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India - Eaglenest – Jan - 2007

354 Bird Species recorded

Checklist starts on Page 13

Leaders Nick Bray & Peter Lobo

Eastern Himalayas 2007- Nagaland and Eaglenest

Day 1 Friday 12th January

We arrived at Kolkata airport ahead of schedule at 1.30am and were met by my friend Neil Law who took us to the Saturday Club in the centre of the city where we had rooms booked. After a few hours sleep we met at 8am for breakfast before heading back to the airport, stopping along the road to check out some rough fields where we found **Bengal Bushlark**, **Richard's** and **Paddyfield Pipits**, **Oriental Skylark** and a group of **Asian Openbills**.

Our internal flight to Dimapur in Nagaland was a little late in taking off, but a journey of just under 2 hours was uneventful and we were met by our guide and good friend Peter Lobo. It took us about 4 hours to drive to Khonoma Village and we were surprised by the high military presence along the roadside, apparently this is due to the occasional politically motivated unrest, but I'm glad to say we experienced no problems. We drove through rolling hillsides cloaked in a strange mix of trees, with huge cleared areas and surprisingly not a bird seen for several hours. There has been a history of hunting in Nagaland which no doubt was the cause of the lack of birdlife but the area around Khonoma Village has been declared a reserve and the local villagers are taking an active part in preserving the habitat and its attendant wildlife. Anyway, as we neared the village I spotlighted a **Collared Scops-owl** perched in a small sapling near the road. This is a recent split from the bird resident over much of peninsular India and is called **Indian Scops-owl**.

On arrival at Khonoma we were assigned rooms within the community and congregated at a nice cottage for a delicious evening meal before retiring for some much deserved sleep.

Day 2 Saturday 13th January

After a chilly night we were on the road by 5.30am and heading up into the hills in our four-wheel drive vehicles. The track was very rough and it was tough going but we eventually made it onto a better road, stopping to look at a **Blue-fronted Redstart** and a superb **Slaty-backed Forktail**. A little further along we came across a small flock containing **Silver-eared Mesia**, **Ashy-throated** and **Buff-barred Warblers**, **Blue-winged Minla** and **Blue-throated Barbet**. The next stage of the drive produced lots of **Crested Finchbills**, **Black-throated Tits**, and a perched **Himalayan Buzzard**.

Breakfast was an ‘al fresco’ affair during which a few **Olive-backed Pipits**, **Little Buntings** and a **Fire-tailed Sunbird** were seen, but a **Spot-breasted Scimitar-babbler** was heard only. From here we walked up towards the highest ridge and encountered several large flocks on the way and this gave us time to rest as well as it was a steep path! We started off with a flock containing **Mrs Gould’s Sunbird**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker**, lots of **Grey Sibilas** and **Orange-bellied Leafbird**. The next flock was much bigger and faster moving and we had to move pretty quickly ourselves to catch up with **Bar-throated (Chestnut-tailed) Minlas** that were the dominant species, as well as **Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler**, **Rufous-capped** and **Golden Babblers**, and several **Rusty-fronted Barwings**. Higher up we came across a flowering tree which was proving very attractive to a flock of **Striated Bulbuls**, and as we watched these a **Large Niltava** and a skulking group of at least 12 **Rusty-capped Fulvettas** were discovered. As we got higher, **Beautiful Sibilas** were a regular sight and there was also several **Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrushes**, **Yellow-browed Tit** and **Green-tailed Sunbird**.

Eventually we came across a sign stating “Tragopan Sanctuary” but we never had a sniff of this much wanted species and the sign also heralded an extremely difficult and steep section of path with large rock steps bordered on either side by dense vegetation. This proved particularly attractive to at least 3 **Pygmy Wren-babblers** and more unexpectedly a very close and surprisingly confiding **Naga Wren-babbler**. Steve even managed a record shot of this much-wanted and seldom seen specialty of this region – and in fact we may well have been the first British birders to see this recent split from **Long-tailed Wren-babbler**.

Anyway, after this excitement we continued with a **Barred Cuckoo-dove** flying across the path in front of us. And by now the sun had reached the hillside and we warmed up rather quickly after a cold start and this coincided with a flock of **Blue-winged Laughingthrushes** that we only glimpsed just before reaching the top ridge. Amazingly, our lunch was brought to us by some of the villagers whom we were staying with (!) and which we certainly appreciated but there was way too much food for us! During lunch we also had good views of **Yellow-cheeked Tit** and **Golden-throated Barbet**, before continuing our walk along the ridge and bumped into a large flock of **Eye-browed** and **Grey-sided Thrushes** which were incredibly shy. A covey of **Rufous-throated Hill-partridges** ran away from us along the path before we made a steep descent back towards the vehicles. A large flock amongst the secondary growth beside the track held **Bar-throated Minlas**, **Rusty-fronted Barwings**, **Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush**, **Striated Bulbul** and a brief **Red-headed (Chestnut-crowned) Laughingthrush**. As we neared the bottom of the hill we flushed at least 5 **Mountain Bamboo-partridges** from an open grassy area, had good views of some more **Little Buntings** and heard a **Red-faced Liocichla** from the hillside above us to round off an interesting day’s birding.

Day 3 Sunday 14th January

Another early start saw us up in the hills above Khonoma village again, and Peter in the lead vehicle had a tantalizingly brief view of a **Black-breasted Thrush** flying across the track. After a brief and unsuccessful search we carried on driving, but didn’t get very far as a **Mountain bamboo-partridge** was stood in the middle of the narrow track and proceeded to walk slowly up onto the grassy verge and disappeared in some bushes. It was at this point we began walking up into the hills and thankfully it was much easier than yesterday and took us up into good primary forest. On the way up the call of **Rufous-throated Hill-partridge** was a regular sound, but we saw a **Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin** (a recent split from **Red-flanked Bluetail**) before coming across a small flock of common species such as **Yellow-cheeked Tits**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** and **Green-tailed Sunbird**. Once in the good forest we saw a pair of **Blue-winged Leafbirds** posing nicely on a small bush, and at the same spot we heard a **Green Cochoa** calling a few times but couldn’t locate it! Things were a little quiet for a while, until we reached the end of the trail and found **Maroon Oriole** and a beautiful **Black-eared Shrike-babbler**.

So we headed back down and amongst the more open lower areas birds became numerous and one particular big flock held **White-browed Shrike-babbler**, at least 3 **Red-tailed Minlas** amongst the numerous **Bar-throated Minlas**. The last slope before reaching the vehicles then turned up what is potentially the bird of the trip. As we tried to get decent views of a **Plain-backed Thrush**, a pitta gave brief views before disappearing into some bamboo. We assumed it was a **Blue-naped Pitta** but after several more views it just didn't seem right. Not only was the habitat wrong but the dark, chocolate brown upperparts, warm buffy underparts, dark bill and legs and dark line through the eye were all inconsistent with this i.d. It became apparent that this was possibly a **Rusty-naped Pitta** and a potential first for India, but not having obtained photos or a totally positive i.d we had to let it go!

Finally we made it back to the vehicles and some much needed lunch before driving to a different and slightly higher elevation. The habitat was much more open with low bushes and some dense secondary growth. This turned out to be a really interesting area and we scored with several target species that were not seen elsewhere. A couple of skulking **Striped Laughingthrushes** were eventually seen by everyone, as were a pair of duetting **Spot-breasted Scimitar-babblers** in a bare tree, but a **Vivid Niltava** was only seen by Steve. **Golden Bush-robins** were surprisingly common, as was **Fire-tailed Sunbird**, **Blue-fronted Redstart**, **Black-throated Prinia**, **Grey Sibia** and **Crested Finchbill**. In fact by the time we began walking back to the vehicles it was getting late, but we were delayed even further by a flock of 6+ **Blue-winged Laughingthrushes** and a **Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler** crossing the path in front of us. So with time running out we decided to walk along the road but it was relatively quiet with **Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin**, a flock of **Rusty-fronted Barwings** and numerous **Himalayan Black Bulbuls** being seen, plus a **Red-faced Liocichla** observed by Ken.

Day 4 Monday 15th January

As we congregated at one of the villagers' houses for an early breakfast there was a wonderful starlit sky above which heralded another fine day. This was primarily a travelling day but there was still time for some last minute birding here and once everyone had finished breakfast we walked along the road whilst our luggage was put into the vehicles. Lots of birds were seen as we walked out of the village for a few kilometers and **Hume's Warbler**, **Slaty-backed Forktail**, **Grey Sibia** and **White-capped River-chat** were all seen well. The road passed through good forest where **Blue-winged Minla**, **Blue-winged Laughingthrush**, **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon**, **Golden Babbler**, **Ashy Bulbul**, **Eye-browed Thrush**, **Nepal Fulvetta** and **Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher** all showed and a **Collared Owlet** called.

The drive down into the lowlands produced **Common Stonechat**, **Red-rumped Swallow**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Himalayan Swiftlet** and **Brown Shrike**. And as we skirted the periphery of Kaziranga National Park we pulled in to a roadside restaurant for lunch. We made some observations from here and also at a lookout alongside the road a few kilometers further on and saw **Little Cormorant**, **Asian Openbill**, **Black-necked** and **Woolly-necked Storks**, **Lesser Adjutant**, **Indian Spot-billed Duck**, **Bronze-winged Jacana**, **Lesser Pied Kingfisher**, **Little Green Bee-eater**, **Black-billed Roller** (a potential split from **Indian Roller**), **Lineated Barbet**, **Citrine Wagtail**, **Taiga Flycatcher**, **White-vented Myna** and **Grey-headed Starling** (a recent split from **Chestnut-tailed Starling**). There was also an **Indian One-horned Rhinoceros** and several **Hog Deer** as well.

