *Leptopoecile sophiae obscura* (2)

Only seen at high altitude, with the first two a short way before Eklobhatti on the 13th, followed by five or more in the Kagbeni area, where two singles were seen the next morning.

What a startling combination of colours!

### (\*# Pygmy Blue Flycatcher *Muscicapella hodgsoni* (1)

One was seen in the forest by Fishtail Lodge, Pokhara, on the 12th, but only the underparts were noted clearly, with just a suggestion of a blue crown. The call was a dry, liquid rattle.)

### # Orange-gorgetted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophiatea* (1)

Two were seen in the forest by Fishtail Lodge, Phewa Tal, Pokhara, on the 12th.

### # Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* (2)

Two were seen well at Fishtail Lodge, Phewa Tal, Pokhara on the 12th, with one in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th.

### # Variegated Laughing Thrush *Garrulax variegatus* (1)

A small flock of at least five was seen just below Jharkot on the 14th.

### # Rufous-vented Black Tit *Parus rubidiventris beavani* (1)

Four were seen in the pine forest below Nilgiri on the 16th.

These birds differed markedly from those seen on the Langtang trek in April 1996. The underparts, apart from the rufous vent, were wholly grey. The difference between *P.r.r* and *P.r.beavani*, though the latter is supposedly the more eastern!

### # Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus* (1)

One was seen by DBR near Jharkot on the 15th.



# **Yellow-cheeked Tit** *Parus spilonotus* (1)

Two were seen extremely well at Fishtail Lodge, Pokhara on the 12th.

Another outstandingly colourful, attractive species.

# **Wallcreeper** *Tichodroma muraria* (4)

In Jomoson on the 13th one pair flew over the main street and another pair was seen on the northern outskirts. One was seen at Kagbeni on the 14th (DBR) and back in Jomoson singles were seen on the 16th (DBR) and 17th.

\*# **Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus* (1)

One was seen well in the trees by the pools to the east of Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

# **Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus* (1)

One was seen close to Kosi Barrage on the 19th, revealing a reddish, rather than brown upper-tail.

**Black-headed Shrike** *Lanius schach tricolour* (6)

Quite commonly seen in the lowland areas, with 10+ during the journey from Kathmandu to Pokhara on the 12th. Singles were seen along the Rapti River on both the 17th and 18th, at least five were seen in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th, with singles there and along the Bagmati River on the 20th and 21st respectively.

**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* (7)

Commonly seen in the lowland areas, with day totals of 50+ during the 17th-19th, and probably 100+ on the 20th, which included the Kosi Barrage area and the journey, as night fell, west towards Hetauda, when small flocks were gathering on wires.

# **Ashy Wood Swallow** *Artamus fuscus* (1)

One was seen by the Rapti River, Hetauda, on the 18th.

# **Green Magpie** *Cissa chinensis* (1)

At least one was seen in the forest by Fishtail Lodge, Pokhara, on the 12th (DBR).

**Indian Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda* (3)

One was seen *en route* from Kathmandu to Pokhara, along the Trisuli River on the 12th, when one was also seen near the Fishtail Lodge (DBR), and others were present in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and 20th.

# **Red-billed Chough** *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* (4)

A flock of about 1,000 high over Jharkot on the 14th was a most impressive sight. Thereafter just a few were seen daily, between Muktinath and Jomoson, until the 17th.

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens* (7)

Commonly seen across all the relatively low lying areas, from Kosi Barrage in the east to Pokhara in the west. Day total estimates of 100+ were the norm.

**Jungle Crow** *Corvus macrorhyncos* (5)

Although most commonly seen at higher altitudes, where its long tail and heavy bill caused confusion with the Raven - which we

didn't see - at least five were present along the Trisuli River on the 12th. Day totals of about 20 were noted in the Jomson area on the 16th and 17th.

**(Asian Pied Starling) Pied Myna *Sturnus contra* (2)**

In the Kosi Barrage area about 100 were seen in small flocks on the 19th, with probably 50+ on the 20th.

**Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* (6)**

Commonly seen across the lowland districts, with day total estimates of 25-100.

**\*# Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus* (4)**

There was some initial confusion over Myna identification - not having a decent field guide! Birds considered to be of this species were first noted *en route* between Kathmandu and Pokhara, along the Trisuli River, on the 12th. At least 10 were noted during the return journey from Pokhara to Hetauda on the 17th, with day totals of 50+ in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th and 20th.

**House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (7)**

Commonly seen across the lowland districts, invariably in association with man.

**# Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (7)**

Although this species replaced the previous one in the high altitude villages, where day totals of 60-70 were noted during the 13th-17th, small flocks were seen *en route* between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the 12th, with at least five along the Bagmati Valley, south of Kathmandu, on the 21st.

**\*# Tibetan Snowfinch *Montifringilla adamsi* (2)**

A flock of 100+ Snowfinches was seen high in the desert area between Jharkot and Kagbeni on the 15th and DBR saw about 30 on the outskirts of Jomson the next day. Plumage, call and distribution all point to this species.

**Red Munia *Amandava amandava* (1)**

A small group of about five was seen in the Kosi Barrage area on the 19th.

**\*# Red-fronted Serin *Serinus pusillus* (1)**

Two singles and a flock of about 12 were seen near Jomson, in the pine forest below Nilgiri, on the 16th.

**(\*# Plain Mountain-Finch *Lucosticte nemoricola* (1)**

An immature, possibly of this species, was seen in the vicinity of Kagbeni on the 14th.

My brief notes included: a small finch, with a small conical bill, pale covert tips forming two wing bars, pale-fringed tertials, pale creamy throat and underparts, brown cap and nape, upperback dark with creamy stripes.)

**\*# Streaked Rosefinch *Carpodacus runcilloides* (3)**

Seen daily in the Kagbeni/Jharkot area between the 13th-15th, when day totals of about 12 were noted.

# **Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala* (1)  
DBR found about 10 along the east bank at Kosi Barrage on the 19th.

# **Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalos* (2)  
At least nine were seen in the orchards at Kagbeni on the 13th and DBR saw a female at Jharkot on the 15th.

# **Rock Bunting** *Emberiza cia* (4)  
Appeared to be the commonest bunting at high altitude, with three near Kagbeni on the 13th, a flock of 15 (DBR) there the next morning, six on the 15th, including four in Jharkot and single males near Khinga and below Eklobhatti, and two males in Jomoson on the 17th, one of which sang attractively.

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Total species in Nepal	169
species only seen in Nepal	91
New species in Nepal for DWT	26
Total species in India	143
species only seen in India	65
New species in India for DWT	30
Total species seen in both India and Nepal	78
Total species for India and Nepal	234
Total new species for DWT	56