Our long drive took us right the way across Assam, over the mighty Brahmaputra River and along the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve where **Asian Barred Owlet**, 2 **Great Pied Hornbills** and some singing **Striated Grassbirds** were seen. We also made a brief stop to buy some blankets and alcohol for our forthcoming camping expedition! And eventually we arrived in Balukpong at 5.40pm just in time to go through the formalities at the border post and entered Arunachal Pradesh, where we stayed in a small hotel for the night just over the border.

Day 5 Tuesday 16th January

We spent most of the day walking along the main road in the Sessa Wildlife and Orchid Sanctuary, which gave us some really great birds and also the weather was very kind. On my last visit it had rained most of the time here, so to be able to spend the day birding on good weather was a real treat! We began by driving uphill for a few kilometers and everyone was impressed by the excellent habitat of forested hillsides and deep, seemingly impenetrable valleys that seemed to go on forever! A **Streaked Spiderhunter** and a heard only **White-tailed Robin** got the ball rolling, followed by an out-of-range **Orange-bellied Flowerpecker**, **Rufous-faced** and **Yellow-bellied Warblers**, **Mountain Tailorbird**, a flock of **Striated Yuhinas**, **Great Barbet** and a flock of **White-browed Shrike-babblers**. We followed this up with the unexpected sighting of a pair of **Jerdon's Baza**, one of which perched in a tree overhanging the road for a short while. All of a sudden a couple of **Grey-chinned Minivets** flew in next to us and a short while later we saw **Scarlet**, **Short-billed** and **Long-tailed Minivets** as well!

We carried on seeing birds all morning, but occasionally jumped in the vehicles and drove a little higher when things got quiet and by doing this we covered many different elevations. As we passed a dense stand of bamboo on the hillside above us, a flock could be heard moving through and after a short wait we hit the jackpot with several **Long-billed Scimitar-babblers**, a flock of **Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbills** and the main prize was a superb **Indian White-hooded Babbler**. From this point **Long-tailed Sibias** became common, flocks of **Mountain Imperial-pigeons** flew overhead and **White-throated Bulbuls** also became a relatively frequent sighting. A **Grey Treepie** was scoped in a distant tree, another **Mountain Tailorbird** put in an appearance, both **Ashy** and **Bronzed Drongos** showed well and we heard a **Puff-throated Babbler** calling from way up the hill. Bird activity began to slow down by late morning, but we persevered and were eventually rewarded when we noticed a flowering tree containing a flock of **Silver-eared Mesias**, **Blue-winged Minla**, **Long-tailed Sibia**, several **Orange-bellied Leafbirds**, and a **Black-throated Sunbird**.

Surprisingly, things picked up after lunch with a **Great Pied Hornbill** flying through the valley below us, and this preceded sightings of **Rufous-bellied Niltava**, **Spotted**, **Little** and **Slaty-backed Forktails**, **Brown Dipper** and **Plumbeous Water-redstart**. A flock of hyperactive **Black-chinned Yuhinas** appeared next to us and became a familiar sight for the next couple of hours, as did **White-naped Yuhina**, whilst **Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch**, **Black Eagle** and **Small Niltava** were seen in quick succession. A small side track took us off the road and produced a cracking little **Pygmy Blue Flycatcher** which we watched for ages, before being distracted by a **White-spectacled Warbler**. A **Golden Babbler** could be heard calling but never showed, although a small group of **Striated Laughingthrushes** were seen in a large moss-covered tree, and a **Red-headed Trogon** only showed to one member of the group.

Eventually we had to leave the wonderful Sessa area and drive to a small hotel at Dirang, which would be our base for the next few nights. The journey took us through some wonderful scenery, reminiscent of Tibet with huge forested mountains on either side of the road and fast flowing boulder-strewn rivers and this certainly whetted our appetite for the next stage of our adventure.

Day 6 Wednesday 17th January

We headed into the **Sangti Valley** this morning but not before checking out the amazing view from the hotel gardens. A short drive took us down to a fast-flowing river where **Plumbeous Water-redstart** and **White-capped River-chats** were common, and there was also a couple of **Himalayan Pied (Crested) Kingfishers**, **Little Forktail** and **Brown Dipper**. A **Wallcreeper** fed alongside the bumpy track we were driving along, before finding a pair of superb **Ibisbills** in the river below us. We took some time to watch these brilliant birds before driving on, seeing another **Wallcreeper** and a **White-browed Wagtail**.

Approaching a small village, we noticed some movement in the gardens next to the track and this turned out to be a group of **Rufous-breasted Accentors**, some **Little Buntings**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, a **Black Redstart**, and an **Oriental Turtle Dove**. Our main reason for visiting this site was the **Black-necked Cranes** that spend the winter here, but as we drove through the village we could see that the fields where the cranes feed were empty! As we pulled up to scan the area, Peter asked some workers if they had seen the birds and was told they had flown off just before we arrived! So we contented ourselves by looking at some **Hodgson's Redstarts** present in the nearby trees and which turned out to be fairly common here, whilst out in the paddyfields both **Northern** and **Red-wattled Lapwings** fed, a few **Long-billed Plovers** were picked up out, several **Oriental Turtle Doves** were present and eventually up to 3 **Black-tailed Crakes** showed well below our vantage point. We then retraced our steps and drove back through the village as some children told Peter they had just seen the cranes flying up the valley but we found nothing so returned to the paddyfields and amazingly as we turned the corner there they were! There were 3 **Black-necked Cranes** striding sedately across the fields below us. Wow! We drove around and had great views of them as we followed a path beside the river. Our walk also produced **Himalayan Buzzard**, 3 **Russet Sparrows**, **Ashy-throated Warbler**, **Rufous-breasted Accentor**, and a really close **Long-billed Plover**.

We returned to the hotel for lunch before returning down to the valley where we spent some more time admiring the **Ibisbills** at closer quarters, but this time we also found **Himalayan Aboardant Bush-warbler**, **Streak-throated Scimitar-babbler** and **Red-headed (Black-throated) Tit**. However by mid-afternoon the wind had picked up and we had to contend with a constant drizzle. In fact it was rather unpleasant and decided to return to the hotel a little earlier than planned.

Day 7 Thursday 18th January

We spent the day at a new site which we were later to call 'Magic Mountain' due to the great birds we found! All the birding was done from the roadside and we had a great time, starting with a **White-tailed Robin** and **Chestnut-headed Tesia** beside a small stream, followed by a flock of **Red-headed Tits** and a **Black-eared Shrike-babbler**. We drove a little higher up the road and bumped into a flock comprising of **Beautiful Sibias**, **Great Barbet**, **Bar-tailed Minla**, **Mrs Gould's Sunbird**, with a flock of **Rufous-fronted Tits** appearing a short while later in company with a **Blue-fronted Redstart** and 4 **Red-headed Laughingthrushes**.

But this was just a little aperitif to what would happen next. As we scanned an open area between some dense patches of bamboo, we found the first of 11 **Fire-tailed Myzornis** to be seen today! It was feeding along a mossy branch of a large tree and took some getting on initially, but in the end we had really close views as it flew into the bushes right next to us in response to our pishing. We stayed in the same spot for quite a while and were rewarded with a large flock of **Grey-sided Laughingthrushes** moving through the vegetation below us, although we only heard a **Spotted Laughingthrush**.

The **scenery** once again was breathtaking, with snow all around us and views to the snow clad Himalayas dominating the horizon, but this meant the vehicles struggled to get much higher and in the end we couldn't get much farther up the mountain. So we walked up a particularly icy stretch of road, seeing a **Pygmy Wren-babbler** feeding under a fallen log and at one stage it hopped out onto the snow in plain view. Just a little way from here we could look down on a patch of bamboo and found 3 **Brown Parrotbills** feeding actively but they soon disappeared. Near here, an isolated house held lots of **Rufous-breasted Accentors** in its garden, along with an obliging **White-browed Bush-robin**. So we decided to have our picnic lunch here before walking up the road, finding a flock of **Black-faced Warblers**, **Dark-breasted Rosefinch**, **Hume's** (a recent split from **Yellowish-bellied**) **Bush-warbler**, a couple more **Fire-tailed Myzornis**, and we heard another **Spotted Laughingthrush**.

A decision was then taken to walk back down the road, which turned out to be a good move as we had absolutely crippling views of a **Plain-backed Thrush** as it fed beside the road and seemed oblivious to our presence. As we finally left this bird to feed in peace our best views of **Fire-tailed Myzornis** were absolutely mind-blowing as one individual appeared just a few feet below us on a bamboo stem and just stayed there for ages! Other species seen on the walk down included **Green-tailed Sunbird**, a flock of **White-throated Laughingthrushes**, **Silver-eared Mesia**, **Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush**, **Rusty-capped Fulvetta** and **Rusty-flanked Treecreeper**. Unfortunately, we only heard a **Bar-winged Wren-babbler** calling from a steep sided gully and which didn't respond to playback at all.

One final stop was made some way down the mountain where one particularly good patch of primary forest gave us a heard only **Collared Owlet** and **Ward's Trogon**, and we had brief views of a **White-collared Blackbird**, whilst Abid saw a **Long-tailed Thrush**.

Day 8 Friday 19th January

With clear skies and a mounting sense of anticipation we headed towards SeLa Pass this morning and followed the ever winding road up through numerous army camps until we reached the snowline. Unfortunately there had been heavy snowfall over the previous week making the road impassable and so we missed our chance of any monals at the pass. So we birded the lower levels and came up with some good birds such as a few flocks of **Snow Pigeons** that must have been pushed down to lower altitudes due to the bad weather at the summit. Also seen were several **Bhutan Laughingthrushes** (a recent split from **Streaked Laughingthrush**), **White-collared Blackbird** and **Dark-throated Thrush**. As we walked down a female **Crimson-browed Finch** fed in a berry laden tree and gave great views, and shortly after a female **Gold-naped Finch** was found perched in a nearby bush. Another flock of **Snow Pigeons** flew over, with plenty more **Bhutan** and **Red-headed Laughingthushes** putting in regular appearances.

We carried on walking and found a flock of **Brown-throated Fulvettas** alongside the road, followed by a group of **Tibetan Siskins** and another **Wallcreeper** before reaching the vehicles and having lunch. Afterwards, we decided to head back to the lower slopes of 'Magic Mountain' where we found a flock of **Black-faced Warblers**, 3 **Fire-tailed Myzornis**, **Scaly-breasted Wren-babbler**, **Black-chinned Yuhina**, **Kaleej Pheasant** and another heard only **Collared Owlet**, before disturbing a **Grey Nightjar** from the road as we drove back to the hotel at dusk. We watched the nightjar flying around a small valley before driving back down to the main road, this time flushing a strange-looking small bird from the road that may well have been a **Gould's Shortwing** but we could not relocate the bird despite searching.

Day 9 Saturday 20th January

We paid a return visit to search for the possible shortwing at first light without success, but did have good views of at least 2 **Grey-sided Bush-warblers**, as well as **Black-throated Prinia**, **Lemon-rumped Warbler** and a **Chestnut-headed Tesia**. From here we drove along a rough road to Tenga, seeing a pair of **White-crested Laughingthrushes**, 2 **Wallcreepers**, **Mountain Hawk-eagle** and a **Black Eagle**. We were held up for an hour en-route by some roadworks which involved using dynamite to blow up some huge boulders overhanging the road and we had to wait as they put the broken pieces into a lorry by hand. Most of the labourers lifting these rocks seemed to be women that had apparently migrated from Nepal in search of this type of work! But eventually we made it through and saw **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon** and 2 **Grey Treepies** perched next to the road, and more **Black-faced Warblers**.

On arrival at Tenga in the late morning we stocked up on crisps and chocolate before heading up to Lama Camp at the fabled Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary. On arrival I was amazed to see that a

permanent camp had been built with a dining room and proper toilets – such a difference to my last visit. We dumped our gear into the large African-style tents and were all eager to check out the surrounding area – after a welcoming cup of tea. In a short space of time we saw a pair of **Golden Bush-robins**, **White-browed Bush-robin** (which was quite common in the area), **Streak-throated Barwing**, **Red-headed**, **Blue-winged** and **Bhutan Laughingthrushes**, **Rufous-capped Babbler**, and a flock of **Whiskered** and **Stripe-throated Yuhinas**. We even had brief views of the now-famous **Bugun Liocichla** moving in company with the other laughingthrushes, and lots and lots of **Beautiful Sibias**. However, by 4pm a thick mist descended and with it came the dreaded rain so we retired to the dining room for an early dinner.

Day 10 Sunday 21st January

The rain had stopped overnight and the mist seemed to be clearing, so we checked out the area below the camp and bumped straight into a **Vivid Niltava**! Below the first bend in the track a mossy tree was proving attractive to a small flock which contained **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**, 2 **Black-eared Shrike-babblers**, **White-tailed Nuthatch** and a brief **Cutia**. Just around the next corner was a large flock of yuhinas and minlas, and there was also a **Yellow-browed Tit** amongst them. On the track was a pair of **Rufous-breasted Bush-robins** bathing in a small puddle, whilst **Himalayan Greenfinch** and **Rufous-capped Babbler** were present nearby. Meanwhile, a fruiting tree on the bank above us held a **Sapphire Flycatcher**, **Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin** and an **Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher**. Just around the corner at an old landslide area we had **Golden**, male **White-browed** and another **Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin**.

With the weather improving all the time it encouraged us to keep on walking, and we soon found a big flock with lots of **Yellow-throated Fulvettas** and **Golden Babblers**, as well as **Grey-cheeked Warbler**, **Orange-bellied Leafbird**, 3 **Black-eared Shrike-babblers** and **Whiskered Yuhina**.

After lunch we found a confiding **Pygmy Wren-babbler**, a big flock of **Rufous-winged Fulvettas** and a few **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeons** around the first corner, but decided not to walk too far in order to stake out the gully directly below the camp. A group of 6 **Scaly Laughingthrushes** moved up through the undergrowth, and preceded several sizeable flocks that seemed to come up through the gully in waves. Probably the best bird of the afternoon was one of our main targets here, a superb **Black-headed Shrike-babbler** that flew in and landed low down beside the road. However, a flock of **Golden-breasted Fulvettas** was quite a spectacle as well! There was also a few **Green Shrike-babblers**, **Barred Cuckoo-dove** and an **Emerald Dove** seen as well.

Day 11 Monday 22nd January

A calling **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler** in the early morning mist certainly had us on alert but this individual was not particularly tape-responsive, but a short while later we had one singing its heart out from very close range. There was also a fine supporting cast as well including **Black-chinned Yuhina**, obliging **Scaly-breasted** and **Pygmy Wren-babblers**, **Bar-throated Minla**, **Bhutan Laughingthrush**, **Black-throated Prinia**, **Yellow-cheeked Tits** and **Mountain Hawk-eagle**. But we didn't hang around long as it was time to leave Lama Camp and head to our next camp at Sunderview. However, our departure was delayed when we heard the distinctive call of a **Bugun Liocichla** which had everyone running along the track, but to no avail.

We followed the jeep track up towards Eaglenest Pass, and this section is normally the quietest of the whole journey and today proved no exception. We encountered a flock of **Rufous-fronted Tits** before reaching the pass, and even with a delay due to a problem with one of the vehicles we failed to find anything else of note. Once over the pass a **Winter Wren** appeared amongst the snow, and on the other side things started to liven up with flocks of **Streak-throated** and **Rufous-vented Yuhinas**. And after several attempts we eventually scored big-time with a **Bar-winged Wren-**

babbler giving us an unbelievable show as it came right down to take a look at us! Who said wren-babblers aren't responsive at this time of year?

Moving on we drove down below Sunderview Camp and birded a small section of road, but all we had for our efforts was a **Temminck's Tragopan** calling from somewhere in the distance and 3 **Eurasian Woodcocks** flying over at dusk.

Day 12 Tuesday 23rd January

Another early start saw us driving back up towards Eaglenest Pass, but overnight ice had formed on the Jeep Track and we had to push the vehicles up a steep section of track. But once we got to the right spot we could hear a **Spotted Laughingthrush** calling, so we dived into the bamboo and tried to find a decent open area in which to entice it in. But this failed to produce anything so walked back out to the track and scored with point blank views of two superb individuals perched on a frost encrusted bamboo stem. What a sight! Also here in this winter wonderland were several flocks of **Dark-throated Thrushes** and a few **Eye-browed Thrushes**. As we watched these a **Spotted Nutcracker** began calling and with a little perseverance saw at least 7 of the distinctive brown-bellied Himalayan race that is a potential future split.

So we began walking down the Jeep Track and the sun was just hitting our side of the pass and we began to defrost! Bird activity subsequently increased for a while, with a flock of **Brown-throated Fulvettas** being seen just before our picnic breakfast. We then took a side track into some really good forest, where we saw 3 more beautiful **Spotted Laughingthrushes**, **Himalayan Red-flanked** and **White-browed Bush-robins** and 4 **Large Niltavas**. There was also plenty of evidence suggesting that a group of **Indian Elephants** had moved through here recently, which certainly made us a little more careful!

After lunch we walked down the track seeing **Rufous-fronted Tit**, **Green Shrike-babbler**, a flock of **Yellow-browed Tits**, **Spotted Forktail**, **Streak-throated Barwing**, **Crimson-breasted Woodpecker**, **Golden-throated Barbet**, **Emerald Dove**, as well as several flocks of yuhinas, barwings and minlas. There was also a **Common Hawk Cuckoo**, **Grey-sided Laughingthrush** and we heard a **Coral-billed Scimitar-babbler** in the distance. Steve B and Ken had gone in the opposite direction and made a return visit to the good forest from this morning which resulted in **Common Hill-partridge**, **Collared Owlet**, **Indian Blue Robin** and a male **White-tailed Robin**.

Day 13 Wednesday 24th January

We continued our search for the elusive trogon this morning, and made our way to the next camp at Bompu. We walked through an amazing forest full of moss-encrusted large trees with bromeliads and epiphytes hanging from them like some prehistoric land! The bird activity was prolific and many of the previously mentioned species were common in this area, and a fruiting tree near the track was particularly attractive to a group of 20+ **Great Barbets**. We also picked out **Darjeeling** and **Fulvous-breasted Woodpeckers** in the same tree, along with **Golden-throated Barbet**, **Striated Laughingthrush** and an **Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher**. An extremely obliging **Rufous-throated Wren-babbler** then put in an appearance a short while later, along with some **Emerald Doves**, more bush-robins, and 3 **Cutia** that we watched feeding overhead for at least 20 minutes.

Everyone was having a great time and we just didn't know what to expect next. A big flock of **Grey-sided** and **Red-headed Laughingthrushes** crossed the path in front of us, and a short while later a couple of **Scaly Laughingthrushes** showed in a small gully, whilst overhead a few **Himalayan Swiftlets** were seen.

We had lunch alongside the track, and shortly after Peter picked up the bird we all wanted to see, a stunning pair of **Ward's Trogon** were tucked in amongst a dense stand of trees and moss covered

vines. This was an incredible spot by Peter, and although they never came fully out into the open everyone managed reasonable views through the scope. Obviously, we were elated with this and with a spring in our step we continued walking and came across another flock of **Golden-breasted Fulvettas**, as well as another showy **Fire-tailed Myzornis**, a flock of **Striated Bulbuls**, and a hyperactive flock of 20+ **Black-throated Parrotbills**. We also saw another myzornis, flocks of **Mountain Bulbuls**, lots of **Golden-breasted** and **Yellow-throated Fulvettas** and 6 **Brown Bullfinches**. The non-avian highlight of the day was a **Yellow-throated Marten** clambering around a large tree.

We eventually made it all the way to the new permanent camp at Bompou amidst the spectacle of forested ridges stretching all the way to the horizon. That evening a **Himalayan Wood-owl** called from the nearby forest.

Day 14 Thursday 25th January

A big flock of **Bar-throated** and a couple **Red-tailed Minlas** got us scurrying out of our tents at daybreak, and we also saw a **Shikra** perched on the hillside above. A short drive took us back up to the trogon area from yesterday and we took a side trail into the forest where **Plain-backed Thrush**, **Crimson-breasted** and **Darjeeling Woodpeckers** and **Yellow-throated Fulvetta** were seen. But with nothing much else calling we retraced our steps via a couple of **Blue-winged Laughingthrushes** and back out onto the Jeep Track. A small group of **Brown Bullfinches** were busy feeding on berries and another flock of fast moving **Black-throated Parrotbills** melted away into the forest. Many of the same species were seen during the course of the morning, but we still enjoyed good views of at least 3 more stunning **Fire-tailed Myzornis**, as well as a flock of **Grey-sided Laughingthrushes**, better views of **Barred Cuckoo-dove**, **Golden-breasted Fulvetta** and **Striated Bulbul**.

At lunch a **Long-legged Buzzard** and **Rufous-bellied Eagle** flew over, before we continued walking down the track. This turned up some more specialties from this area in the shape of a pair of **Red-faced Liocichlas** skulking amongst a mixed flock of **Grey-sided** and **Scaly Laughingthrushes**. Then a large mixed species flock could be heard from the dense bamboo close by, and first of all we saw several **Black-chinned Yuhinas**, but then it became apparent that there were lots of **Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbills** and some skillful fieldcraft resulted in outstanding views. But we couldn't relax as Peter had seen something else and we followed the flock down the hill which resulted in brilliant looks at a group of **Coral-billed Scimitar-babblers**. We watched this flock for ages until it moved away into the forest, so we walked on down below camp and continued our great run of sightings with **White-spectacled Warbler**, **Rusty-fronted Barwing**, **Common Rosefinch** and yet more **Yellow-throated Fulvettas**. What a day!

Day 15 Friday 26th January

We left Bompou and walked the 13km to the next camp and possibly the best and most exciting area at Sessni which took us most of the day. The minla flock was around the camp again this morning before breakfast and once everyone had packed their kit we began walking down a reasonably steep section of the Jeep Track. Starting off with a fine **Black-eared Shrike-babbler**, we hadn't walked far before scoring with a superb **Collared Treepie** that flew out of a stand of bamboo and landed in a tree nearby. The next stage of the walk was characterized by the numerous **Pygmy Wren-babblers** heard calling, and other notable sightings included **Yellow-cheeked Tit**, **Grey-chinned Minivet**, **Blue-winged Laughingthrush**, **White-naped Yuhina** which became much more common over the next couple of days and culminating in a couple sightings of **Rufous-necked Hornbill**.

After lunch the activity picked up with **Blue-throated Barbet**, more minlas, **Crested Goshawk**, a flock of **Black-faced Warblers**, **Emerald Dove**, **Ashy Drongo**, a flock of **Black-throated**

Parrotbills, White-spectacled Warbler and a brief **Snowy-browed Flycatcher**. A superb **White-gorgeted Flycatcher** proved extremely hard to see as it skulked low down amidst some dense secondary growth beside the track but was certainly worth the effort to see it. And then, as the vegetation became really dense at the bottom of the valley, we noticed a big increase in bird activity with **Yellow-throated Fulvettas** becoming increasingly common, along with more **White-spectacled Warblers** and **Golden Babblers**. A flock of around 30 **Coral-billed Scimitar-babblers** put on a good show, as did a group of **White-crested Laughingthrushes** and a couple of **Greater Racket-tailed Drongos**.

During the day we had tried several sites for **Long-billed Wren-babbler** without any response, but finally alongside a steep ravine one called back. In fact there was a pair present and came steaming through the undergrowth to within 10 feet of us and calling loudly. And from here it wasn't far to the camp and as we walked across a couple of shallow streams that crossed the track a **Spotted Wren-babbler** sang from a damp gulley above us.

Day 16 Saturday 27th January

During the night we could hear a **Mountain Scops-owl** calling close by and just as the sun began to rise over the distant hills I spotlighted a very large nightjar in the valley below which could well have been a **Great Eared Nightjar**. Over the next couple of evenings we heard a bird that resembled the call of this species, but it didn't respond to tape playback at all but seemed to go further away in response! The habitat around this camp is totally different from all other areas visited at Eaglenest and as such offers several different and much-wanted species. We tried in vain for several wren-babblers before and after breakfast but nothing seemed to be responding but we didn't give up hope! One other noticeable thing about this area is that it is much warmer than we had been experiencing higher up and this came as a surprise to us. However, we walked out from camp after a fine breakfast and after some time we saw **Golden Bush-robin** at the edge of camp, followed by a pair of confiding **Red-faced Liocichla** nearby, **Blue-winged Laughingthrush**, **White-naped Yuhina**, **Yellow-browed Tit**, and **Long-tailed Sibia**.

Continuing on, we heard at least 5 **Spotted Wren-babblers** calling, along with an **Eye-browed Wren-babbler**, neither of which gave decent views, but we did see our second **Pygmy Blue Flycatcher**, **Rusty-fronted Barwing**, a pair of **Black Eagles** displaying, a flyover **Rufous-bellied Eagle**, and a flock of **Nepal House Martins**. We retraced our steps and checked out a particularly good looking area and succeeded in finding a pair of absolutely outstanding **Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babblers**. Unbelievably we observed the pair song-duetting from a fallen log deep within the undergrowth and this must surely rank as the major highlight of the trip. But how could you follow this? Well a trio of fine **Red-faced Liocichla** provided something of a distraction on the walk back to camp.

After lunch we walked along the Jeep Track again, finding a sizable flock containing **Red-tailed Minla**, **Rufous-winged Fulvetta**, **Grey-cheeked Warbler**, **Black-eared Shrike-babbler**, **White-throated Fantail** and **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**. And then it happened! On a large moss covered tree overhanging the track we saw a party of 5 delightful **Beautiful Nuthatches** feeding in a rather frenetic fashion. Surely one of the most wanted birds in all of Asia, and we were watching them right above our heads. This was possibly one of the biggest 'highs' any of us had ever experienced and we simply lapped up the views of these mouth-watering little 'beauties'! The perfect picture was complete when we realized that in the same tree were a few **Rufous-backed Sibias** and a **Sultan Tit** as well.

To round off one of the best days of the entire trip we saw a small flock of **White-crested Laughingthrushes** and had further views of a **Long-billed Wren-babbler**. Wow!

Day 17 Sunday 28th January

So how could we possibly follow yesterday's sightings? Well we drove right down to the lower edges outside the actual sanctuary, stopping along the way to look at a group of birds perched on some dead trees which only turned out to be **Mountain Imperial-pigeons**. A **White-browed Piculet** was much more entertaining as it fed amongst a stand of bamboo, and nearby a flock of **Silver-eared Mesias** crossed the hillside above us, but a perched female **Rufous-necked Hornbill** was the best find of all. We walked a little way down the road, finding a large fruiting tree which was proving attractive to loads of **Blue-throated** and **Golden-throated Barbets**, plus a few **Rufous-backed Sibias** as well. Nearby were **Ashy Bulbul**, **Nepal Fulvetta**, **Small Niltava**, **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker**, **White-browed Shrike-babbler**, a pair of **White-browed Scimitar-babblers** and **Rufous Woodpecker**. We could hear a **Grey Peacock-pheasant** calling from the valley below, but there was no way of trying to reach it, so we contented ourselves with 3 **Great Pied Hornbills**, **Whistler's Warbler** and a typically skulking **Slaty-bellied Tesia**.

We then drove a little further down to a point where we could overlook a river and jumped out of the vehicles as a large flock seemed to be crossing the river. We saw **White-bellied Erpornis**, **White-naped Yuhina**, **Yellow-vented Warbler**, **Red-tailed** and **Blue-winged Minlas**, **Striped Tit-babbler**, and **Speckled Piculet**. Down by the river there were several **Plumbeous Water-redstarts** and **White-capped River-chats**, **Brown Dipper**, **Black-backed** and **Little Forktails**, several **Sultan Tits**, 2 **Black Storks**, **Changeable Hawk-eagle**, **Crested Serpent-eagle**, **Whistler's Warbler**, more **Striped Tit-babblers** and a flock of **Black-crested Bulbuls**. Find of the morning went to Steve B who somehow spotted a **Pied Falconet** perched on a dead tree on a distant hillside, which necessitated a scramble along the boulder strewn river in soaring temperatures to get a closer view – cheers!

We returned to camp for lunch, after which we walked up the track seeing a flock of **Grey-chinned** and **Scarlet Minivets**, along with **Pied Flycatcher-shrike**, a flock of **Yellow-throated Fulvettas**, **Wedge-tailed Green-pigeons** and 4 more **Beautiful Nuthatches** for some lucky people in the group. There were also more **White-browed Shrike-babblers** and **Rufous-backed Sibias** seen before we drove higher up. This turned out to be a good move as we had **Common Green-magpie** amongst a flock of **White-crested Laughingthrushes**, a calling **Collared Treepie**, **Eurasian Woodcock**, **Bay Woodpecker** at last, **Spotted Wren-babbler** and ever so brief (and probably uncountable) views of an **Eye-browed Wren-babbler**. Still you can't argue with 8 species of wren-babbler seen on any tour, can you? But the day wasn't over and on our return to camp we were just getting ready for dinner when an **Asian Barred Owlet** flew in and began calling, but was completely (and literally) overshadowed by a male **Indian Elephant** that appeared at the edge of camp and began feeding. This necessitated some frantic action by the camp crew who threw more wood onto the bonfires at either end of camp and it was a slightly nervous bunch of birders who retires to their tents for the night!

Day 18 Monday 29th January

Sadly we had to leave Eaglenest this morning and start out on the long drive to Guwhati, and a quick walk from camp combined with a stop at the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve to repair one of the vehicles resulted in us seeing **Spotted Forktail**, **Spotted Dove**, **Brown Dipper**, **Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike**, **Black-crested Bulbul**, **Wreathed Hornbill**, **Spot-winged Starling**, **Grey-headed Starling**, **Black-hooded Oriole**, **Common Hill-myna**, **Red-breasted Parakeet**, **Crested Treeswift**, **Barred Cuckoo-dove**, **Large Hawk-cuckoo**, **Baya Weaver** and **Ashy Woodswallow**.

The drive across the lowlands to the edge of Kaziranga produced **Eastern Cattle Egret**, **Wire-tailed Swallow**, **Red Collared-dove**, and a pair of **Red-headed Vultures**. Lunch was taken along the road where we saw **Crimson Sunbird**, **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker**, **Great Tit** and **Common Tailorbird** before saying goodbye to our superb camp crew and driving to Guwahati.

Day 19 Tuesday 30th January

We had a little time before our return flight to Kolkata and visited Deepor Bheel, which is a large lake and marshy area on the edge of the city. The highlight of our visit was the close views of the globally threatened and endangered **Greater Adjutants**, as well as some **Lesser Adjutants**, a good selection of commoner wildfowl, **Black-eared Kites**, **Grey-headed Lapwing**, **Brown Shrike**, **Striated Grassbird**, **Dusky Warbler** and **Tickell's Leaf-warbler**.

But all too soon we had to leave and return to the hotel and load our luggage for a final time onto the vehicles and head to the airport where we said our goodbyes to our excellent drivers and Peter. Our flight departed on time and we were soon back in Kolkata and taking a refreshing shower at the Saturday Club before our international flight back to the UK which arrived the following day.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter Lobo for his hard work and excellent organizational skills which ensured this tour ran so smoothly. His knowledge of the birds of this region is unsurpassed, and his birding and leadership skills were outstanding.

Checklist starts on next page -

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR NAGALAND and EAGLENEST
Friday 12th January to Tuesday 30th January 2007

Podicipedidae

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: A few seen at Deepor Bheel.

Phalacrocoracidae

Indian Shag *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*: Only seen near Kolkata.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*: A pair flying over the Sangti Valley were the only ones.

Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*: A few seen en-route to Balukpong and at Deepor Bheel.

Ardeidae

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: Seen a few times in the lowlands.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*: A few seen around the lowlands.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*: Several present at Deepor Bheel on 30th January.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: A recent split. Common at all lowlands areas.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel near Guwahati.

Indian Pond-heron *Ardeola grayii*: Common and easily seen around the plains.

Ciconiidae

Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*: Seen on 3 dates, with some reasonable size flocks notes as we drove along the periphery of Kaziranga and also at Deepor Bheel.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*: 6+ seen at Kaziranga.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*: Only seen in the valley below Sessni.

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*: A single observed as we drove beside Kaziranga.

Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*: Seen at Kaziranga and Deepor Bheel.

Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius*: This range restricted species was observed at Deepor Bheel.

Anatidae

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*: Only noted at Kaziranga.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas Penelope*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*: Only seen at Deepor Bheel.

Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*: A recent split from birds found to the east. Observed at Kaziranga on 15th January.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: Seen at Kaziranga and Deepor Bheel.

Accipitridae

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*: Several seen as we drove across Assam on 15th January.

Jerdon's Baza *Aviceda jerdoni*: A pair observed at Sessa was an unexpected find.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans govinda*: Very common in Kolkata, and also seen en-route to Balukpong and a few at Deepor Bheel and Guwahati.

Black-eared Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus*: Treated by some authorities as separate species from the species above. Common at Deepor Bheel.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*: Just a couple of sightings at Eaglenest.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*: One sighting of an individual in the Sangti valley.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*: One definite sighting at Eaglenest.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*: A recent split from Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*. Frequently seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*: One high-flying bird at Eaglenest.

Crested Serpent-eagle *Spilornis cheela*: Just a few seen, mainly in lower areas of Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Hieraaetus kienerii*: Singles seen on 3 dates between Sunderview and Sessni at Eaglenest probably involved two different individuals.

Mountain Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis*: Seen on 4 dates at Eaglenest.

Changeable Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus limnaeetus*: A relatively recent split from Crested Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus cirrhatus*, which is found much further south. Seen a few times at Eaglenest.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*: Almost a daily sighting in Arunachal Pradesh and seen on 8 different days, with the highest count of 4 birds seen on 26th and 27th January.

Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus*: A pair seen as we drove back to Guwahati on 29th January.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*: A few seen at Deepor Bheel.

Falconidae

Pied Falconet *Microhierax melanoleucos*: Single observed perched in a large dead tree in the valley below Sessni at Eaglenest is an excellent record.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*: A few seen in Arunachal Pradesh.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: Single observed in the plains.

Phasianidae

Mountain Bamboo-partridge *Bambusicola fytchii*: Quite common above Khonoma village in Nagaland, where seen on 3 dates. Our best sighting was of a bird crossing the road in front of our vehicles and gave excellent views.

Common Hill-partridge *Arborophila torqueola*: Seen twice between Sunderview and Bompou at Eaglenest and heard on 2 other dates.

Rufous-throated Hill-partridge *Arborophila rufogularis*: A small group seen well in Nagaland and heard on 7 dates at Eaglenest.

Kaleej Pheasant *Lophura leucomelanos*: Only seen on 'Magic Mountain' on 19th January.

Gruidae

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*: This globally vulnerable species is a high-altitude specialist and you have to be somewhere adventurous to see it – usually! We found 5 wintering birds in the Sangti Valley feeding in paddyfields. They only seem to be here from about the second week in January to mid-February although their movements are subject to weather conditions.

Rallidae

Black-tailed Crake *Porzana bicolor*: A scarce bird anywhere in Asia and one of the specialties and major targets of this trip. At least 3 observed in the Sangti Valley.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis Phoenicurus*: A few seen in paddyfields in the lowlands.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Ibidorhynchidae

Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii*: 3 observed in the Sangti Valley.

Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Jacanidae

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus*: Seen at Kaziranga and Deepor Bheel.

Charadriidae

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*: A frequent sighting in the plains and also surprisingly in the Sangti Valley.

Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*: A flock seen in flight at Deepor Bheel.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*: Pair seen overwintering in the Sangti Valley.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*: At least 7 seen in the Sangti Valley, with a one particular pair giving crippling views.

Scolopacidae

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*: A few seen.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: Seen on 2 dates.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*: Small flock at Deepor Bheel.

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*: Seen at dusk near our camp at Sunderview.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Columbidae

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Noted on 6 dates.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*: As we made the drive towards a snow-bound SeLa Pass, several small flocks of this alpine bird totalling 20 individuals were seen. A lucky observation, no doubt due to inclement weather higher up at the pass pushing these birds lower!

Mountain Imperial-pigeon *Ducula badia*: Seen on 5 dates in Arunachal Pradesh, with the highest count of 30+ being seen at Sessa.

Ashy Woodpigeon *Columba pulchricollis*: Seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Oriental Turtle-dove *Streptopelia orientalis*: At least 15 noted in the Sangti Valley.

Red Collared dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: Only noted near Deepor Bheel.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*: A few seen in the lowlands.

Barred Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia unchall*: Seen on 6 dates.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*: Almost a daily sighting in Arunachal Pradesh.

Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon *Treron sphenura*: Seen on 7 dates.

Pin-tailed Green-pigeon *Treron apicauda*: Seen on our last day at Eaglenest.

Psittacidae

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*: Very common as we left Eaglenest and drove along the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve.

Cuculidae

Large Hawk-cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides*: Seen once at Eaglenest and also near Nameri Tiger Reserve.

Common Hawk-cuckoo *Cuculus varius*: Endemic to the Indian Subcontinent. A coupe seen between Sunderview and Bompou.

Hodgson's Hawk-cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisicolor*: Heard calling distantly on the hillside above our camp at Sessni.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*: It has been proposed to split this species into 'northern' and 'southern' forms. Just a few seen at Deepor Bheel and travelling across the plains.

Strigidae

Himalayan Wood-owl *Strix nivicola*: Only heard on 2 evenings at Eaglenest.

Collared Scops-owl *Otus lettia*: This superspecies has been split. With Indian Scops-owl *Otus bakkamoena* occurring in peninsular India and Sri Lanka and *lettia* in the Himalayan foothills and further east. By some authorities. A single bird was spotlighted as we approached Khonoma village on our first evening.

Mountain Scops-owl *Otus spilocephalus*: Heard on 4 evenings at Eaglenest, but not tape-responsive at all.

Asian Barred Owllet *Glaucidium cuculoides*: Singles noted on several dates.

Collared Owllet *Glaucidium brodiei*: Seen at Eaglenest by Steve B and Ken. Heard on another 3 dates there as well.

Caprimulgidae

Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus jotaka*: A recent split with Indian Jungle Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* found in Peninsular India and Sri Lanka. Single observation flying around the road on Magic Mountain.

Great-eared Nightjar *Eurostopodus macrotis*: We heard and also spotlighted a distantly flying large nightjar sp. without any white in the wings and tail that we believe could well have been this species. A call was heard on several evenings at Sessni that didn't perfectly match this species but was of the same tone and scale. Potentially a first for Eaglenest although we have heard of no subsequent sightings.

Hemiprocnidae

Crested Treeswift *Hemiproctes coronata*: A few seen on the drive from Sessni to Guwahati.

Apodidae

Asian Palm-swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*: Seen in the plains at a few sites.

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*: Seen on 3 dates.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*: Common in Kolkata.

Trogonidae

Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*: Seen on 2 dates in Arunachal Pradesh.

Ward's Trogon *Harpactes wardi*: A truly scarce and magical bird and you have to be in the Himalayas of Bhutan or Arunachal Pradesh to find it! A great spot by Peter of a pair in a deeply wooded hollow below the road on the way to Bompou camp.

Coraciidae

Black-billed (Indian) Roller *Coracias benghalensis affinis*: A potential split although a range of hybridization and plumage overlap necessitates further study. We saw a few individuals as we drove along the boundary of Kaziranga.

Alcedinidae

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*: Seen at a few lowland sites.

Himalayan Pied Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*: Formerly called Crested Kingfisher. 3 of these huge beasts were seen in the Sangti Valley.

Lesser Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*: Only seen on the 15th January as we drove across Assam.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: Singles observed on 15th, 17th and 29th January.

Meropidae

Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*: Seen on 2 dates in the lowlands.

Bucerotidae

Rufous-necked Hornbill *Aceros nipalensis*: One of the major target species. Seen on 2 dates at Eaglenest, with the area between Bompou and Sessni seemingly the best area.

Great Pied Hornbill *Buceros bicornis*: Seen on 3 dates.

Wreathed Hornbill *Aceros undulates*: A pair seen as we left Eaglenest on the long drive to Guwahati on 29th January.

Capitonidae

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*: Seen near Guwahati.

Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica*: Relatively common in all areas visited.

Golden-throated Barbet *Megalaima franklinii*: Easily seen and a frequent sighting.

Lineated Barbet *Megalaima lineata*: Just a single observation as we left Nagaland.

Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*: A characteristic sound when birding in the Himalayas. Very common and recorded on 13 dates. A fruiting tree between Sunderview and Bompou proved particularly attractive and contributed to a count of 40+ birds seen on 24th January!

Picidae

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*: A pair in a large mixed-species flock below Sessni was the only sighting.

White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea*: A pair below Sessni in some roadside bamboo gave good views.

Fulvous-breasted Pied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos macei*: Only recorded on 2 dates at Eaglenest.

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*: Singles on Magic Mountain and near Bompou were the only sightings of this extremely attractive species.

Crimson-breasted Pied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos cathpharius*: We had several good views of this sometimes tricky species at Eaglenest.

Darjeeling Woodpecker *Dendrocopus darjellensis*: This large woodpecker was seen twice at Eaglenest.

Greater Yellownape *Picus flavinucha*: Just a single observed at Sessa.

Rufous Woodpecker *Celeus brachyurus*: Single observed below Sessni was the only record.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*: This shy species was mainly heard, but also seen on 2 dates at Eaglenest.

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*: The form in Sri Lanka has been split from this species. Pair observed on our last morning in Nagaland.

Pittidae

Rusty-naped Pitta *Pitta oatesi*: One probable was seen well enough by some of the group above Khonoma village to know it wasn't the expected Blue-naped Pitta *Pitta nipalensis*. With dark chocolate brown upperparts, buff underparts, dark line through the eye that curved down around the ear-coverts, and large dark bill and legs – this may well represent the 1st record for India!

Unfortunately we couldn't pin this bird down, but the fact this was totally wrong habitat for *nipalensis* and that our local guide had never even seen a pitta species here before makes you wonder.....?

Alaudidae

Bengal Bushlark *Mirafra assamica*: A relatively recent split from what was formerly called Rufous-winged Bushlark. Seen near Kolkata.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*: A few were song-fighting near Kolkata.

Hirundinidae

Nepal House-martin *Delichon nipalensis*: A flock of 50+ over the Sangti Valley and 150+ in the valley below Sessni were the largest groups seen.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Seen in the plains.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*: A few seen in lower areas as we left Nagaland.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*: Only recorded as we drove to Guwahati on 29th January.

Motacillidae

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: Seen on 6 dates in typical habitat.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*: Observed near Kaziranga and at Deepor Bheel.

Black-eared Wagtail *Motacilla alba alboides*: Seen on 4 dates.

White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla madaraspatensis*: Endemic to the Indian Subcontinent. A pair in the Sangti Valley were the only ones recorded.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*: Recorded on 11 dates.

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*: Singles recorded in Sangti Valley and Deepor Bheel.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*: Seen near Kolkata and surprisingly in Sangti Valley.

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*: Only seen near Kolkata.

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Artamidae

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus*: A few seen on 3 dates.

Campephagidae

Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis gularis*: Single observe sighting at Sessa.

Pied Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*: Formerly called Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike. Seen on 2 dates in Arunachal Pradesh.

Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos*: Seen a few times below Sessni.

Large Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina macei*: Just one sighting as we drove out of Nagaland.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*: A couple small flocks at Sessa and near Sessni.

Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*: Seen in Nagaland, Sessa and magic Mountain.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*: A recent split, with Orange Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* now recognized in SW India and Sri Lanka. Several flocks were noted in Eaglenest, with one particularly sizeable flock seen near Sessni camp.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*: Completing our good run with this genus, we had several groups of this species, sometimes forming loosely associating mixed flocks with other minivets. 40+ near Sessni camp was our biggest total.

Pycnonotidae

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*: Common in most areas and seen on 9 dates.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*: Seen in Kolkata and near Deepor Bheel.

Himalayan Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*: This species has been split, and now Square-tailed Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes ganeesa* is recognized from SW India and Sri Lanka. Common in all upland areas and seen on 13 dates, usually in large flocks.

Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flavala*: Seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest, where the latter held a flock of 25+ on 28th January.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mccllellandii*: Common in Nagaland and also seen on 3 dates at Eaglenest.

White-throated Bulbul *Alophoixus flaveolus*: Only seen at Sessa.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus flaviventris*: A recent 3-way split, with Black-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus* in Sri Lanka, and Flame-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus gularis* in Western Ghats. Seen in Nagaland and the lower areas below Sessni at Eaglenest.

Crested Finchbill *Spizixos canifrons*: Very common above Khonoma village in Nagaland.

Striated Bulbul *Pycnonotus striatus*: Common in most upland areas, with the highest count of 50+ below Bompu and Sessni at Eaglenest.

Aegithinidae

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*: Seen by Steve W. at Nagaland.

Irenidae

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*: A liberal sprinkling of sightings in most areas and often seen amongst mixed feeding flocks.

Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*: A recent split with Jerdon's Leafbird *Chloropsis jerdoni* present over most of peninsular India and Sri Lanka and *cochinchinensis* present in NE India and areas further east. 3 individuals seen above Khonoma Village.

Laniidae

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: Several seen in the lowlands.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*: Seen on 5 dates.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: A single individual observed as we drove by Kaziranga.

Rhipiduridae

Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha*: Very common in most areas visited and seen on 12 dates.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*: Currently under taxonomic review, with White-spotted Fantail *Rhipidura albogularis* found in central and southern India, although there is a broad zone of overlap and hybridization. 2 seen at Sessa on 16th Jan and several sightings at Eaglenest.

Cinclidae

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*: A bird of fast flowing and boulder strewn upland rivers. At least 6 seen in Sangti Valley on 17th January.

Turdidae

Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush *Monticola rufiventris*: Seen on 10 dates.

Blue Rock-thrush *Monticola solitarius*: A female in Sangti Valley and one below Sessni were the only sightings.

Blue Whistling-thrush *Myiophonus caeruleus*: Common and easily seen.

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis atrogularis*: A flock of 15 below Eaglenest Pass and a lone individual a few days earlier were the only ones recorded.

Grey-sided Thrush *Turdus feae*: A large mixed flock with the following species was observed above Khonoma village on 13th January.

Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*: Seen in company with the previous species and also present on 2 dates at Eaglenest.

White-collared Blackbird *Turdus albocinctus*: Steve B saw a lone individual as we walked down the road from our abortive attempt at reaching SeLa Pass.

Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus boulboul*: Single observed above Khonoma Village.

Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima*: 2 seen in Nagaland and an exceptionally confiding individual on Magic Mountain allowed a very close approach as it fed beside the road.

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys*: Single observed by Duncan as we walked up the road in the Sessa Orchid and Wildlife Sanctuary.

Muscicapidae

Green Cochoa *Cochoa viridis*: The distinctive call was heard above Khonoma village.

White-tailed Blue Robin *Myiomela leucura*: Singles on Magic Mountain and below Eaglenest Pass were the only ones seen.

Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-robin *Tarsiger rufilatus*: A recent split from Northern Red-flanked Bush-robin *Tarsiger cyanurus*. More commonly known as Red-flanked Bluetail. Quite common and seen on 8 dates, with the highest count of 10+ below Lama Camp.

Rufous-breasted Bush-robin *Tarsiger hyperythrus*: At least 6 seen below Lama Camp on 21st January and a single the following day.

White-browed Bush-robin *Tarsiger indicus*: Very common at Eaglenest and almost a daily sighting with 10+ observed between Sunderview and Eaglenest Pass on 23rd January.

Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunnea*: A single observed by Steve B and Ken above Sunderview Camp was an unseasonal observation.

Golden Bush-robin *Tarsiger chrysaeus*: Seen on 5 dates and many gave very good views.

Oriental Magpie-robin *Copsychus saularis*: Just seen on 2 dates.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*: Easily seen in the Sangti Valley and also at Sessa.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*: First seen in Nagaland but also present in Sessa and Eaglenest as well.

Black-backed Forktail *Enicurus immaculatus*: Single seen along the river below Sessni Camp.

Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculates*: What a bird! A few seen.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris*: This distinctive subspecies was seen briefly in the Sangti Valley.

Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*: Very common in the Sangti Valley with a high count of at least 20 individuals present on 17th January.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*: Very common and easily seen.

Plumbeous Water-redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*: A common bird on all the rivers in the region.

White-capped River-chat *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*: As per previous species, but we never got tired of trying to photograph them!

Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata maura*: Reasonably common, with several real frosty individuals typical of 'Siberian Stonechat', with other darker birds obviously of a different race.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*: Seen on 5 dates.

White-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula monileger*: A real Himalayan specialty and we had 2 different individuals that proved particularly difficult to get a good view of at Eaglenest.

Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*: Also called Taiga Flycatcher. Single observed as we drove past Kaziranga.

Orange-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophciata*: Very common and seen on 13 dates.

Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsoni*: Poor views late in the afternoon at Magic Mountain was the only sighting.

Snowy browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*: Just one individual observed briefly as we walked down the road towards Sessni camp.

Pygmy Blue Flycatcher *Muscicapella hodgsoni*: This hyperactive little beauty was seen very well at Sessa and near Sessni camp.

Sapphire Flycatcher *Ficedula sapphire*: A couple below Lama Camp were the only ones recorded.

Vivid Niltava *Niltava oatesi*: Singles observed in Nagaland and by Lama Camp.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*: Only seen at Sessa.

Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae*: Recorded on 3 dates but only in small numbers.

Large Niltava *Niltava grandis*: Our highest count of 8 was seen near Sunderview camp.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: Just a few seen.

Timaliidae

Bhutan Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron imbricatum*: A recent split from Streaked Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron lineatum*. Easily seen on way to SeLa Pass and around Lama Camp.

Blue-winged Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron squamatum*: A flock of 6+ in Nagaland and a couple of small flocks at Eaglenest all gave good views.

Scaly Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron subunicolor*: A flock of 14 at Eaglenest was the highest count, but also recorded on 2 other dates there.

Red-headed Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron erythrocephalu*: Formerly called Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush, and includes a recent split of Assam Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron chrysopterum*. Common and seen on 10 dates, often in mixed laughingthrush flocks.

Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*: After hearing one on our first day in Nagaland, Ken tracked one down at the edge of the Tragopan Sanctuary. We eventually had great looks at this superb bird on 3 dates at Eaglenest.

Bugun Liocichla *Liocichla sp*: Poor views below Lama Camp was very disappointing.

Spotted Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla ocellata*: The distinctive call was heard on Magic Mountain before we tracked 5 birds down at two different sites at Eaglenest.

Black-faced Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron affine*: Not as common as expected but seen on 2 dates at Eaglenest.

Striped Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron virgatum*: One of our main targets in Nagaland and the views of 6 birds were superb.

Striated Laughingthrush *Grammatoptila striata*: This charismatic bird was easily seen and recorded on 10 different dates.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis*: A big flock of 30+ seen on Magic Mountain and an even bigger flock of over 50 birds seen on a side trail between Sunderview and Bompou.

Grey-sided Laughingthrush *Dryonastes caerulatus*: Several large flocks noted at Eaglenest and Magic Mountain.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*: Several good looks at this beautiful bird.

Striped Tit-babbler *Macronous gularis*: Just a couple seen in the valley below Sessni were the only ones recorded.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*: Recorded on 10 dates with an incredibly high total of 60+ recorded below Lama Camp on 21st January.

Golden Babbler *Stachyris chrtsaea*: Seen in Nagaland in the first mixed species flock we encountered and recorded on 6 other dates with 12+ the highest count on 21st January.

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*: Just one group of 4 seen towards Sessni.

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

Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*: Quite a common bird and seen on 9 dates.

White-browed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus schisticeps*: 3 individuals seen at lower elevations below Sessni.

Coral-billed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ferruginosus*: We had 2 large flocks of 20+ and 30+ at Eaglenest which gave outstanding views.

Spot-breasted Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*: A pair below the Tragopan Sanctuary in Nagaland gave great views as they sang from a leafless tree.

Long-billed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ochraceiceps*: Only seen at Sessa on a bamboo cloaked hillside in company with Indian White-hooded Babbler and a flock of Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbills.

Fire-tailed Myzornis *Myzornis pyrrhoura*: One of the true Himalayan prizes. We had an incredible run of sightings, starting off on Magic Mountain with 11 different individuals seen, often at very close quarters. Also seen on 4 subsequent dates but in smaller numbers.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris*: Several flocks of this delightful species were seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*: A single sighting of a slightly out of range individual at Eaglenest on 21st January.

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*: A common sight in Arunachal Pradesh and small parties seen on 9 dates.

White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca*: Formerly thought to be a yuhinas but now considered in a family of its own. Seen in Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary and below Sessni camp.

Striated Yuhina *Staphida castaniceps*: The only sighting was of a small group of 5 birds at the Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary on 16th January.

Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis*: Very common in all areas visited and seen on 14 dates.

White-naped Yuhina *Yuhina bakeri*: One of the specialities of the region, with the biggest numbers at the Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary. Also seen on 4 consecutive dates at Eaglenest.

Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis*: Seen on 4 dates at Eaglenest with 50+ being the highest daily count.

Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis*: Reasonably common and often in company with others in its genus.

Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Alcippe castaneiceps*: Several active feeding groups seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Yellow-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe cinerea*: Very good views of this surprisingly common bird during the second half of our camping expedition at Eaglenest. Seen on 7 dates.

Golden-breasted Fulvetta *Alcippe chrysotis*: One of the prettiest of all the sought-after specialities here and usually seen in groups of 20 or more.

Brown-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe ludlowi*: Several small flocks seen of this charming bird, including a very active group feeding beside the road below SeLa Pass.

Rusty-capped Fulvetta *Alcippe dubia*: Two very skulking flocks seen in Nagaland and another seen at Eaglenest.

Nepal Fulvetta *Alcippe nipalensis*: Some good views of several flocks in upland areas.

Rusty-fronted Barwing *Actinodura egeroni*: A common sight in both Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Streak-throated Barwing *Actinodura waldeni*: Common at Eaglenest in groups of 20 or so.

Rufous-backed Sibia *Heterophasia annectans*: Seen on 2 dates at Eaglenest. The first sighting in company with a flock of Beautiful Nuthatches.

Grey Sibia *Heterophasia gracilis*: Very common in Nagaland.

Long-tailed Sibia *Heterophasia picaoides*: This attractive bird was found at Sessa and Sessni, but not in the higher areas.

Beautiful Sibia *Heterophasia pulchella*: Common and easily seen.

Indian White-hooded Babbler *Gampsorhynchus rufulus*: A recent split from the extralimital species found further east. Just one sighting of 3 birds in the mixed species flock feeding in bamboo at Sessni on 16th January.

Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*: Usually seen in mixed-species flocks in one's or two's in both Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Bar-throated Minla *Minla strigula*: Formerly called Chestnut-tailed Minla. Common and easily seen in all areas visited.

Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta*: Several small parties of this particularly attractive species were found in Nagaland and Eaglenest. Seen on 6 dates in total.

Green Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius xanthochlorus*: Just a few seen at Eaglenest.

Black-eared Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius melanotis*: Relatively common in small numbers.

White-browed Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis*: Seen on 4 dates.

Black-headed Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius rufiventer*: This local specialty was seen on just 2 dates at Lama Camp and below Sessni.

Cutia *Cutia nipalensis*: Seen on 3 dates in small numbers at Eaglenest.

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*: recorded a few times at Eaglenest.

Scaly-breasted Wren-babbler *Pnoepyga albiventer*: We saw a couple of confiding individuals at Lama camp and near Sunderview.

Pygmy Wren-babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*: The commonest species of its genus here. Recorded on 10 dates but only seen on 4! However, several great views were had, especially on Magic Mountain and below Lama Camp.

Rufous-throated Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis caudatus*: 3 extraordinarily confiding birds were seen, each one singing its heart out from just a few yards away.

Spotted Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis formosus*: Several birds were heard singing in response to tape playback, but only one was seen poorly.

Naga Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis chocalitinus*: One of a 3-way split from what was formerly called Long-tailed wren-babbler. We were the first British birders to see this bird, and what views! A very confiding individual circled us several times above Khonoma Village in response to Peter's tape.

Steve B even managed to obtain a record shot of this rare bird.

Bar-winged Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis troglodytoides*: having heard 2 birds on Magic Mountain we eventually found a tape responsive bird at Eaglenest that came right down to the Jeep Track and showed off its fine plumage to us.

Eye-browed Wren-babbler *Napothera epilepidota*: Sadly we only heard this bird which seemed to be common below Sessni camp as several were calling.

Long-billed Wren-babbler *Rimator malacoptilus*: This taxa is now considered distinct from the species found in Sumatra! One exceptionally confiding bird above Sessni gave great views from deep within the undergrowth – if you knew exactly where to look!

Sikkim Wedge-billed Wren-babbler *Sphenocichla humei*: Part of a 2-way split which now includes Cachar Wedge-billed Wren-babbler *Sphenocichla roberti* found slightly further east. A pair at Sessni singing from a horizontal log in the undergrowth for several minutes were potentially the main highlight of the trip.

Paradoxornithidae

Black-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis nipalensis*: Several extremely fast-moving groups were observed between Sunderview and Sessni.

Brown Parrotbill *Paradoxornis unicolor*: Magic Mountain came up trumps with a group of 5 birds moving through the bamboo.

Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis atrosuperciliaris*: The only sighting was a flock in the bamboo at Sessni on 16th January.

Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis ruficeps*: A flock moving through bamboo above Bompu were in association with a flock of Coral-billed Scimitar-babblers.

Regulidae

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*: A few seen at Eaglenest.

Cisticolidae

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*: Seen and heard near Kolkata on the way to the airport.

Black-throated Prinia *Prinia atrogularis*: A recent split from Hill Prinia *Prinia superciliaris* and seen well on 8 separate dates.

Sylviidae

Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris*: Seen as we drove to Balukpong on the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve and at Deepor Bheel near Guwahati.

Hume's Bush-warbler *Cettia acanthizoides*: A recent split from the Yellowish-bellied Bush-warbler found in China and Taiwan. Seen well on 5 dates in Arunachal Pradesh.

Himalayan Aberrant Bush-warbler *Cettia flavolivacea*: Following recent taxonomic studies, this species has been a proposed split to include Manipur Aberrant Bush-warbler *Cettia flavolivacea weberi*. Singles seen in Sangti Valley and near Lama Camp.

Large Bush-warbler *Cettia major*: Formerly called Chestnut-crowned Bush-warbler. Only seen in the Sangti Valley.

Blyth's Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*: Seen at Deepor Bheel.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*: Just a few seen.

Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus*: Seen on 2 separate occasions at Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary beside the road.

Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea*: Only 1 seen below Sessni.

Chestnut-headed Tesia *Tesia castaneocoronata*: Seen on 7 occasions, with 4 seen below Sessni.

Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps*: Very common at Eaglenest and seen on 10 dates. The biggest day count of 45+ was made from Lama Camp.

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*: Single observed at Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary.

Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus superciliaris*: Sessa was by far the best place to find this local specialty, but also the area below Sessa produced a few sightings.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps*: A few seen in Arunachal Pradesh.

Grey-hooded Warbler *Seicercus xanthoschistos*: Common and easily seen in most areas.

Grey-cheeked Warbler *Seicercus poliogenys*: After a brief view of a possible, a confiding individual below Lama Camp was seen. Once at Sessni it became quite common and a good count of 12 on 27th January was made.

White-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus affinis*: Smaller numbers than the previous species, but seemed to prefer slightly higher elevations.

Whistler's Warbler *Seicercus whistleri*: A relatively recent split from what was formerly called Golden-spectacled Warbler, but that has been renamed Green-crowned Warbler *Seicercus burkii*. 3 were seen at low elevation below Sessni.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*: Seen in Nagaland and very common around Deepor Bheel.

Tickell's Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus affinis*: Singles seen in Nagaland and Sangti Valley.

Yellow-browed Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*: Relatively common during the first half of the trip.

Hume's Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus humei*: Just a couple seen around Khonoma Village.

Orange-barred Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*: Formerly called Buff-barred Leaf-warbler. A common bird during the first half of the tour.

Lemon-rumped Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus*: A sprinkling of sightings throughout the tour of this very attractive *Phylloscopus* warbler.

Grey-faced Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis*: Formerly called Ash-throated Leaf-warbler. Exceedingly common and seen on most days.

Yellow-vented Warbler *Phylloscopus cantator*: Eventually we caught up with this tricky species in the bird wave low down below Sessni.

Paridae

Great Tit *Parus major*: Only seen when we stopped for lunch en-route to Guwahati.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*: Common during the first half of the tour.

Black-spotted Yellow Tit *Parus sibilans*: Formerly called Yellow-cheeked Tit. A liberal sprinkling of sightings in both Nagaland and Eaglenest.

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea*: First seen associating with a flock of Beautiful Nuthatches and Rufous-backed Sibia above Sessni, and 7 present in the valley below Sessni the day after.

Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*: Seen on 6 dates.

Aegithalidae

Red-headed Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*: Formerly called Black-throated Tit. The biggest flocks were 25+ in Sangti Valley and 30+ on Magic Mountain.

Rufous-fronted Tit *Aegithalos iouschistos*: A small flock flew I and landed in front of us as we birded the road on Magic Mountain. Further flocks also seen either side of Eaglenest pass.

Certhiidae

Rusty-flanked Treecreeper *Certhia nipalensis*: Great views on Magic Mountain were followed by sightings on 4 further dates between Lama Camp and Sunderview.

Tichodromidae

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*: A good run of sightings with several seen in the Sangti Valley and towards SeLa Pass

Sittidae

White-tailed Nuthatch *Sitta himalayensis*: Seen relatively frequently at Eaglenest, with a highest count of 8 birds made between Sunderview and Bompu.

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta cinnamoventris*: A recent split with Indian Nuthatch *Sitta castanea* occupying areas south of the Himalayas. Just a few seen.

Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta Formosa*: This was the bird everyone wanted to see and we had superb views of a flock above Sessni on consecutive days feeding in a large tree over the road.

Dicaeidae

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*: Only seen at the lunch stop driving to Guwahati.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: Relatively common and seen on 8 dates, usually in mixed-species feeding flocks.

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trigonostigma*: A surprise find of a lone bird in Sessa Wildlife Sanctuary. Although the 'Ripley' guide states it is found nowhere near our sighting, this is the second time I have seen it here and have previously managed some photos in the past to confirm!

Zosteropidae

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*: Seen on 6 dates.

Nectariniidae

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*: This species has been split, with Vigors's Sunbird *Aethopyga vigorsii* found in the Western Ghats. Only seen at our lunch stop en-route to Guwahati.

Fire-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga ignicauda*: Very common around Khonoma Village in Nagaland.

Mrs Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*: Reasonably common and seen on 6 dates, but usually in good numbers.

Black-breasted Sunbird *Aethopyga saturate*: Several seen with the area above Sessni being the best site for this species, with 8+ seen there on 28th January.

Green-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga nipalensis*: Common and seen on 11 dates.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*: First seen in Sessa with only one other sighting below Sessni Camp.

Prunellidae

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiatea*: Very common in Sangti Valley where 18+ seen on 17th January and 25+ seen on drive up towards SeLa Pass.

Emberizidae

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*: A liberal sprinkling of sightings in Nagaland, Magic Mountain and Sangti Valley.

Fringillidae

Himalayan Greenfinch *Carduelis spinoides*: Just a few seen in Nagaland and near Lama Camp.

Tibetan Siskin *Carduelis thibetana*: A flock of 40+ fed in roadside trees as we walked down the road below SeLa Pass.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*: 30+ above Khonoma Village was the biggest day total, and also seen on Magic Mountain and near Lama Camp.

Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Carpodacus nipalensis*: Just 1 seen on Magic Mountain.

Crimson-browed Finch *Propyrrhula subhimachala*: A female feeding on some roadside berries as we walked down from SeLa Pass was unexpected but gave good views.

Gold-naped Finch *Pyrrhoptes epaulette*: We found an extraordinarily confident female perched in a bush just a few yards away from us, shortly after finding the previous species.

Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis*: Two small flocks attacking berry laden trees at Eaglenest were seen.

Estrildidae

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*: Just a few seen in the lowlands.

Passeridae

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: Recorded on 3 dates.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*: Seen at Balukpong, Sangti Valley and Magic Mountain.

Cinnamon Sparrow *Passer rutilans*: A few were seen in the Sangti Valley.

Ploceidae

Eastern Baya Weaver *Ploceus p burmanicus*: A proposed split with Indian Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus philippinus*. A flock flew by as we paused at the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve to repair one of the vehicles en-route to Guwahati.

Oriolidae

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*: Singles seen in Nagaland and Eaglenest, with a few more heard.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*: Seen in the grounds of the Saturday Club, Kolkata and near Nameri Tiger Reserve.

Dicruridae

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*: A common sight in the plains.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*: Relatively common in forested areas.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*: Seen on 5 dates in forested areas.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*: Seen on 3 dates in the forest below Sessni.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*: Not as common as previous species and seen on 3 dates only.

Sturnidae

Spot-winged Starling *Saroglossa spiloptera*: Flocks were seen feeding in flowering *Bombax* trees when we stopped en-route to Guwahati to repair the vehicles at the edge of Nameri Tiger Reserve.

Grey headed Starling *Sturnia malabarica*: Part of a two-way split from what was formerly called Chestnut-tailed Starling. Malabar White-headed Starling *Sturnia blythii* is endemic to the Western Ghats. Only seen en-route to Balukpong and Guwahati.

Asian Pied Starling *Gracupica contra*: Seen on 4 dates in the lowlands.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Seen on 4 dates in the lowlands.

Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus*: Only seen at our lunch stop beside Kaziranga as we drove to Balukpong.

White-vented Myna *Acridotheres grandis*: A few were seen feeding around some livestock at the edge of Kaziranga when we stopped for lunch en-route to Balukpong.

Common Hill-myna *Gracula religiosa*: A recent split includes Lesser Hill-myna *Gracula indica* which is endemic to the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka. Only seen en-route to Guwahati, feeding in flowering *Bombax* trees.

Corvidae

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*: A proposed two-way split includes Larger-spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga multipunctata* which is found in NW India and Afghanistan. Several of these chocolate-brown bellied birds were seen below Eaglenest Pass.

House Crow *Corvus splendens*: Seen on 4 dates in the lowlands.

Eastern Jungle Crow *Corvus levaillantii*: Formerly part of the 'Large-billed Crow' complex, there are now several splits and proposed splits pending. This species is considered sufficiently distinctive on call to warrant full species status along with Indian Jungle Crow *Corvus culminatus*. Seen in Kaziranga.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus japonensis*: Part of the *Corvus* complex that may yet involve more splits. Several seen in highland areas.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: Seen en-route between Dirang and Lama Camp.

Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis*: Singles seen amidst mixed laughingthrush flocks near our camp at Sessni.

Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*: Singles seen in Sangti Valley and Magic Mountain.

Collared Treepie *Dendrocitta frontalis*: Singles observed at Sessa and just below Bompu Camp.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*: Just a few seen at lower elevations.

354 species recorded.

Please note that our checklists do not include species seen by leaders only.

We also do not include single observer sightings or very poor views.

We do not count heard only or subspecies, although they are noted.

This we believe gives us a very honest accurate group total.

With this in mind we welcome you to compare our lists with other companies, check out our high standards and above all our prices which offer the very best value for money.

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